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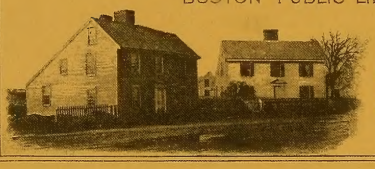
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THE

WORKS

Of the Learned

Iſaac Barrow, D. D.

Late Maſter of *Trinity College* in *Cambridge.*

Publiſhed
By His Grace Dr. *JOHN TILLOTSON,*
late Lord Arch-Biſhop of *Canterbury.*

The ſecond Volume.

CONTAINING

SERMONS and *EXPOSITIONS*

Upon all the

ARTICLES

IN

The Apoſtles Creed.

2262
2

The Second Edition, Corrected.

LONDON,
Printed by *J. Heptinſtall,* for *Brabazon Aylmer,* at the *Three Pigeons* againſt the *Royal Exchange* in *Cornhill,* 1700.

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The Christian Creed.

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geons against the Royal Exchange in Cornhill. 1700.

To the King.

SIR,

I Most humbly present to Your Majesty a Work, the Authour whereof, my Son, was much the more dear to me for his constant and exemplary Loyalty. Not only the general obligation of a Subject always ingaged him to Your Majesty's Service, but the particular favours wherewith You were pleased to honour and encourage his Studies, might probably have induc'd him to a Dedication of this kind, if his modesty would have let him think any thing of his worthy Your Majesty's Patronage. This, which I here offer, is, by those who are better able to judge of it than my self, valued as the most considerable of his productions: But it chiefly presumes to entitle it self to Your Royal Protection, because it is an Explication and Vindication of that Christian Faith, whereof Your Majesty is the great Defender.

And, Sir, I beg leave to take this opportunity to make as publick an acknowledgment as I can, of that great goodness Your Majesty has shewn in the acceptance and recompence of the fidelity I have through a course of many years born to the Cause of Your Majesty and your Royal Father.

Long may Your Majesty live and Reign under the happy conduct and blessing of that Wisdom, in whose right hand is length of days, and in her left hand Riches and Honour. I am,

May it please your Majesty,

Your Majesty's most Humble,

Faithful and Obedient

Subject and Servant,

THOMAS BARROW.

The Creed.

I Believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth:

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was Crucified, dead and buried, He descended into Hell; The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost; The holy Catholick Church; The Communion of Saints; The forgiveness of sins; The resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. Amen.

THE Christian Faith EXPLAINED and VINDICATED In several SERMONS, UPON THE Chief Articles of it contained in the APOSTLES CREED.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON I.

Of the Evil and Unreasonableness of INFIDELITY.

HEB. 3. 12.

Take heed, Brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief.

IF the causes of all the sin and all the mischief in the world were carefully sought, we should find the chief of all to be Infidelity; either total or gradual. Wherefore to dehort and dissuade from it is a very profitable design; and this, with God's assistance, I shall endeavour from these words; in which two particulars naturally do offer themselves to our observation; an assertion implyed, that Infidelity is a sinfull distemper of heart; and a duty recommended, that we be carefull to void, or correct that distemper; of these to declare the one, and to press the other shall be the scope of my discourse.

That Infidelity is a ſinfull diſtemper of heart, appeareth by divers expreſs teſtimonies of Scripture, and by many good reaſons grounded thereon.

Joh. 16. 8, 9. It is by our Saviour in terms called *Sin*; *when he is come, he will reprove the world of ſin, — Of ſin, becauſe they believe not in me:* and,
Joh. 15. 22. 24. *If I had not come, and ſpoken unto them, they had not had ſin*; *but now they have no cloak for their ſin*; and, *If ye were blind, ye ſhould not have had ſin*; *but now ye ſay, we ſee, therefore your ſin abideth.* What ſin? that of Infidelity, for which they were culpable, having ſuch powerfull means and arguments to believe imparted to them, without due effect.

It hath a Condemnation grounded thereon: *He* (ſaith our Saviour)
Joh. 3. 18. 12. 48. *that believeth not, is condemned already, becauſe he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God*; but Condemnation ever doth ſuppoſe faultineſs.

ὃ δὲ μόνον τὸ μὴ εἰκῆ τῇ ἐντολῇ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸ ἀπιστεῖν αὐτῇ καλεπωτάτω ἐπάγει τῷ κόλασιν. *Chryſ.* ad *Demat.* Tom. 6. (p. 140)

2 Theſ. 2. 11, 12. 1. 8. It hath ſore puniſhment denounced thereto; *God* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *ſhall ſend them ſtrong deluſion, that they ſhould believe a lye, that they all might be damned who believe not the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs*; and, Our Lord (ſaith he) at his coming to judgment, will *take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; whence among thoſe, who *have their part in the lake burning with fire and brimſtone, the fearfull, and unbelievers* (that is they Apoc. 12. 8. who fear to profeſs, or refuſe to believe the Chriſtian Doctrine) are reckoned in the firſt place; which implyeth Infidelity to be a heinous ſin.

It is alſo ſuch, becauſe it is a *tranſgreſſion of* a principal *Law*, or di-
1 Joh. 3. 23. Joh. 6. 29. vine Command; *this* (ſaith S. *John*) *is* ἡ ἐντολὴ αὐτοῦ, *the command of him that we ſhould believe*; *this* (ſaith our Lord) *is* τὸ ἔργον τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the*
Mark. 1. 15. ſignal *work of God* (which God requireth of us) that *ye believe on him, whom he hath ſent*; that was a duty, which our Lord and his Apoſtles chiefly did teach, injoin and preſs; wherefore correſpondently Infide-
1 Joh. 3. 4. lity is a great ſin; according to S. *John*'s notion, that *ſin* is ἀνομία, *the tranſgreſſion of a Law.*

But the ſinfulneſs of Infidelity will appear more fully by conſidering its nature and ingredients; its cauſes; its properties and adjuncts; its effects and conſequences.

I. In its nature it doth involve an affected blindneſs and ignorance of the nobleſt and moſt uſeful truths; a bad uſe of reaſon, and moſt culpable imprudence; diſregard of God's providence, or deſpight thereto; abuſe of his grace; bad opinions of him, and bad affections toward him; for

Tit. 2. 11. 3. 4. 1 Tim. 1. 15. God in exceeding goodneſs and kindneſs to mankind hath propoſed a doctrine, in it ſelf *faithfull and worthy of all acceptation*, containing moſt excellent truths inſtructive of our mind and directive of our practice, toward attainment of Salvation and Eternal felicity: ſpecial overtures of mercy and grace moſt needfull to us in our ſtate of ſinfull guilt, of weakneſs, of wretchedneſs; high encouragements and rich promiſes of reward for obedience; ſuch a doctrine with all its benefits, Infide-
Luke 7. 30. Matt. 23. 37. 1 Tim. 2. 4 Luke 10. 16. Rom. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9, 15. lity doth reject, *defeating the counſel of God*, croſſing his earneſt *deſires* of our welfare, *deſpiſing his goodneſs, and patience.*

1 Pet. 1. 10. Act 3 18. Luke 24. 44. To this doctrine God hath yielded manifold clear atteſtations, declaring it to proceed from himſelf; ancient preſignifications and predicti-

ons;

ons; audible voices and visible apparitions from heaven, innumerable miraculous works, providence concurring to the maintenance and propagation of it against most powerfull oppositions and disadvantages; but all these testimonies Infidelity slighteth, not fearing to give their Author the lye, which wicked boldness S. *John* chargeth on it; *He* (saith the Apostle) *that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the testimony that God gave of his Son.*

Heb. 2. 4. Act. 4. 33. 19. 20. 2. 47. 6. 7. 12. 24. 1 Joh. 5. 10.

Many plain arguments, sufficient to convince our minds, and win our belief, God hath furnished; the dictates of natural conscience, the testimony of experience, the records of history, the consent of the best and wisest Men, do all conspire to prove the truth, to recommend the usefulness of this Doctrine; but Infidelity will not regard, will not weigh, will not yield to reason.

God by his providence doth offer means and motives, inducing to belief, by the promulgation of his Gospel, and exhortation of his Ministers: but all such methods Infidelity doth void and frustrate; *thrusting away the word, turning away the ear from the truth, letting the seed fall beside us, casting away the Law of the Lord of hosts*; in effect (as those in *Job*) *Saying to God, depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways.*

2 Cor. 5. 20. Act 13 46. 2 Tim. 4. 4. Matt. 13. Ic. 5. 24. Job 21. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 16.

God by his grace *doth shine upon our hearts*, doth attract our wills to compliance with his will, doth excite our affections to relish his truth; but Infidelity doth *resist his Spirit*, doth quench the heavenly light, doth smother all the suggestions and motions of divine grace within us.

Joh. 6. 44. (Apoc. 3. 20.) Act. 7. 51. 1 Th. 5. 19. 2 Cor. 4 4.

What God asserteth, Infidelity denieth, questioning his veracity: what God commandeth, Infidelity doth not approve, contesting his wisdom; what God promiseth, Infidelity will not confide in, distrusting his fidelity, or his power: Such is its behaviour (so injurious, so rude, so foolish) toward God, and his truth; this briefly is its nature, manifestly involving great pravity, iniquity and impiety.

II. The causes, and sources from whence it springeth (touched in Scripture, and obvious to experience) are those which follow.

1. It commonly doth proceed from negligence, or drowsy inobservance and carelessness; when men being possessed with a *spirit of slumber*, or being amused with secular entertainments do not mind the concerns of their Soul, or regard the means by God's mercifull care presented for their conversion; being in regard to religious matters of *Gallio*'s humour, *caring for none of those things*; thus, when the King in the Gospel sent to invite persons to his wedding-feast, it is said, Οἱ δὲ ἀμελήσαντες ἀπῆλθον, they *being careless or not regarding it, went their ways one to his field, another to his trade.* Of such the Apostle to the *Hebrews* saith, *How shall we escape,* τοιαύτης ἀμελήσαντες σωτηρίας *who regard not so great salvation*, exhibited to us? Of such Wisdom complaineth; *I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. No man*; the greatest part indeed of men are upon this account Infidels, for that being wholly taken up in pursuit of worldly affairs and divertisements, in amassing of wealth, in driving on projects of ambition, in enjoying sensual pleasures, in gratifying their fancy and humour with vain curiosities, or sports, they can hardly lend an ear to instruction; so they become unacquainted with the notions of Christian doctrine; the which to them are as *the seed falling by the way side*, which those *fowls of the air* do snatch and devour before it sinketh down into the earth, or doth come under consideration. Hence is unbelief commonly termed not *hearing God's voice*, not hearkning to God's word, the dinn of worldly business rendring men deaf to divine suggestions.

Rom. 11. 8. Act. 18. 17. Matt. 22. 5. Heb. 2. 3. Prov. 1. 24. Is. 65. 12. 66. 4. Jer. 7. 31. Matt. 13. 4.

2. Another source of Infidelity is sloth, which indispoſeth men to undergo the fatigue of ſeriouſly attending to the doctrine propounded, of examining its grounds, of weighing the reaſons inducing to believe; whence at firſt hearing, if the notions hap not to hit their fancy, they do ſlight it before they fully underſtand it, or know its grounds; thence at leaſt they muſt needs fail of a firm and ſteady belief, the which can alone be founded on a clear apprehenſion of the matter, and perception of its agreeableneſs to reaſon: So when the *Athenians* did hear S. *Paul* declaring the grand points of faith, ſomewhat in his diſcourſe, uncouth to their conceit, falling from him, ſome of them did
Act. 17. 32. Act. 26. 28. neglect his doctrine; *ſome mocked, others ſaid we will hear thee again of this matter:* So *Agrippa* was *almoſt perſuaded to be a Chriſtian*, but had not the induſtry to proſecute his inquiry, till he arrived to a full ſatisfaction. A ſolid faith, (with clear underſtanding and firm perſuaſion) doth indeed, no leſs than any ſcience, require ſedulous, and preſevering ſtudy; ſo that as a man can never be learned, who will not be ſtudious; ſo a ſluggard cannot prove a good believer.

3. Infidelity doth ariſe from ſtupidity, or dulneſs of apprehenſion (I mean not that which is natural, for any man in his ſenſes, how low ſoever otherwiſe in parts or improvements, is capable to underſtand the Chriſtian doctrine, and to perceive reaſon ſufficient to convince him of its truth, but) contracted by voluntary indiſpoſitions and defects; a ſtupidity riſing from miſts of prejudice, from ſteams of luſt and paſſi-
Heb. 5. 4. on, from ruſt grown on the mind by want of exerciſing it in obſerving and comparing things; whence men cannot apprehend the cleareſt notions plainly repreſented to them, nor diſcern the force of arguments however evident and cogent; but are like thoſe wiſards in *Job*, who
Job 5. 14. If. 59. 10. Deut. 28. 29. *meet with darkneſs in the day time, and grope at noon day, as in the night.* This is that, which is ſo often charged on the *Jews* as cauſe of their infidelity; who *did hear but not underſtand, and did ſee but not perceive; becauſe their heart was groſs, and their ears were dull of hearing, and their eyes were cloſed*; this is that πώρωσις καρδίας, that *numbneſs of heart*, which is repreſented as the common obſtruction to the perception and admiſſion of our Lord's doctrine; this our Lord blamed in his own Diſciples, when he rebuked them thus;
Act. 28. 26. —— If. 6. 9. Matt. 13. 14. Joh. 12. 40. Rom. 11. 7, 8, 25. Eph. 4. 18. If. 29. 10. Ezek. 21. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 14. Mark 3. 5. 6. 52. 8. 17.
Luke 24. 45. *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken*; Of this the Apoſtle doth complain, telling the *Hebrews*, that they were uncapable of improvement in knowledge, becauſe they were νωθροὶ ταῖς
Heb. 5. 11, 14. ἀκοαῖς, *dull of hearing* for want of skill and uſe, *not having their ſenſes exerciſed to diſcern both good and evil:* there is indeed to a ſound and robuſt faith required a good perſpicacy of apprehenſion, a penetrancy of judgment, a vigour and quickneſs of mind, grounded in the purity of our faculties, and confirmed by exerciſe of them in conſideration of ſpiritual things.

4. Another cauſe of Infidelity is a bad judgment; corrupted with prejudicate notions, and partial inclinations to falſhood. Men are apt to entertain prejudices favourable to their natural appetites, and humours; to their luſts, to their preſent intereſts; dictating to them, that wealth, dignity, fame, pleaſure, eaſe, are things moſt deſirable, and neceſſary ingredients of happineſs; ſo that it is a ſad thing in any caſe to want them; all men have ſtrong inclinations byaſſing them toward ſuch things, it is a hard thing to ſhake off ſuch prejudices, and to check ſuch incli-
Matt. 16. 23. Joh. 6. 60, 66. nations; it is therefore not eaſie to entertain a doctrine repreſenting ſuch things

things indifferent, obliging us sometimes to reject them, always to be moderate in the pursuit and enjoyment of them; wherefore Infidelity will naturally spring up in a mind not cleansed from those corruptions of judgment.

5. Another source of Infidelity is perverseness of Will, which hindreth men from entertaining notions disagreeable to their fond, or froward humour: ὦ γενεὰ ἄπιστος καὶ διεστραμμένη, *O faithless and perverse generation*, those Epithets are well coupled, for he that is perverse will be faithless; in proportion to the one the other bad quality will prevail. *The weapons of the Apostolical warfare* (against the Infidel world) *were* as S. *Paul* telleth us, *mighty to the casting down of strong holds*; so it was; and the Apostles by their discourse and demeanour effectually did force many a strong fortress to surrender: but the will of some men is an impregnable bulwark against all batteries of discourse; they are so invincibly stubborn, as to hold out against the clearest evidence, and mightiest force of reason; if they do not like what you say, if it cross any humour of theirs, be it clear as day, be it firm as an Adamant, they will not admit it; you shall not persuade them, though you do persuade them. Such was the temper of the *Jews*, whom S. *Stephen* therefore calleth *a stiff-necked people, uncircumcised in heart and ears*; who although they did hear the most winning discourse, that ever was uttered, although they saw the most admirable works that ever were performed, yet would they not yield to the doctrine; the mean garb of the persons teaching it, the Spirituality of its design, the strict goodness of its precepts, and the like considerations not sorting with their fancies, and desires; they hoping for a *Messias*, arrayed with gay appearances of external grandeur and splendour; whose chief work it should be to settle their Nation in a state of worldly prosperity and glory.

Matt. 17. 17. 2 Cor. 10. 5. οὐ πάντες δυσωπεῖ τὸ σημεῖα, ἀλλὰ μόνος τὸν Θεὸν γνώμονας. *Const.* Apost. 8. 1. Act. 7. 21, 54. Jer. 6. 10. 9. 26.

6. This is that hardness of heart, which is so often represented as an obstruction of belief: this hindred *Pharaoh*, notwithstanding all those mighty works performed before him, from *hearkning* to God's word; and regarding the mischiefs threatned to come on him for his disobedience; *I will not* (said he) *let Israel go*; his will was his reason, which no persuasion, no judgment could subdue: This was the cause of that monstrous Infidelity in the *Israelites*; which baffled all the methods, which God used to persuade and convert them; *Notwithstanding* ('tis said) *they would not hear, but hardned their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God*: Whence that exhortation to them; *To day if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*. And to obduration the disbelief of the Gospel upon the Apostles preaching is in like manner ascribed; S. *Paul* ('tis said in the *Acts*) *went into the Synagogue and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and perswading the things concerning the Kingdom of God: But divers were hardned and believed not*: and, *Exhort one another daily* (saith the Apostle) *lest any of you be hardned* (in unbelief) *through the deceitfulness of sin*.

Exo. 7. 4, 22. 8. 15. 19. 9, 12. Exod. 5. 7. 2 Kings 17. 14. Psa. 95. 8. Heb. 3. 8. Act. 19. 9. Heb. 3. 14, 13. *Vid.* Mark 16. 14.

7. Of kin to that perverseness of heart is that squeamish delicacy and niceness of humour, which will not let men entertain or savour any thing, any wise seeming hard or harsh to them, if they cannot presently comprehend all that is said, if they can frame any cavil, or little exception against it, if every scruple be not voided, if any thing be required distastefull to their sense; they are offended, and their faith is choaked; You must to satisfie them, *speak to them smooth things*, which no wise grate on their conceit, or pleasure: So when our Lord discoursed

Isa. 30. 10. Joh. 6. 63.

sed somewhat mysteriously, representing himself in the figure of heavenly bread (typified by the *Manna* of old) given for the World, to
Joh. 6. 60, 66. sustain men in life; *Many of his disciples hearing this, said this is a hard*
Joh. 6. 61. *saying, who can hear it?* and — *from that time many of his disciples*
Matt. 11. 6. 24. 10. 13. 21. *went back, and walked no more with him*; this is that which is called be-
1 Pet. 2. 8. ing — *scandalized at the word*; and *stumbling at it*; concerning which our Saviour saith, *Blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in me.*

In regard to this weakness, the Apostles were fain in their Instructions to use prudent dispensation, proposing only to some persons the most easie points of Doctrine, they not being able to digest such as were
1 Cor. 3. 2. more tough and difficult: *I have* (saith S. *Paul*) *fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able* to bear it — *for ye are yet car-*
Heb. 5. 12. *nal*; and *Ye* (saith the Apostle to the *Hebrews*) *are such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

Such were even the Apostles themselves in their minority; *not savou-*
Matt. 16. 23. Matt. 26. 31. *ring the things of God*; being *offended at* our Lord's discourses, when he spake to them of suffering; and with his condition, when he entred into it.

8. With these dispositions is connected a want of love to truth; the which if a man hath not, he cannot well entertain such notions as the Gospel propoundeth, being no wise gratefull to carnal sense and appetite: This cause S. *Paul* doth assign of the *Pagan* Doctors falling into so
Rom. 1. 28. gross errours and vices, *because they did not like to retain God in their knowledge*; and of mens revolting from Christian Truth to Antichristian Imposture — *because they received not the love of truth, that they might*
2 Thes. 2. 11. *be saved: for which cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lye:* Nothing indeed, but an impartial and ingenuous love of truth (overbalancing all corrupt prejudices and affections) can engage a man heartily to embrace this holy and pure Doctrine, can preserve a man in a firm adherence thereto.

9. A grand cause of Infidelity is pride, the which doth interpose various bars to the admission of Christian truth; for before a man can believe, πᾶν ὕψωμα, *every height* (every towring imagination and con-
2 Cor. 10. 5. ceit) *that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, must be cast down.*

Pride fills a man with vanity and an affectation of seeming wise in special manner above others, thereby disposing him to maintain Paradoxes and to nauseate common truths receiv'd and believ'd by the generality of mankind.

A proud man is ever averse from renouncing his prejudices, and correcting his errours; doing which implyeth a confession of weakness, ignorance and folly, consequently depresseth him in his own conceit, and seemeth to impair that credit, which he had with others from his wisdom; neither of which events he is able to endure.

He that is wise in his own conceit, will hug that conceit, and thence is
Prov. 26. 12. uncapable to learn; *there is*, saith *Solomon*, *more hope of a fool than of him*;
Joh. 5. 44. 12. 43. and He that affecteth the praise of Men, will not easily part with it for the sake of truth; whence, *How* (saith our Lord) *can ye believe, who receive glory one of another?* how can ye, retaining such affections, be disposed to avow your selves to have been ignorants and fools, when
1 Cor. 3. 18. as ye were reputed for learned and wise? how can ye endure to become Novices, who did pass for Doctors? how can ye allow your selves so blind and weak, as to have been deceived in your former judgment of things?

He

He that is conceited of his own wisdom, strength of parts, and improvement in knowledge cannot submit his mind to notions, which he cannot easily comprehend and penetrate; he will scorn to have his understanding baffled or puzled by sublime mysteries of Faith; he will not easily yield any thing too high for his wit to reach, or too knotty for him to unloose: *How can these things be?* what reason can there be for this? I cannot see how this can be true: this point is not intelligible; so he treateth the dictates of Faith; not considering the feebleness and shallowness of his own reason: Hence *not many wise men according to the flesh* (or who were conceited of their own wisdom, relying upon their natural faculties and means of knowledge) not many *Scribes*, or *disputers of this world* did imbrace the Christian Truth, it appearing absurd and foolish to them; it being needfull, that a man should *be a fool, that he might* (in this regard) *become wise.* Joh. 3. 9. 1. Cor. 1. 26. 2. 6. Joh. 7. 26. 1 Cor. 1. 20. 1 Cor. 2. 14. 1 Cor. 3. 18.

The prime notions of Christianity do also tend to the debasing humane conceit, and to the exclusion of all glorying in our selves; referring all to the praise and glory of God, ascribing all to his pure mercy, bounty and grace: It representeth all men heinous sinners, void of all worth and merit, lapsed into a wretched state, altogether impotent, forlorn, and destitute of ability to help or relieve themselves; such notions proud hearts cannot digest; they cannot like to avow their infirmities, their defects, their wants, their vileness, and unworthiness; their distresses and miseries; they cannot endure to be entirely and absolutely beholden to favour and mercy for their happiness; such was the case of the *Jews*; who could not believe, because — *going about to establish their own righteousness, they would not submit to the righteousness of God. Dextra mihi Deus*; every proud man would say, with the profane *Mezentius.* Rom. 3. 27. 4. 2, 16. 9. 11. 11. 6. 1 Cor. 1. 29. 3. 21. Ephes. 2. 9. Tit. 3. 5. Rom. 10. 3. 9. 31.

Christianity doth also much disparage and vilifie those things, for which men are apt much to prize and pride themselves; it maketh small accompt of wealth, of honour, of power, of wit, of secular wisdom, of any humane excellency or worldly advantage: It levelleth the Rich and the Poor, the Prince and the Peasant, the Philosopher and Idiot in spiritual regards; yea far preferreth the meanest and simplest person, endued with true Piety above the mightest and wealthiest, who is devoid thereof: In the eye of it, *The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour*, whatever he be in worldly regard or state: This a proud man cannot support; to be divested of his imaginary privileges, to be thrown down from his perch of eminency, to be set below those, whom he so much despiseth, is insupportable to his Spirit.

The practice of Christianity doth also expose men to the scorn, and censure of profane men; who for their own solace, out of envy, revenge, diabolical spite, are apt to deride and reproach all conscientious, and resolute practisers of their duty, as silly, credulous, superstitious, humorous, morose, sullen folks: So that he that will be good, must resolve to bear that usage from them; like *David*; *I will yet be more vile, than thus, and will be base in my own sight:* but with these sufferings a proud heart cannot comport; it goeth too much against the grain thereof to be contemned. 2 Sam. 6. 22.

Christianity doth also indispensably require duties, point-blank opposite to pride; it placeth humility among its chief vertues, as a foundation of piety; it enjoineth us to think meanly of our selves, to disclaim our own worth and desert, to have no complacency or confidence in any thing belonging to us; not to aim at high things; to wave the Rom. 12. 3, 16.

regard

regard and praise of men: it exacteth from us a sense of our vileness, remorse and contrition for our sins, with humble confession of them, self-condemnation and abhorrence: it chargeth us to bear injuries and affronts patiently, without grievous resentment, without seeking or so much as wishing any revenge; to undergo disgraces, crosses, disasters willingly and gladly: it obligeth us *to prefer others before our selves*, sitting down in the lowest room, yielding to the meanest persons; to all which sorts of duty a proud mind hath an irreconcilable antipathy.

Job 42. 3. 42. 6.

Phil. 2. 3. Ro. 12. 10. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Luk. 14. 10. Rom. 12. 16.

A proud man, that is big and swollen with haughty conceit and stomach cannot stoop down so low, cannot shrink in himself so much as to *enter into the strait gate, or to walk in the narrow way, which leadeth to life:* He will be apt to contemn wisdom and instruction.

Matt. 7. 14. Prov. 1. 7, 30. 5. 12. 13. 13.

Shall I (will he say) such a Gallant as I, so accomplished in worth, so flourishing in dignity, so plump with wealth, so highly regarded, and renowned among men, thus pitifully crouch and sneak? shall I deign to avow such beggarly notions, or bend to such homely duties? shall I disown my perfections, or forgo my advantages? shall I profess my self to have been a despicable worm, a villainous caitiff, a sorry wretch? shall I suffer my self to be flouted as a timorous Religionist, a scrupulous Precisian, a conscientious Sneaksby? shall I lie down at the foot of mercy, puling in sorrow, whining in confession, bewailing my guilt, and craving pardon? shall I allow any man better, or happier than my self? shall I receive those into consortship, or equality of rank with me, who appear so much my inferiours? shall I be misused, and trampled on without doing my self right; and making them smart, who shall presume to wrong or cross me? shall I be content to be nobody in the world? So the proud man will say in his heart, contesting the doctrines and duties of our Religion, and so disputing himself into Infidelity.

Is. 5. 24. Eze. 20. 13, 16, 24 Act 13. 41 (καταφρονηται). Luke 10. 16. Rom. 2. 4.

10. Another spring of Infidelity is pusillanimity, or want of good resolution and courage: δειλοὶ καὶ ἄπιστοι, *Cowards and Infidels* are well joyned among those who are devoted to the fiery *Lake*; for timorous men dare not believe such doctrines, which engage them upon undertaking difficult, laborious, dangerous enterprizes; upon undergoing hardships, pains, wants, disgraces; upon encountering those mighty and fierce enemies, with whom every faithful man continually doth wage war.

Apoc. 21. 8.

They have not the heart to look the World in the face, when it frowneth at them, menacing persecution and disgrace; but *when affliction ariseth for the word, they are presently scandalized.* It is said in the Gospel, that *no man spake freely of our Lord for fear of the Jews*; as it so did smother the profession and muzzle the mouth; so it doth often stifle Faith it self, and quell the heart, men fearing to harbour in their very thoughts points dangerous, and discountenanced by worldly power.

Matt. 13. 21. (Joh. 7. 13. 9. 22. 19. 38)

They have not also courage to adventure a combat with their own flesh, and *those lusts, which war against their Souls*; to set upon correcting their temper, curbing their appetites, bridling their passions; keeping flesh and blood in order; upon pulling out their right Eyes, and cutting off their right Hands, and crucifying their Members; it daunteth them to attempt duties so harsh and painfull.

Jam. 4. 1. 1. Pet. 2. 11. Rom. 7. 23.

They have not the resolution to withstand and repell temptations, and in so doing to *wrestle with Principalities and Powers*; to resist and baffle the *strong one*. To part with their ease, their wealth, their plea-

Eph. 6. 12. (Luk. 14. 31.)

sure,

ſure, their credit, their accommodations of life, is a thing, any thought whereof doth quaſh all inclination in a faint and fearfull heart of complying with the Chriſtian Doctrine.

Chriſtianity is a Warfare, living after its rules is called *fighting the good fight of Faith*; every true Chriſtian is a *good ſouldier of Jeſus Chriſt*; the ſtate of Chriſtians muſt be ſometimes like that of the Apoſtles; who were *troubled on every ſide*; *without were fightings, within were fears*: great courage therefore, and undaunted reſolution are required toward the undertaking this religion, and the perſiſting in it cordially. 1 Tim. 1. 18. Heb. 12. 1 Tim. 6. 12. 2 Cor. 7. 5.

11. Infidelity doth alſo riſe from ſturdineſs, fierceneſs, wildneſs, untamed animoſity of ſpirit; ſo that a man will not endure to have his will croſſed, to be under any law, to be curb'd from any thing, which he is prone to affect.

12. Blind zeal, grounded upon prejudice, diſpoſing men to ſtiff adherence unto that, which they have once been addicted and accuſtomed to, is in the Scripture frequently repreſented as a cauſe of Infidelity. So the *Jews* being *filled with zeal, contradicted the things ſpoken by Saint Paul*; flying at his doctrine, without weighing it; So *by inſtinct of zeal* did S. *Paul* himſelf *perſecute the Church*; being *exceedingly zealous for the traditions delivered by his fathers*. Act. 13. 45. 17. 5. 5. 17. Rom. 10. 2. Gal. 4. 17. Phil. 3. 6.

ζῆλον θεῶν. Gal. 1. 14. Act. 26. 11. πεισοῦς ἐμμαινόμενοι.

In fine, Infidelity doth iſſue from corruption of mind by any kind of brutiſh luſt, any irregular paſſion, any bad inclination or habit: any ſuch evil diſpoſition of ſoul doth obſtruct the admiſſion or entertainment of that doctrine, which doth prohibit and check it; doth condemn it, and brand it with infamy; doth denounce puniſhment and woe to it: whence *men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith*; and *Men of corrupt minds, deſtitute of the truth*, are attributes well conjoyned by S. *Paul*, as commonly jumping together in practice; And *to them* (ſaith he) *that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their mind, and conſcience is defiled*; ſuch pollution is not only conſequent to, and connected with, but antecedent to Infidelity, blinding the mind ſo as not to ſee the truth, and perverting the will ſo as not to cloſe with it.

Οὐ ῥᾴδιον πονηρία συντρεφόμενον ἀναβλέψαι ταχέως πρὸς τὸ τῶν παρ' ἡμῖν δογμάτων ὕψος, ἀλλὰ χρὴ πάντων κατατρέψαι πρῶτ' παθῶν ἢ μέλλοντα σπεῦσαν τῷ ἀληθείαν. Chryſ. *in* 1 Cor. Or. 8. 2 Tim. 3. 8. 1 Tim. 6. 5. Tit. 1. 15

Faith and a good conſcience are twins, born together, inſeparable from each other, living and dying together; for the firſt, *faith* is (as S. *Peter* telleth us) nothing elſe but *the ſtipulation of a good conſcience*, fully perſuaded that Chriſtianity is true, and firmly reſolving to comply with it: and, *The end* (or drift, and purport) *of the Evangelical doctrine is charity out of a pure heart, and a good conſcience, and faith unfeigned*; whence thoſe Apoſtolical precepts, *to hold the myſtery of faith in a pure conſcience*; and, *to hold faith and a good conſcience, which ſome having put away, concerning the faith have made ſhipwrack*; a man void of good conſcience will not embark in Chriſtianity; and having laid good conſcience aſide, he ſoon will make ſhipwrack of faith, by apoſtacy from it. Reſolute indulgence to any one luſt, is apt to produce this effect. 1 Pet. 3. 21. 1 Tim. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 3. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 19.

If a man be covetous, he can *hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven*, or ſubmit to that heavenly law, which forbiddeth us *to treaſure up treaſures upon earth*; which chargeth us to be liberal *in communication of our goods*; ſo as to *give unto every one that asketh*; which in ſome caſes requireth to *ſell all our goods, and to give them to the poor*; which declareth, that *whoſoever doth not bid farewell to all that he hath, cannot be* Matt. 19. 23. Matt. 6. 19. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Heb. 13. 16. Luke 16. 9. Luke 6. 30. Matt. 19. 20. Luke 14. 33. Luke 6. 20.

Luke 6. 24. *a disciple of Christ*; which ascribeth *happiness to the poor*, and denounceth *woe to the rich, who have their consolation here*, Preach such doctrine
Matt. 19. 22. to a covetous person, and as the young Gentleman, who *had great possessions*, he will *go his way sorrowful*; or will do like the Pharisees, who
Luke 16. 14. ἐξεμυκτήριζον αὐτὸν. *were covetous*, and *having heard* our Saviour discourse such things, *derided him*; for *the love of money* (saith S. *Paul*) *is the root of all evil,*
1 Tim. 6. 10. *which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith*; ἀπεπλανήθησαν, *they have wandred away*, or apostatized from the faith.

If a man be ambitious, he will not approve that doctrine, which pro-
Phil. 2. 3. Gal. 5. 26. Joh. 12. 43. 5. 44. hibiteth us to affect, to seek, to admit glory, or to do any thing for its sake; but purely to seek God's honour, and in all our actions to regard it as our principal aim: which greatly disparageth all worldly
Matt. 6 1. 1 Pet. 1. 24. 1 Cor. 7. 31. glory as vain, transitory, mischievous; which commandeth us *in ho-*
1 Joh. 2. 16. *nour to prefer others before our selves*, and to *sit down in the lowest room*;
Rom. 12 10. Luke 14. 10. which promiseth the best rewards to humility, and menaceth, that whoever *exalteth himself, shall be abased*; the profession and practice where-
Matt. 23. 12. Luke 14. 11. 18. 14. of are commonly attended with disgrace; such doctrines ambitious minds cannot admit; as it proved among the *Jews*; who therefore
Joh. 5. 44. 12. 43. *could not believe, because they received glory from one another*; who therefore would not profess the faith, *because they loved the glory of men rather than the glory of God.*

If a man be envious, he will not like that doctrine, which enjoyneth
1 Cor. 12. 26. συγχαίρειν. him to desire the good of his neighbour, as his own; to have compla-
1 Cor. 10. 24. Phil. 2. 4. cence in the prosperity and dignity of his brethren; *not to seek his own,*
Rom. 12. 15. *but every man anothers wealth*, or welfare; to *rejoice with them that re-*
1 Pet. 2. 1. *joice*; *and mourn with those that mourn*; which chargeth us *to lay aside*
Gal. 5. 20. *all envyings and emulations, under* pain of damnation; he therefore who
Rom. 13. 13. Jam. 3. 14, 16. is possessed with an envious spirit, or *evil eye*; will look ill upon this doctrine; as the *Jews* did, who being *full of envy* and emulation, did reject the Gospel; it being a grievous eye-sore to them, that the poor *Gen-*
Act. 5. 17. 13. 45. 17. 5. *tiles* were thereby admitted to favour and mercy.

If a man be revengefull or spitefull, he will be scandalized at that law, which commandeth us *to love our enemies*, to
Matt. 5. 44. Rom. 12. 20. Rom. 12. 17. 1 Pet. 3. 9 Matt. 5. 39. 1 Cor. 6. 7. 1 Thes. 5. 15. *bless those that curse us*, to *do good to them that hate us*, to *pray for them that despitefully use us*; which
Col. 3. 13 Eph. 4. 32. Matt. 6. 15. 18. 35. forbiddeth us to *resist the evil*; *to render evil for evil, or railing for railing*; which chargeth us to bear patiently, and freely to remit all injuries, under penalty of forfeiting all hopes of mercy from God;
Col. 3. 8. 1 Pet. 2. 1. Gal. 5. 20. Eph. 4. 31. which requireth us to *depose all wrath, animosity, and malice*, as inconsistent with our salvation; which doctrine how can a heart swelling with rancorous grudge, or boiling
Jam. 1. 21. with anger embrace? seeing it must be *in meekness that we must receive the engrafted word, that is able to save our souls.*

If a man be intemperate, he will loath that doctrine, the precepts
2 Tim. 4. 5. 1 Cor. 9. 25, 27. of which are, that we be *temperate in all things*, that *we bring under our bodies*, that we *endure hard-*
2 Tim 2. 3. 1. 8. 4. 5. Eph. 5. 18. 1 Thes. 4. 4. Col. 3. 5. Gal. 5. 24. *ship as good souldiers of Christ*; to *avoid all excess*; *to possess our vessels in sanctification and honour*; to *mortifie our members upon earth*, to *crucifie the flesh*
2 Pet. 2. 11. *with its affections and lusts*; to *abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*; with which precepts how can a luxurious and filthy heart comport?

In

In fine, whatever corrupt affection a man be poſſeſſed with, it will work in him a diſtaſte, and repugnance to that doctrine, which indiſpenſably, as a condition of ſalvation, doth preſcribe and require univerſal holineſs, purity, innocence, vertue and goodneſs; which doth not allow any one ſin to be foſtered or indulged; which threatneth wrath, and vengeance upon all impiety, iniquity, impurity, wherein we do obſtinately perſiſt; indifferently, without any reſerve or remedy; *wherein the wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men, that detain the truth in unrighteouſneſs.* Eph. 2. 11. 4. 22. Rom. 6. 6. 1 Theſ. 4. 3. Eph. 5. 6. Col. 3. 6. Rom. 1. 18. 2. 8.

An impure, a diſſolute, a paſſionate ſoul cannot affect ſo holy notions, cannot comply with ſo ſtrict rules, as the Goſpel doth recommend; as a ſore eye cannot like the bright day; as a ſickly palate cannot reliſh ſavoury food. *Every one that doth evil, hateth the light,* becauſe it diſcovereth to him his own vileneſs, and folly; becauſe it detecteth the ſadneſs and wofulneſs of his condition; becauſe it kindleth anguiſh and remorſe within him; becauſe it checketh him in the free purſuit of his bad deſigns, it dampeth the brisk enjoyment of his unlawfull pleaſures, it robbeth him of ſatisfaction and glee in any vicious courſe of practice.

Ἡ ἐμπαθὴς ψυχὴ δύναται μέρα τι ἰδεῖν γενναῖον, ἀλλ' ὥσπερ νυκτὸς τινὶ ὄψει λήμης δηλουμένη ἀμβλυωπίαν ὑπομένει τῷ καλεπωτάτῳ. Chryſ. in Joh. Orat. 25. ἔστι γὰρ, ὅτι καὶ ἀπὸ τρόπων διεφθαρμένων καὶ ἀπὸ πολυπραγμοσύνης μόνον ἀναίσχυντος σκοτωθῆναι τῷ διάνοιαν. Ibid. Joh. 3. 20.

Every man is unwilling to entertain a bad conceit of himſelf, and to paſs on himſelf a ſad doom: he therefore will be apt to reject that doctrine, which, being ſuppoſed true, he cannot but confeſs himſelf to be an arrant fool, he cannot but grant himſelf a forlorn wretch.

No man liketh to be galled, to be ſtung, to be racked with a ſenſe of guilt, to be ſcared with a dread of puniſhment; to live under awe and apprehenſion of imminent danger; gladly therefore would he ſhun that doctrine, which demonſtrateth him a grievous ſinner, which ſpeaketh diſmal terrour, which thundreth ghaſtly woe upon him.

He cannot love that truth, which is ſo much his enemy, which ſo rudely treateth and ſeverely perſecuteth him; which telleth him ſo bad and unwelcome news. *

Who would be content to deem omnipotency engaged againſt him? to fancy himſelf ſtanding on the brink of a fiery lake, to hear a roaring Lion, ready to devour him; to ſuppoſe that certain, which is ſo dreadfull and ſad to him?

* *They hated knowledge, and did not chuſe the fear of the LORD,* Prov. 1. 29. 5. 12.

Hence it is, that *the carnal mind is enmity to God*; hence do bad men *rebel againſt the light*; hence *Fooliſh men ſhall not attain to wiſdom, and ſinners ſhall not ſee her, for ſhe is far from pride, and men that are lyars cannot remember her.* Rom. 8. 7. Job 24. 13. Eccluſ. 15. 7.

Hence a man reſolvedly wicked cannot but be willing to be an Infidel, in his own defence, for his own quiet and eaſe; faith being a companion very incommodious, intollerably troubleſome to a bad conſcience.

τὸ ἀπιστεῖν ἧ ἐντολαῖς ἐκ τῆς πρὸς τὸν ὀκπλήρωσιν ἐκλελύσθαι ἧ ἐκπολῶν γίνεσθαι, &c Chryſ. Tom. 6. Orat. 12. (p. 140.)

ὥστε εἰ μέλλομεν ἐρρίζωμένην ἔχειν τὴν πίστιν, πολιτείας ἡμῖν δεῖ καθαρᾶς, καὶ τὸ πνεῦμα πειθόμενον μένειν, καὶ συνέχειν ἐκείνης τὴν δύναμιν· Οὐ γὰρ ὅτιν ἐκ ὅτι βίον ἀκήδαστον ἔχοντα μὴ πρὸ πίστιν σαλευθῆναι, &c Chryſ. Tom. 5. Or. 55.

Being reſolved not to forſake his luſts, he muſt quit thoſe opinions, which croſs them; ſeeing it expedient that the Goſpel ſhould be falſe, he will be inclinable to think it ſo; thus he ſinketh down, thus he tumbleth himſelf headlong into the gulf of Infidelity.

The cuſtom of ſinning doth alſo by degrees ſo abate, and at length ſo deſtroy the loathſomneſs, the uglineſs, the horrour thereof, doth ſo reconcile it to our minds, yea conciliateth ſuch a friendſhip to it, that we cannot eaſily believe it ſo horrid and baſe a thing as by the Goſpel it is repreſented to us.

ἡ πονηρία φιλοτεχνεῖ τῶν ἐργάζ, Vid. Chryſ. in Joh Or. 5. (p. 582.)

Vitious practice doth alſo weaken the judgment, and ſtupify the faculties. So that we cannot clearly apprehend, or judge ſoundly about ſpiritual matters.

The ſame alſo quencheth God's ſpirit, and driveth away his grace, which is requiſite to the production and preſervation of faith in us.

14. In fine, from what ſpirit Infidelity doth proceed we may ſee by the principles, commonly with it eſpouſed, for its ſupport and countenance, by its great Maſters and Patrons; all which do rankly ſavour of baſeneſs, and ill nature.

They do libel and revile mankind as void of all true goodneſs; from the worſt qualities, of which they are conſcious themſelves or can obſerve in others, patching up an odious character of it; thus ſhrowding themſelves under common blame from that which is due to their own wickedneſs; and diſpenſing with that charity and honeſty, which is by God's law required from them toward their neighbour: and having ſo bad an opinion of all men, they conſequently muſt bear ill-will toward them; it not being poſſible to love that, which we do not eſteem.

They allow nothing in man to be immaterial, or immortal; ſo turning him into a beaſt, or into a puppet, a whirlegig of fate or chance.

They aſcribe all actions and events to neceſſity or external impulſe, ſo raſing the grounds of juſtice, and all vertue; that no man may ſeem reſponſible for what he doth, commendable or culpable, amiable or deteſtable.

They explode all natural difference of good and evil; deriding benignity, mercy, pity, gratitude, ingenuity, that is all inſtances of good nature, as childiſh and ſilly diſpoſitions.

All the reliques of God's image in man, which raiſe him above a beaſt, and diſtinguiſh him from a fiend, they ſcorn and expoſe to contempt.

They extoll power as the moſt admirable, and diſparage goodneſs as a pityfull thing; ſo preferring a Devil before an Angel.

They diſcard conſcience, as a bugbear, to fright children and fools; allowing men to compaſs their deſigns by violence, fraud, ſlander, any wrongfull ways; ſo baniſhing all the ſecurities (beſide ſelfiſhneſs and flaviſh fear) of government, converſation and commerce; ſo that nothing ſhould hinder a man (if he can do it with advantage to himſelf and probable ſafety) to rebell againſt his Prince, to betray his Country, to abuſe his friend, to cheat any man with whom he dealeth.

Such are the principles (not only avowed in common diſcourſe, but taught and maintained in the writings) of our Infidels; whereby the ſources of it do appear to be a deplorable blindneſs, and deſperate corruption of mind; an extinction of natural light, and extirpation of good nature. Farther,

III. The naughtineſs of Infidelity will appear by conſidering its effects and conſequences; which are plainly a ſpawn of all vices and villainies; a deluge of all miſchiefs, and outrages upon the earth: for faith being removed,

removed, together with it all conſcience goeth, no vertue can remain; all ſobriety of mind, all juſtice in dealing, all ſecurity in converſation are packed away; nothing reſteth to encourage men unto any good, or reſtrain them from any evil; all hopes of reward from God, all fears of puniſhment from him being diſcarded. No principle, or rule of practice is left, beſide brutiſh ſenſuality, fond ſelf-love, private intereſt, in their higheſt pitch, without any bound or curb; which therefore will diſpoſe men to do nothing but to prey on each other, with all cruel violence, and baſe treachery. Every man thence will be a God to himſelf, a Fiend to each other; ſo that neceſſarily the world will thence be turned into a *Chaos* and a Hell, full of iniquity and impurity, of ſpite and rage, of miſery and torment. It depriveth each man of all hope from providence, all comfort and ſupport in affliction, of all ſatisfaction in conſcience; of all the good things which faith doth yield.

The conſideration of which numberleſs and unſpeakable miſchiefs hath engaged Stateſmen in every Common-wealth to ſupport ſome kind of faith, as needfull to the maintenance of publick order, of traffick, of peace among men.

It would ſuffice to perſuade an Infidel, that hath a ſcrap of wit (for his own intereſt, ſafety and pleaſure) to cheriſh faith in others, and wiſh all men beſide himſelf endued with it.

It in reaſon obligeth all men to deteſt Atheiſtical ſupplanters of faith, as deſperate enemies to mankind, enemies to government, deſtructive of common ſociety; eſpecially conſidering that of all religions that ever were, or can be, the Chriſtian doth moſt conduce to the benefit of publick ſociety; injoyning all vertues uſefull to preſerve it in a quiet and flouriſhing ſtate, teaching Loyalty under pain of damnation.

I paſs by, that *without faith no man can pleaſe God*; that Infidelity doth expoſe men to his wrath, and ſevereſt vengeance; that it depriveth of all joy and happineſs; ſeeing Infidels will not grant ſuch effects to follow their ſin, but will reject the ſuppoſition of them as precarious, and fictitious. Heb. 11. 6.

To conclude therefore the point, it is from what we have ſaid, ſufficiently manifeſt, that Infidelity is a very ſinfull diſtemper, as being in its nature ſo bad, being the daughter of ſo bad cauſes; the ſiſter of ſo bad adjuncts, the mother of ſo bad effects.

But this you will ſay is an improper ſubject: for is there any ſuch thing as Infidelity in *Chriſtendom*; are we not all Chriſtians, all believers, all baptized into the faith, and profeſſors of it? do we not every day repeat the *Creed*, or at leaſt ſay *Amen* thereto? do we not partake of the holy Myſteries, ſealing this profeſſion? what do you take us for? for *Pagans?* this is a ſubject to be treated of in *Turkey*, or *in partibus infidelium*. This may be ſaid; but if we conſider better, we ſhall find ground more than enough for ſuch diſcourſe; and that Infidelity hath a larger territory than we ſuppoſe: for (to paſs over the ſwarms of Atheiſtical apoſtates, which ſo openly abound, denying or queſtioning our Religion) many Infidels do lurk under the maſk of Chriſtian profeſſion. It is not the name of Chriſtian, or the badges of our Religion that make a Chriſtian; no more than a Cowle doth make a Monk, or the Beard a Philoſopher: there may be a Creed in the mouth, where there is no faith in the heart, and a Croſs impreſſed on the forehead of an Infidel; *with the heart man believeth to righteouſneſs: Shew me thy faith by thy works*, ſaith S. *James*: if no works be ſhewed, no faith is to be granted, Rom. 10. 8. Jam. 2. 18.

as

as where no fruit, there no root, or a dead root, which in effect and moral esteem is none at all.

Is he not an Infidel, who denieth God? such a *renegado* is every one
Tit. 1. 16. that liveth profanely, as S. *Paul* telleth us. And have we not many such *renegado's?* if not, what meaneth that monstrous dissoluteness of life, that horrid profaneness of discourse, that strange neglect of God's service, a desolation of God's law? where such luxury, such lewdness, such avarice, such uncharitableness, such universal carnality doth reign, can faith be there? can a man believe there is a God, and so affront him? can he believe that Christ reigneth in heaven, and so despise his laws? can a man believe a judgment to come, and so little regard his life, a heaven and so little seek it, a hell and so little shun it? --- Faith therefore is not so rife, Infidelity is more common than we may take it to be: Every sin hath a spice of it, some sins smell rankly of it.

To it are attributed all the rebellions of the *Israelites*, which are the types of all Christian professors, who seem travellers in this earthly wilderness toward the heavenly *Canaan*; and to it all the enormities of sin, and overflowings of iniquity may be ascribed.

I should proceed to urge the Precept, that we *take heed thereof*; but the time will not allow me to do it: I shall only suggest to your Meditation the heads of things.

It is Infidelity, that maketh men covetous, uncharitable, discontent, pusillanimous, impatient.

Because men believe not providence, therefore they do so greedily scrape, and hoard.

They do not believe any reward for charity, therefore they will part with nothing.

They do not hope for succour from God, therefore are they discontent, and impatient.

They have nothing to raise their spirits, therefore are they abject.

Infidelity did cause the Devils Apostasie.

Infidelity did banish Man from Paradise (trusting to the Devil, and distrusting God's word.)

Infidelity (disregarding the warnings and threats of God) did bring the deluge on the World.

Heb 3. 19. 4. 6, &c. Infidelity did keep the *Israelites* from entring into *Canaan*, the type of Heaven; as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* doth insist.

Infidelity indeed is the root of all sin, for did men heartily believe the promises to obedience, and the threats to disobedience, they could hardly be so unreasonable as to forfeit the one, or incurr the other: did they believe that the Omnipotent, All-wise, Most just and severe God did command and require such a practice, they could hardly dare to omit or transgress.

Let it therefore suffice to have declared the evil of Infidelity, which alone is sufficient inducement to avoid it.

SER-

I Believe, &c.

SERMON II.

OF THE Vertue and Reasonableness OF FAITH.

2 PET. 1. 1.

—— to them that have obtained like pretious faith with us.

THE Holy Scripture recommendeth Faith (that is, a hearty and firm persuasion concerning the principal doctrines of our Religion, from divine revelation taught by our Lord and his Apostles) as a most *pretious*, and *honourable* practice; as a vertue of the first magnitude, very commendable in it self, † very acceptable to God, very beneficial to us; having most excellent fruits growing from it, most noble privileges annexed to it, most ample rewards assigned for it. 1 Pet. 1. 7. † Heb. 11. 6. Joh. 16. 27.

It is in a special manner commanded, and obedience to that command is reckoned a prime instance of piety: *This is his commandment, that we should believe; this is the work of God, that ye believe on him, whom he hath sent.* 1 Joh. 3. 23. Joh. 6. 29.

It is the root of our spiritual life; for *He that cometh to God must believe*; and, *add to your faith vertue*, saith S. *Peter*, supposing faith to precede other vertues. Heb. 11. 6. 2 Pet. 1. 5.

It is the principal conduit of divine grace: for

By it we are regenerated, and become the Sons of God; *Ye all* (saith S. *Paul*) *are the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus.* Gal. 3. 26. Joh. 1. 12.

By it we *abide in God*, and do *possess* him, saith S. *John.* 1 Joh. 2. 24. 2 Joh. 9.

By it *Christ dwelleth in us*, saith S. *Paul.* Eph. 3. 17.

By it we obtain God's Spirit: *did ye* (saith Saint *Paul*) *receive the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* Gal. 3. 2, 14. Eph. 1. 13. Act. 2. 38. 5. 32. Joh. 7. 38.

By it we are justified, or acquitted from guilt, and condemnation for sin: for, *Being justified by faith we have peace with God.* Rom. 3. 25. 5. 1. 10. 10. Act. 26. 18. 10. 43.

By

Act. 15. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 22. By it our *hearts are purged* (faith S. *Paul*) *our ſouls are purified*, faith S, *Peter*.

Joh. 8. 31. By it we are freed from the dominion of ſin; according to that of our Saviour; *If ye abide in my word,— ye ſhall know the truth, and the truth ſhall ſet you free.*

Eph. 3. 12. Heb. 10. 22. It procureth freedom of acceſs to God —*we have* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *boldneſs and acceſs with confidence by the faith of him.*

Eph. 6. 16. 1 Pet. 5. 9. 1 Joh. 5. 5. 1 Tim. 1. 19. 3. 9. 1. 5. It is the *ſhield*, whereby we *reſiſt* temptations; and the weapon, whereby we *overcome the world.*

In fine, it is that, which being *retained in a good conſcience*, and maintained by vertuous practice, doth keep us in a ſtate of ſalvation, and will aſſuredly convey us into eternal life and felicity; for, *by grace we are ſaved, through faith.*

Eph. 2. 8. Rom. 10. 10. Rom. 8. 24. 1. 16. Heb. 10. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 9. Luk. 8. 12. Act. 16. 30, 31. 2 Theſ. 2. 10.

Πίστιν —— ἣν διαβάλλουσι, κενῶς ἡ βάσεως νομίζοντες Ἕλληνες, Clem. *Str.* 2. (p. 265.)

Pagani nobis objicere ſolent, quòd religio noſtra, quia quaſi rationibus deficit, in ſolâ credendi perſuaſione conſiſtat. Ruff. *in Symb.*

That faith ſhould be thus highly dignified, hath always appeared ſtrange to the Adverſaries of our Religion; and hath ſuggeſted to them matter of obloquy againſt it; they could not apprehend why we ſhould be commanded, or how we can be obliged to believe; as if it were an arbitrary thing, depending on our free choice, and not rather did naturally follow the repreſentation of objects to our mind: they would not allow, that an act of our underſtanding, hardly voluntary, as being extorted by force of arguments, ſhould deſerve ſuch reputation, and ſuch recompences; for if (argued they) a doctrine be propounded with evident and cogent reaſon, what vertue is there in believing it, ſeeing a man in that caſe cannot avoid believing, is therein merely paſſive, and by irreſiſtible force ſubdued? if it be propounded without ſuch reaſon, what fault can it be to refuſe aſſent, or to ſuſpend his opinion about it? can a wiſe man then do otherwiſe? is it not in ſuch a caſe ſimplicity, or fond credulity to yield aſſent; yea is it not deceit or hypocriſie to pretend the doing ſo? may not juſtly then all the blame be charged rather on the incredibility of the doctrine, or the infirmity of reaſons enforcing it, than on the incredulity of the perſon, who doth not admit it? whence no Philoſophers ever did impoſe ſuch a Precept, or did aſſign to Faith a place among the Vertues.

Ἀδύνατα καὶ δικαιοπράγημα φαίνεται τὸ ἑκουσίῳ καὶ ἀκουσίῳ, Ariſt. *Eth.* 5. 8. 3. 1.

Prov. 14. 15.

To clear this matter, and to vindicate our Religion from ſuch miſpriſions; and that we may be engaged to prize and cheriſh it, I ſhall endeavour to declare, that Chriſtian Faith doth worthily deſerve all the commendations, and the advantages granted thereto; this I ſhall do by conſidering its nature and ingredients, its riſe and cauſes, its efficacy and conſequences.

Πίστις τὸ εἰς τὸν γνῶσεως ὠφέλιμον ἀσκητικὴ. Chryſ. *T.* 5. *Or.* 55.

I. As to its Nature; it doth involve knowledge, knowledge of moſt worthy and important truths, knowledge peculiar and not otherwiſe attainable, knowledge in way of great evidence and aſſurance.

Ἀλήθεια δὲ πάντων μὲν ἀγαθῶν θεοῖς ἡγεῖται, πάντων δ' ἀνθρώποις. Plat. *de Leg* 5. (p. 841.) *de Rep.* 6. (p. 575.)

1. Truth is the natural food of our ſoul, toward which it hath a greedy appetite, which it taſteth with delicious complacency, which being taken in and digeſted by it doth render it luſty, plump and active: truth is the ſpecial ornament of our mind, decking it with a gracefull and pleaſant luſtre; truth is the proper wealth of reaſon, whereof having acquired a good ſtock, it appeareth rich, proſperous, and mighty: what light is without, that is truth within, ſhi-

Pſ. 119. 142, 151. Joh. 1. 7. 3. 19. Pſ. 119. 105.

ning

ning on our inward world, illuſtrating, quickning, and comforting all things there, exciting all our faculties to action, and guiding them in it. All knowledge therefore, which is the poſſeſſion of truth, is much eſteemed; even that, which reſpecteth objects mean, and little, concerning us (ſuch as humane Sciences are converſant about; natural appearances, hiſtorical events, the properties, proportions and powers of figure, of motion, of corporeal force) doth bear a good price, as perfective of rational nature, enriching, adorning, invigorating our mind; whence *Ariſtotle* doubteth not upon all thoſe habitual endowments, which ſo accompliſh our underſtanding, to beſtow the name of Vertues; that with him being the *Vertue of each thing, which any-wiſe perfecteth it, and diſpoſeth it for action ſuitable to its nature.* And if ignoranee, errour, doubt are defects, deformities, infirmities of our ſoul, then the knowledge, which removeth them, doth imply the perfection, beauty and vigour thereof. Faith therefore as implying knowledge is valuable.

Πᾶσα ἀρετὴ ἣ ἕξις ἥ τε ἄν ἡ ἀρετὴ, αὐτό τε εὖ ἕξει, καὶ τὸ ἔργον ἀποτελοῖ, καὶ τὸ ἔργον αὐτῆς εὖ ἀποδώσει, Arist. *Eth.* 2. 6.

2. But it is much more ſo, in regard to the quality of its objects, which are the moſt worthy that can be, and moſt uſefull for us to know; the knowledge whereof doth indeed advance our ſoul into a better ſtate, doth ennoble, enrich and imbelliſh our nature; doth raiſe us to a nearer reſemblance with God, and participation of his wiſdom; doth infuſe pureſt delight, and ſatisfaction into our hearts: doth qualifie and direct us unto practice, moſt conducible to our welfare; 'tis a knowledge, *enlightning the eyes, converting the ſoul, rejoycing the heart; ſweeter than honey, and the honey-comb; more pretious than rubies*; which *giveth to* our head an *ornament of grace*, and *a crown of glory*. For, Thereby we underſtand the nature, or the principal attributes of God, of whom only the Chriſtian doctrine doth afford a completely true and worthy character, directive of our eſteem, our worſhip, our obedience, our imitation of him; whereby our demeanour toward him may become him, and pleaſe him.

Pſ. 19. 7, 8, 9, 10. (Pſ. 119. 103, 111.) Prov. 3. 15. 4. 9.

By it we are fully acquainted with the will and intentions of God, relating both to our duty and our recompence; what he requireth from us, and what he deſigneth for us; upon what terms he will proceed with us in way of grace, of mercy, of juſtice.

By it we are informed concerning our ſelves, what our frame is, whence our original, to what ends we are deſigned, wherein our felicity doth conſiſt, and how it is attainable.

It enableth us rightly to diſtinguiſh between good and bad, right and wrong; what is worthy of us, and pleaſing to God, what misbecoming us and offenſive to him; both abſolutely and comparatively, according to the degrees of each caſe reſpectively.

It preſcribeth us an exact rule of life, comprizing all our duties toward God, our neighbour, our ſelves; to obſerve which will be moſt decent, and exceedingly profitable to us.

It teacheth us from what principles, and upon what grounds we ſhould act, that our practice ſhould be truly good, and laudable.

It propoſeth the moſt valid inducements to vertue, tendring the favour of God and eternal bliſs in reward thereof, menacing divine wrath, and endleſs woe, upon its neglect.

It diſcovereth the ſpecial aids diſpenſed to us for the ſupport of our weakneſs againſt all temptations and diſcouragements incident to us through the courſe of our life.

The knowledge of these things is plainly the top of all knowledge, whereof we are capable; not consisting in barren notion, not gratifying idle curiosity, not serving trivial purposes, but really bettering our souls, producing most goodly and wholesome fruits, tending to ends most noble and worthy, this indeed is the highest Philosophy; the true culture, and medicine of our soul; the true guide of life, and mistris of action; the mother of all vertues; the best invention of God, and rarest gift of heaven to men; for these commendations, by *Pagan* Sages ascribed to their Philosophy, do in truth solely belong to that knowledge, which by faith we do possess: their Philosophy could not reach such truths; it could not so much as aim at some of them; it did but weakly attempt at any: It did indeed pretend to the knowledge of divine and humane things (this being its definition, current among them) but it had no competent means of attaining either in any considerable measure; for divine things (the nature of him, who *dwelleth in light which no man can approach unto*; the intentions of him, who *worketh all things after the counsel of his will*; the *ways of him, which are more discosted from our ways, than heaven from earth*; the *depths of God, which none but his own spirit can search out* or discover) do lie beyond the sphere of natural light, and inquisition of our reason: and as for humane things, the chief of them have such a connexion with divine things, that who were ignorant of the one, could no wise descry the other; wherefore those candidates of knowledge, notwithstanding their lofty pretences, were fain to rest in a low form, employing their studies on inferiour things, *the obscurity of nature, the subtilty of discourse*, and *moral precepts of life*; such precepts, as their glimmering light, and common experience did suggest; for even in points of common morality and prudence humane wit can but fumble, as by the great clashing and jangling about them, is very notorious.

Cultura animi, Cic. *Tusc.* 1. *Medicina animi, Tusc.* 3. *O vitæ Philosophia dux, &c. Tusc.* 5. *de Leg.* 1. *de Fin.* 3. *Nec ullum arbitror, ut apud Platonem est, majus aut melius à Diis datum munus homini. Acad.* 1. *Tus.* 1.

Omnis optimarum rerum cognitio, atq; in iis exercitatio Philosophia nominatur. de Orat. 3.

Οὐκ ἐχέγγυοι διδάσκαλοι περὶ θεῶν λέγοντες ἄνθρωποι καθ' ἀνθρώποις, &c. Cl. Alex. *Str.* 6. (*p.* 501.)

1 Tim. 6. 16. Eph. 1. 11. Is. 55. 9. 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11.

Philosophia in tres partes distributa est, in naturæ obscuritatem, in disserendi subtilitatem, in vitam atque mores. Cic. *de Orat.* 1.

3. Faith also hath this excellent advantage, that it endueth us with such knowledge in a very clear, and sure way; comparable to that whereby the Theoremes of any Science are known; it not being grounded on any slippery deduction of reason, nor on slender conjectures of fancy, nor on musty traditions, or popular rumours; but upon the infallible testimony of God, conveyed unto us by powerfull evidence, striking all capacities, apt with equal influence to enlighten the simple, and to convince the wise. For want of this all humane wisdom was so blind and lame; so various, so uncertain; nothing but confusion, unsettlement, and dissatisfaction arising from mere ratiocination; which being destitute of light and aid from heaven, doth ever grope in the dark, doth rove after shadows of truth, is bewildred in mazes of intricacy, wherein things lie involved; whence all Philosophy did consist in faint guesses, plausible discourses, and endless disputes about matters of highest consequence, such as the original of the world, the administration of humane things, the nature and subsistence of our soul, the way to happiness; none being able about such points to conclude with resolution, or to assert with confidence; so that in effect all the Philosophers might be ranged under one great Sect of *Scepticks*, or

Act. 17. 27, 30.

Ὁ μὲν ἐκ πίστεως βοηθούμενος, ἀλλ' εἰκότως ἐπὶ τὸ λόγου ἐρχόμενος, ταῖς ἀνθρωπίναις ἐνθυμήσεσι περὶ τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἀλήθειαν

or *ſeekers*, the moſt adviſed, and beſt diſpoſed among them, in reſult of their moſt diligent ſpeculations, appearing very doubtfull. * Σαθρῶν, φύσεως ὄζει, παρὸ πολὺ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐκπίπτων. Baſ. *in* Iſ. 15. Ὅλως ὃ ἦν ἄνευ πίστεως ἐπὶ τὰ λαλῶν ἐρχομένη ψυχὴ διακενὴς ληρήσει. *Ibid.* * *Hanc ego perfectam Philoſophiam ſemper judicavi, quæ de maximis quæſtionibus copioſe poſſet, ornateq; dicere.* Cic. *Tuſc.* 5 *Vid. in* M Ant. *Comm. p.* 143. Chryſ. *in* Joh. Or. 63. * Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔστω ποιεῖ σκοτόδινον ὡς ἀνθρώπινοι λογισμοὶ, ἀπὸ τῆς γῆς πάντα φθεγγόμενοι, καὶ μὴ ἀνεχόμενοι φωτίζεσθαι ἄνωθεν, &c. Chryſ. *in* Joh. Or. 25.

But we have (as S. *Peter* ſaith) *βεβαιότερον λόγον, a more ſure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well to give heed, as unto a lamp ſhining in a dark place*, guiding us in the obſcurities and uncertainties of life; we have *a hope, as an anchor of the ſoul both ſure and ſtable*; which ſtayeth and ſetleth our mind, being toſt with winds and waves of uncertain cogitations, ſuggeſted by different appearances of things. 2 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 6. 19. Τῇ ψυχῇ τῷ ἡμετέρᾳ σφαλερὰ μένουσι, καὶ περιφερομένῳ ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν λογισμῶν ἀστασίας, &c. Chryſ. *Tom.* 5. *Orat.* 55.

Hence (as S. *Chryſoſtome* is wont to inſiſt) by virtue of faith ruſtick and mechanick Idiots do in true knowledge ſurpaſs the moſt refined wits, and Children prove wiſer than old Philoſophers; an Idiot can tell us that, which a learned Infidel doth not know; a Child can aſſure us that, wherein a deep Philoſopher is not reſolved: for ask a Boore, ask a boy educated in our religion, who made him, he will tell you God Almighty, which is more than *Ariſtotle*, or *Democritus* would have told; demand of him why he was made, he will anſwer you, to ſerve and glorifie his Maker; and hardly would *Pythagoras* or *Plato* have replyed ſo wiſely; examine him concerning his ſoul, he will aver, that it is immortal, that it ſhall undergo a judgment after this life, that accordingly it ſhall abide in a ſtate of bliſs or miſery everlaſting; about which points neither *Socrates* nor *Seneca* could aſſure any thing: enquire of him how things are upheld, how governed and ordered, he preſently will reply, by the powerfull hand and wiſe providence of God; whereas among Philoſophers one would aſcribe all events to the current of fate, another to the tides of fortune; one to blind influences of Stars, another to a confuſed jumble of Atoms: poſe him about the main points of morality and duty; and he will in few words better inform you, than *Cicero*, or *Epictetus*, or *Ariſtotle*, or *Plutarch* in their large Tracts, and voluminous diſcourſes about matters of that nature. Τίς ἐκ ἂν αὐτόθεν μάθοι τὴν τῶν χειρὸς δύναμιν, ἢ τὰς ἀγραμμάτους καὶ ἰδιώτας ἢ μέγα ὅτι σοφία κομπάζοντων τοσούτῳ σοφωτέρους ἀπέδειξεν, ὅσῳ καὶ μικρῶν παιδίων τοὺς ἐμφρονας ἀνδρὸς κατερεχομένας ἔστιν ἰδεῖν, &c. Chryſ. *Chryſ.* T. 6. Or. 61. (pag. 633.)

So real a property it is of God's law *to give ſubtilty to the ſimple, to the young man knowledge and diſcretion*; ſo true it is, that our Lord affirmeth of himſelf, *I came a light into the world, that he who believeth in me, may not abide in darkneſs*; ſo juſtly doth S. *Paul* affirm concerning divine revelation, that *it is able to make a man wiſe to ſalvation, through faith, which is in Chriſt Jeſus*; being *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for inſtruction in righteouſneſs, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furniſhed unto all good works.* This is that high-way of holineſs of which the Prophet ſaith — *the way-faring men, though fools, ſhall not err therein.* Thus is faith in its nature honourable. Prov. 1. 4. Pſ. 19. 7. Pſ. 119. 9, 100, 130. Joh. 12. 46. 8. 12. 2 Tit. 3. 15, 16, 17. Iſ. 35. 8.

II. It hath alſo divers ingredients, or inſeparable adjuncts, which it doth imply, rendring it commendable and acceptable to God. As

1. Faith implyeth a good uſe of reaſon. This is that which commendeth any vertue, that a man acting after it, doth act wiſely, in con-

Πᾶν τὸ ἄλογον ἢ λόγον ἢ ὀρθὸν, τοῦτο ἁμάρτημα ὄν, &c. Clem. Alex. *Paed.* 1. 13.

formity to the frame and design of his nature, or like a rational creature; using his best faculties in the best manner, and in their proper operations toward the end intended by the all-wise Creatour: this is that, upon which all dispensation of justice is founded, a man being accomptable for the use of his reason, so as to deserve reward for the right management, and punishment for the misuse thereof; this is that consequently, whereon God so often declareth himself to ground his judgment; so that in effect he will justifie men for being wise, and condemn them as guilty of folly; whence in the holy Style wisdom, and vertue or piety, are terms equivalent; and a fool doth signifie the same with a vitious, or impious person. And if ever a man deserveth commendation for well using his reason, it is then, when upon mature deliberation he doth embrace the Christian doctrine; for so doing is a most rational act, arguing the person to be sagacious, considerate and judicious; one, who doth carefully enquire into things, doth seriously weigh the case, doth judge soundly about it.

Deut. 4. 6. 32. 29. Ps. 111. 10. Job 28. 28. Prov. 1. 7, 9, 10.

It was a foul aspersion cast upon our Religion by its ancient opposers, that it did require ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν, *a mere belief, void of reason:* challenging assent to its doctrines without any trial or proof; this suggestion, if true, were I confess, a mighty prejudice against it, and no man indeed justly could be obliged to admit it upon such terms; but it is really a gross calumny; such a proceeding being disclaimed by the teachers and advocates of our Religion, being repugnant to the nature, and tenour thereof; being prejudicial to its interest and design; being contrary to its use, and practice. Never any Religion was indeed so little liable to the censure of obtruding it self on mens credulity, none ever so freely exposed it self to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to scann and sift its pretences; yea provoked them for its sake and their own, upon most important considerations (at the peril of their souls, as they tendered their own best advantage) to a fair, discreet, carefull examination thereof. Other Religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of Ancestours, custom and prescription of times, large extent and prevalence among crews of people, establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers (arguments extrinsecal, and of small validity in any case) declining all other test and verdict of reason: But our Religion confideth in its self, and the pure merit of its cause; and therefore warneth men, in a case of such moment, laying aside all prejudice, to employ their best understandings on an industrious and impartial search of the truth; referring the decision and result, so far as concerneth each particular man, to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with which God, in order to such purposes, hath endued every person.

Μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ πίστευσον, Orig. *in* Cels. (p. 8, 4.)

Πίστευσον, εἰ σωθῆναι θέλεις, ἢ ἀπῶν. *Id. in* Cels. 6. (p. 282)

Ὁ ταῦτα πιστεύσας οὐκ ἁπλῶς οὐδὲ ἀλόγως, ἀλλὰ κρίσει καὶ πληροφορίᾳ χάσμα ἀληφεν ἐκ θεοῦ. *Const. Apost.* 8. 1.

Δέχεσθε, φησὶν, ἁπλῶς τὰ λεγόμενα, καὶ μηδεὶς ἐξεταζέτω τι πρέπον ἐν αὐτοῖς καὶ τι ἀπρεπές· καὶ πίστιν ὀνομάζετω ἀδιακρίτως ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀφάτοις καὶ ἀναποδείκτοις ἐπὶ βλάβῃ συγκατάθεσιν. Athan. *Tom.* 2. *p.* 325. *de* Arianis.

Εὐγνώμων ἐξέτασις, Orig.

Lact. 2. 6.

Lact. 2. 7.

It indeed ordinarily doth refuse a sudden and precipitate assent, admitting no man, capable of judging and chusing for himself, to the participation of it, or to the name and privileges of a worthy believer, untill after a competent time and opportunities of instruction, he can approve himself to understand it well, and doth avow himself to be cordially persuaded of its truth.

Such is its method, and it hath not any need of other; God having provided and exhibited arguments abundantly sufficient to convince any man

man of its truth, who is not affectedly blind and ſtupid, or wantonly ſlothfull and careleſs; or frowardly ſtiff and obſtinate.

What indeed better arguments (conſidering the nature of the objects, which faith reſpecteth, being things ſpiritual and inviſible; conſidering alſo the capacities of perſons concerned, being all ſorts of people, wiſe and ſimple, learned and rude) could we have, or could we need, than the conſpicuous excellency, and uſefulneſs of the doctrine, approving it ſelf to the mind, and confirming it ſelf by palpable experience of moſt happy fruits, ſpringing from a practice conformable thereto? than its exact correſpondence to manifold ancient preſignifications and predictions concerning it; than ſpecial atteſtations of God thereto not only by audible voices, and viſible apparitions from heaven, but alſo by innumerable miraculous works; than the concurrence of divine providence in ſtrange methods to the propagation and maintenance of it; than the bleſſings and conſolations, attending a faithfull obſervance of it? what ſubtilty of diſcourſe, what charm of eloquence could ſerve to evince and impreſs the great truths concerning the attributes, providence, will, commands and promiſes of God; concerning the immortal ſubſiſtence of our ſoul, the future judgment, the everlaſting rewards hereafter, with ſuch evidence and ſuch force, to the common and vulgar reaſon, or indeed to any reaſon of man, as do theſe plain arguments, needing no reach of wit, or depth of judgment to ſound their meaning, or feel their ſtrength?

1 Pet. 1. 10. Heb. 2. 4. Act. 4 33. 19. 20. Joh 7. 17. Act. 5. 32

Τί ἀναγκαιότερον εἰς συγκατάθεσιν, εἰπέ μοι, φαντάσεων πλοκῆ τὸ συμπέρασμα ἀκόλουθον ἑαυτοῖς ἐφελκόμενα, ἢ δόγμα πιστὸν ἐνεργῶς ὁρᾶμενον, πᾶσαν ἀνθρώπου δύναμιν ὑπερβαῖνον. Bas. *in Pſ.* 115.

But if any man be too wiſe to be pleaſed with ſuch downright and eaſie ways of conviction, reaſon it ſelf, well followed would lead him hither, and ſerve to produce faith in him, for that there is a God, reaſon from obſervation of appearances in nature and providence will collect; that goodneſs is one of his principal attributes, reaſon from the ſame grounds will inferr; that God hath an eſpecial regard to men will thence alſo become notorious; that conſequently God will vouchſafe his guidance to men in their way toward happineſs, will appear reaſonable to conceive; that God hath not done this in any other way, reaſon comparing and weighing things, will eaſily diſcern; that Chriſtian doctrine may fairly pretend thereto, reaſon ſoon will admit; ſo hath reaſon led us to the door of faith, and being arrived thither, will (if our will be not averſe) eaſily find entrance.

Hence God doth not only allow, but enjoyn us to uſe our beſt reaſon in judging of this doctrine, whether it be from him, and worthy of our acceptance; he doth not bid us to retire into the dark, to ſhut our eyes, or to wink, when we receive it; but chargeth us to go into the cleareſt light; to open our eyes wide, to view it thoroughly with our beſt ſenſes, and ſharpeſt attention, before we do yield our conſent and approbation to it; His precepts are, that *we examine all things, and hold faſt that which is good*; that we *believe not every ſpirit* (or revelation pretended), but *try the ſpirits, whether they be of God*; that we ſtand on our guard, and *take heed that no man deceive us*; that we *be not fools*, nor *children in underſtanding*; but *wiſe*, and *perfect men*; that we *compare things different*, and *try what is well pleaſing to God*; that we be *always ready with meekneſs and modeſty to render unto every man demanding it an account of the hope in us.*

Joh. 3. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 9. Act. 26. 18. 1 Theſ. 5. 21. 1 Joh. 4. 1. Matt. 24. 4. Eph. 5. 6. Eph 5. 15, 17. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Eph. 5. 10. Rom. 12. 2. 1 Cor. 10. 15. Rom. 1. 18. Phil. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 15.

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He therefore doth expoſtulate with men for their dulneſs, their incogitancy, their ſluggiſhneſs, their folly, as the cauſes of their unbelief; declaring that in reſpect to ſuch defaults, wilfully incurred, he will proceed to condemn it; *He* (ſaith our Lord) *that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him; the word, that I have ſpoken, the ſame ſhall judge him in the laſt day*; and, *If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; If I had not come and ſpoken unto them — If I had not done among them the works, which no other man did, they had not had ſin:* Our Lord we ſee did not urge his bare authority, or exact a faith without ground; but he claimeth it as due upon two moſt rational accounts; his convincing diſcourſes, and his unparallel'd works; which from any well adviſed and well diſpoſed perſon could not but win belief, that he was *a teacher ſent from God.*

Luk. 24. 45. Joh. 12. 48. Joh. 10. 37. Joh. 15. 22, 24. Joh. 7. 46. 3. 2.

Indeed, if we ſeriouſly do weigh the caſe, we ſhall find, that to require faith without reaſon, is to demand an impoſſibility; for faith is an effect of perſuaſion, and perſuaſion is nothing elſe but the application of ſome reaſon to the mind, apt to draw forth its aſſent; no man therefore can believe he knoweth not what or why; he that truly believeth, muſt apprehend the propoſition, and he muſt diſcern its connexion with ſome principle of truth, which as more notorious to him he before doth admit; otherwiſe he doth only pretend to believe, out of ſome deſign, or from affection to ſome party; his faith is not ſo much really faith, as hypocriſie, craft, fondneſs, or faction.

God therefore neither doth nor can enjoyn us faith without reaſon; but therefore doth require it, as matter of duty, from us, becauſe he hath furniſhed ſufficient reaſon to perſuade us; And having made his doctrine credible, *(a faithfull (or credible) word, and worthy of all acceptation.)* having given us reaſon chiefly to be employed in ſuch matters, as he juſtly may claim our aſſent, ſo he will take well our ready ſurrendry of it to him, as an act of reaſon, and wiſdom becoming us.

1 Tim. 1. 15.

To yield unto reaſon fairly propoſed and proved is in any caſe a laudable quality, ſignifying that a man hath his reaſon to purpoſe, that he is guided and governed thereby, not by humour or fancy; qualifying him for converſation and buſineſs, for which nothing rendreth a man more unfit than humorous incredulity, or obſtinacy againſt reaſon; It is eſpecially commendable in theſe caſes, concerning our better part, and final ſtate, arguing a man to be ſober and adviſed, affording regard to things beſt deſerving it, employing his conſideration in due place, being faithfull and juſt to himſelf, in attending to his main concernments.

2. Faith implyeth a complyance with the providence and grace of God; with his providence framing the œconomy of things to be believed, diſcovering it to the world by ſpecial revelation, furniſhing motives apt to work faith, diſpenſing opportunities of knowledge leading thereto; with his grace operating in our ſouls, by illuſtration of our minds to diſcern, attraction of our wills to embrace, inclination of our affections to reliſh and like the heavenly truths exhibited to us.

There is no man to whom means are not adminiſtred, ſufficient to produce in him that meaſure of faith, which is requiſite toward the good management of his life, and his rendring an account for it at God's tribunal; there is no man alſo, to whom ſuch means are afforded, whom the grace of God (who *deſireth that all men ſhould be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*) doth not in ſome degree excite to the due improvement of them, but in effect the caſe is varied, becauſe

1 Tim. 2. 4.

ſome

some men do embrace those means, and comply with that grace, while others do reject, or neglect them.

Our Lord saith, that *every one, who hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, doth come unto him*; but some there are, to whom the Father speaketh, yet they *stop their ears, and refuse to hear*; some do hear in a sort, but do not learn, ill prejudices or depraved affections barring instruction from their mind; being like those of whom the Apostle saith, *the word heard did not profit them, being not mingled with faith in those which heard it.* Joh. 6. 45. Job 33. 16. Zech. 7. 11. Ezek. 3. 11. 2 Tim 4. 4. Act. 7. 57. Job 33. 14. 21. 14. Heb. 3. 7, 15. Heb. 4. 2.

No man (saith our Lord again) *can come unto me except the Father draw him*; but this attraction is not compulsory, we may hold back; we may withstand it, and not follow. Joh. 6. 44. Joh 5. 40. Matt. 22. 3. Luke 13. 34.

Faith (saith S. *Paul*) *is a gift of God*, and *a favour granted to us*; ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη, *to you*. (saith he) *it hath been graciously vouchsafed not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him*; and *to you* (saith our Lord) *it is given to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of heaven*; but this gift is not always accepted, this favour is not always entertained; God doth not so obtrude it on us, but that we may reject, or decline it. Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 1. 29. (Eph. 1. 17, 18.) Matt. 13. 11.

Faith is *a fruit of God's spirit*; but such as will not grow in a bad soil, not purged from weeds of corrupt prejudice, of vitious affection, of worldly care; which will not thrive without good care and culture. Gal. 5. 22. Matt. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 12 3, 9. 1 Joh. 2. 20. 4. 2.

God inviteth us to believe by the promulgation of his Gospel, and exhortation of his Ministers; he declareth abundant reason to persuade us; he representeth to our minds the beauty of Christian truth and vertue; he speaketh from without unto us by manifold arguments, able if we are not very stupid to convince us; he speaketh within by strong impressions on our consciences, apt if we are not very stubborn to subdue us; *Behold*, saith he, *I stand at the door, and knock*; *if any man will hear my voice, and will open the door, I will come in unto him*; such is the case, God standeth at the door of our heart by the ministery of his word, he knocketh at it by the impulse of his grace; but to hear is the work of our vigilance, to open is an act of our voluntary complyance. 2 Cor. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Apoc. 3. 20.

God (saith S. *Paul*,) *who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*; God shineth upon us by revelation of his truth, God shineth into us by illumination of his spirit; the which through the ear doth convey the light of truth unto the heart; but we may by wilfull obstruction exclude that light, shutting the windows of our heart against it; we may there quench it by foul affections, we may smother it in foggs of evil prejudice; we may dissipate it by troublesome cares; we may by affected blindness, or drowsie negligence render it indiscernible, or ineffectual to us; like those, of whom the Apostle there saith, that *the God of this world had blinded the minds of those which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.* 2. Cor. 4. 6. Eph. 1. 17, 18. 2 Cor. 3. 14. ἐπωρώθη τὰ νοήματα. 2 Cor. 4. 4.

A man may ἀπωθεῖσθαι τὸν λόγον, *thrust away the word*, as it is said of the *Jews*; he may, as others of the same stamp did, *resist the spirit*; he may (as those worldlings in the Gospel) let the seed *fall beside* him, or not *fall deep* into him, or *fall into thorns*, which may *choke it*; he may *hate the light*, and therefore *not come unto it*; or *rebell against it*, as those did in *Job*; he may, as the *Pharisees* did, *defeat the counsels*, and *cross the desires of God.* Act. 13 46. Act. 7. 51. Matt 13. 4, &c. Joh. 3. 20. 1. 5. Job 24. 13. Luke 7. 30. Matt. 23. 37.

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And as to deal thus with God's word and providence, thus to treat his ſpirit and grace is heinouſly criminal, ſo to uſe them well is very acceptable to God's goodneſs; if we yield due regard to his providence, and an obſequious ear to his word; if we chearfully do accept his gifts, and cloſe with his overtures of mercy; if we concurr with his motions and farther his gracious deſigns, he will take it kindly of us; as therein acting becomingly toward him, and gratifying him in that, wherein he moſt delighteth, which is the procurement of our good.

3. Faith doth imply good opinion of God, and good actions toward him.

Τὸ φυσικὸν φίλτρον πρὸς τὸ κτίσαν. Orig.

God our parent hath ſtamped on our nature ſome lineaments of himſelf, whereby we reſemble him; he hath implanted in our ſoul ſome roots of piety toward him, into our frame he hath inſerted ſome propenſions to acknowledge him, and to affect him; the which are excited and improved by obſerving the manifeſt footſteps of divine power, wiſdom and goodneſs, which occurr in the works of nature and providence; to preſerve and cheriſh theſe is very commendable; a man thereby keeping the pretious reliques of the divine image from utter defacement, retaining ſomewhat of his primitive worth and integrity; declaring that by ill uſage he hath not quite ſhattered or ſpoiled his beſt faculties and inclinations.

Now that he who believeth hath thus managed himſelf, ſo as to have preſerved in his ſoul thoſe ſeeds of piety, apt to conſpire with the influences of grace drawing to belief, doth appear from hence, that faith doth include an aſſent to divers points, ſo thwarting our carnal ſenſe and guſt, that without a good eſteem of God, and good affection toward him, we hardly could admit them; *the carnal mind* (or brutiſh part within us) being, as S. *Paul* ſaith, *enmity to God*, and *uncapable of ſubmiſſion to his law*; the *ſenſual man being not able to receive the things of God, for they are fooliſhneſs to him*; to balance which repugnance and indiſpoſition, there muſt be ſome good notions and good affections in the mind, diſpoſing it to comply with the revelation of truth, and operation of grace.

Rom. 8. 7.
1 Cor. 2. 14.

There can hardly be any greater inſtance of reſpect and love toward any perſon, than a ready yielding of aſſent to his words, when he doth averr things to our conceit abſurd or incredible; than reſting on his promiſe, when he ſeemeth to offer things impoſſible, or ſtrangely difficult; than imbracing his advice, when he recommendeth things very croſs to our intereſt, humour and pleaſure; whence *Abraham's* faith (expreſſed in hoping for a Son in his decrepit age, and in offering up that Son, who was ſo dear to him, who was *the heir of promiſe*, the prop of his family and hope) is ſo magnified, as an argument of exceeding reſpect and affection toward God; *Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteouſneſs, and he was called the friend of God*; it was a great evidence of his friendſhip, that *againſt hope he believed in hope, being fully perſuaded that what God had promiſed, he was able to perform*; and therefore it *was imputed to him for righteouſneſs*; or accepted by God, as a ſignal act of goodneſs, whereby he did teſtifie his immovable opinion concerning the power, fidelity and benignity of God, together with anſwerable good-will toward him.

Jam. 2. 23.
Rom. 4. 18, 21.
Heb. 11. 19, 11.

And many things doth the Chriſtian doctrine propoſe, apt to try ſuch a friendſhip; many a *hard ſaying* doth it aſſert, which a profane mind can hardly ſwallow, or digeſt; there is indeed ſcarce any Article of

of faith, at which we shall not boggle; any matter of duty, which we shall not start at, any promise of God, whereat we shall not stagger, if we be not seasoned with favourable apprehensions and inclinations toward him, who recommendeth them to us, as endued with those attributes, which secure their credibility.

That God Almighty should erect this stately fabrick of heaven and earth, decked with so rich and goodly furniture, with especial regard to Man, so puny and mean a creature, whom he foresaw so ready to offend and wrong him; that upon his foul misdemeanour God should not withdraw his gracious protection and care from him, but thence should take occasion of designing and capacitating him for a state far more happy, than that, whence he had lapsed, making his punishment a benefit, and his deserved death a gate of immortality; That for the redemption of him (continuing in Apostasie, and rebellious enmity) God should please to send down out of his bosom, from the height of glory and blessedness, his own dearest Son, to partake the baseness and infirmity of our flesh, to endure the inconveniences and troubles incident to our condition, to undergo a most painful and ignominious death for the expiation of our offences; these are mysteries, to which we should not easily give credence, did we not conceive God immensly good and gracious.

That God could not pitch on more compendious and commodious ways of expressing his goodness and mercy, we hardly should admit; if we did not take him to be transcendently wise, far beyond our reach, and comprehension. Eph. 3. 8. ἐνεξιχνίαστος πλοῦτος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

That *Jesus*, a man in appearance like to our selves; of mean parentage, of poor estate, who lived as a beggar and a vagrant, who died as a malefactour and a slave, in semblance forlorn to God and man, should be the Lord of life and glory, the general author of salvation, the Judge of all men, the King of all the world, is a point, which cannot but appear very strange, very scandalous to minds, not imbued with special reverence of the divine power and wisdom.

That God who is so perfectly holy, so exactly just, so extremely displeased with iniquity, should yet bear so patiently, and so easily pardon enormous transgressions against himself; that he should accept so mean services, and to so slight performances should dispense so precious rewards, who would believe, that is not possessed with conceptions of his admirable clemency and bounty?

That God one day will raise the dead, recollecting our scattered dust, and rearing our dissolved frame, we should not easily grant, had we not a strong opinion of God's power, and that *nothing is too hard for him* to accomplish.

That to deny our selves in all ways, to *hate our own souls*, to take up a cross, to forsake kindred and friends, to quit houses and lands, *to renounce all that we have*, to reject the profits, the honours, the delights of the world, to cut off our right hands, to pluck out our right eyes, to mortifie our members, and crucifie our flesh; to be dead to the world; to expose our lives unto greatest dangers, yea to sacrifice them unto certain loss, are often things very good, most advisable and eligible, how could we be ever induced to conceive, if we did not take God to be most wise, who hath prescribed such duties, most faithful who hath engaged to satisfie us for the discharge of them, most able fully to requite us for the pains and damages, which we sustain in such practice?

That the methods of providence should be so intricate and unaccountable, that the passage to happiness should be so rough, and that to misery so smooth; that He who disposeth all things, should to those whom he most liketh and loveth dispense temptations, crosses, disgraces, all kinds of hardship and sorrow; permitting those whom he disapproveth and detesteth, to live without interruption in quiet, splendour and jollity; would stumble one, who hath not entertained a general assurance concerning the wisdom and equity of God.

Faith therefore in most of its chief parts doth imply him that owneth it, to be well conceited, and well affected toward his Maker; thereby avowing his most glorious perfections, the which do assure the truth of his word and doctrine; *He* (saith our Lord) *that hath received my testimony, hath set his seal, that God is true*; that is, most evidently he doth signifie his opinion of God's veracity and fidelity, together with the divine perfections requisite to make them good; for he (saith the believer in his mind) the proposition never so uncouth to my apprehension, yet God is true who affirmeth it; be the duty never so harsh to my sense, yet God is wise and good who appointeth it; be the promise never so unlikely in appearance to find effect, yet God is faithful and able to perform it: And he that is thus disposed in judgment and affection toward God, no wonder if his demeanour be very acceptable to him.

Joh. 3. 3.

Thus is faith precious, considering its nature, and those essential ingredients, or inseparable adjuncts, which it doth include or imply. It will also appear to be so, if we consider its rise, and those good dispositions, which concurr in its production.

III. 1. To the engendring of faith there is required a mind sober, composed and wakeful; ready to observe what befalleth, apt to embrace what is offered, conducible to our good and advantage; a mind not so drowned in worldly care, sensual enjoyment, or impertinent sport, as to oversee, or neglect the concerns of our better part, and eternal state.

1 Thes. 5. 6.

That we may believe, we must have *eyes to see*, and *ears to hear*; and *a heart to understand*; we must attently look with our eyes; we must *incline our ears to God's word*, we must *apply our heart to instruction.*

Deut. 29. 4. Matt. 13. 9. 11. 15 Apoc. 2. 7. Ps. 78. 1. Job 13. 17. Is. 32. 3. 35. 5. Prov. 23. 12. 2. 10. 4. 1, &c. 7. 24.

Thus in the Apostolical history we may observe, that when the Apostles in a manner apt to stir any man, being awake, to remark did propose their doctrine, some readily did yield their ears and hearts to their discourse; while others did not mind or regard it.

2. Faith doth require much diligence and industry: we must have the patience to give God the hearing, carefully attending to what is propounded, as it is said of *Lydia*, that she did προσέχειν, *attend to the words spoken by Saint Paul*, and δεῖ περισσοτέρως προσέχειν, *we must* (saith the Apostle to the *Hebrews*) *yield extraordinary attention to the things heard*; we must as our Saviour warneth, let the Evangelical *word sink down into our ears*: we must take the pains to consider the notions, and to weigh the reasons enforcing them; as the *Bereans* did, who did ἀνακρίνειν τὰς γραφὰς, *examine the Scriptures, whether those things were so*, as S. *Paul* did teach out of them. We must ἐνδείκνυσθαι τὴν σπουδὴν, *exert* and *demonstrate that studious care*, which is requisite to get a clear knowledge, and firm persuasion concerning the points of belief; for

1 Tim. 4. 13. Act. 16. 14. Heb. 2. 1. Luke 9. 44. Act. 17. 11. Heb. 6. 11, 12. Heb. 4. 11. σπουδάσωμεν εἰσελθεῖν.

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he that received the seed into the good ground, was ὁ τὸν λόγον ἀκούων καὶ συνιών, *he that heard the word, and did understand it*, or well consider it; God for this reason doth lay his truth not so open, or obvious, that we may be somewhat exercised, and put to use a pious diligence in finding it; it lieth under the surface that we may delve for it; *searching the Scriptures*, weighing reasons, comparing things. Mat. 13. 23. Joh. 5. 39.

3. Faith must needs proceed from sincerity, and soundness of judgment.

The assent, which upon contemplation, and considering of things we do yield to them, is usually termed judgment; and it much resembleth that act, whose name it borroweth; for as he is a good judge, who after a full cognisance, and careful discussion of the case with its pleas, doth pronounce freely and fairly, being no way swayed either by his own inclination, or by temptation from without; who is not byassed by any previous affection or dislike, not drawn by favour, not daunted by fear, not bribed by profit, not charmed by flattery, not dazled by specious appearance, not gulled by crafty insinuations, or by fine speech; not tired by solicitation or importunity, not seduced by precedents or custom; not perverted by any such means, which are indirect, impertinent, or extrinsecal to the cause, so as to give a wrong sentence; so is he that assenteth to Christian truth; many considerations will exempt him from any suspicion of being any-wise so corrupted:

For the Gospel cometh under trial in a guise no-wise plausible or advantageous to humane conceit: its garb and circumstances are no-wise taking, or attractive of any favour to it; but such rather, as are apt to raise dislike and scandal against it; it being, as S. *Paul* saith, presented up *in earthen vessels*, in way very homely, and contemptible. It representeth a mean, a poor, a persecuted, a crucified man offering salvation, and claiming obedience; attended by persons of like condition and fortune, urging the same overtures and pretences upon us; and what impression is such an appearance likely to work upon our fancy, which is prone to affect splendid and pompous shews? Joh. 7. 24. μὴ κρίνετε κατ' ὄψιν. 2 Cor. 4. 7. Gal. 4. 13. 1 Cor. 2. 3.

The same doth not present to us any bribe of gain, doth not tempt us with any hope of preferment, doth not allure us with any bait of pleasure; but challengeth a free sentence; and that such an one, which may greatly prejudice our worldly interests, may spoil our profit, may stop our preferment, may dash all our pleasure; *in the world ye shall have tribulation*; *we must through many tribulations enter into the Kingdom of God*; *Every one that will live godlily in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution*; *If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me*: such are the promises and enticements it useth. Joh. 16. 33. Act. 14. 22. 17. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 21. 2 Tim. 3. 12. 1 Thes. 3. 3. Phil. 1. 29. Eph. 3. 13. Mat. 16. 24. 10. 38.

Neither doth it sooth our court us by glozing speech, so as to recommend it self to our fancies by raising in us a good conceit of our selves; but dealeth bluntly and courtely with us; faithfully and plainly acquainting us with our own case, involved in its cause; how grievous sinners we be, how obnoxious to justice we stand; how worthless we are, how wretched we shall be, secluding that mercy and grace of God, which it tendreth upon its own terms, of confessing our guilt, disclaiming our merit, humbly seeking mercy, forsaking our own ways, and submitting to God's will.

It doth not solicit us in trimm language, nor by sly insinuations doth inveagle us to embrace it, but in downright terms, in a plain dress of

ſpeech, in a reſolute ſtrain doth charge us, upon our peril, to do it right, denouncing upon our refuſal extremities of wrath and vengeance.

It advanceth pleas againſt the bent of our temper, which ever is prone to things forbidden and averſe from things enjoyned by it: againſt the prejudices of our mind, which is always apt to approve or to admire things, which it condemneth or vilifieth; to diſlike or deſpiſe things, which it commendeth and magnifieth: againſt the affections of our heart, the deareſt objects of whoſe love, delight and care it would diſcard and drive from us; the moſt unwelcome and diſguſtful things whereto, it would introduce and bring to us: againſt our ſtrongeſt appetites, and moſt earneſt paſſions; the violent motions of which it doth curb and check; doth quell, or doth allay: againſt many temptations, potently drawing us to things from which it reclaimeth, ſtoutly driving us from things which it recommendeth: againſt the ſtream of habitual uſage, and the torrent of common example, things ſo prevalent upon us: in fine, againſt our ſelves, ſuch as we naturally are, ſuch as we by education and cuſtom are made; whom it impeacheth of heinous guilt and enormous folly; whoſe conceit and credit it debaſeth; whom it depreſſeth into the confines of hell and miſery: all within us, all about us do with might and main oppoſe it; Our luſt, our fancy, our honour, our intereſt, our reputation, our principles, our cuſtoms, our friends, our enemies; the fleſh, the world, the Devil, all combinedly are ſo many fierce adverſaries, ſo many ſhrewd advocates, ſo many clamorous ſolicitours againſt its cauſe.

He therefore, who notwithſtanding all theſe diſadvantages determineth in favour of it, muſt aſſuredly be a very upright, impartial and incorrupt judge; declaring his ſenſe purely according to the dictates of his reaſon and conſcience.

What indeed greater integrity can a man expreſs, than in thus deciding a cauſe referred to him ſo much againſt himſelf, as he is naturally affected, and ſtandeth related to things here? what greater equity can he ſhew than in avowing ſo harſh, ſo rough, ſo unpleaſing truths, ſo little gratifying his own ſenſe or fancy, ſo little favouring his profit or pleaſure? what greater ingenuity can there be, than to eſpouſe that doctrine, which pincheth our liberty within ſo narrow bounds, which layeth ſuch reſtraints upon our thoughts, our words, our actions; which interdicteth to us ſo many enjoyments, which exacteth from us ſo great pains?

4. To the begetting faith there muſt concurr humility, or a readineſs to entertain ſober and moderate opinions of our ſelves, together with ſutable affections and deſires, for he that with hearty perſuaſion and ſerious reſolution embraceth Chriſtianity, doth thereby ſtoop to many things very croſs to the vain conceit, the proud humour, and haughty ſtomach of man.

The firſt ſtep into the Chriſtian ſtate is a ſight and ſenſe of our own imperfection, weakneſs, baſeneſs and miſery: we muſt diſcern and feel, that our mind is very blind and our reaſon very feeble; that our will is very impotent, lame, depraved, prone to evil, and averſe from good: that our life is void of merit, and polluted with guilt; that our condition is deplorably ſad and wretched; that of our ſelves we are inſufficient to think, or do any good, in order to our recovery, or deliverance; whence we are obliged to ſore compunction of ſpirit for our deeds and our caſe, to humble confeſſion of our ſins and miſeries, to earneſt

2 Cor. 3. 5.

earneſt ſupplication for mercy and grace, to heal and reſue us from our ſad eſtate: *Lord have mercy on me, a ſinner: what ſhall I do to be ſaved? Wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this body of death?* ſuch are the ejaculations of a ſoul teeming with faith. Luke 18. 13. Act. 16. 30. Rom. 7. 24.

He that entereth into the faith, muſt therewith entirely ſubmit his underſtanding, and reſign his judgment to God, as his maſter and guide; being ready to believe whatever God declareth, however to his ſeeming unintelligible or incredible; to follow whither God conducteth, although like *Abraham* he *knoweth not whither he goeth*; to approve that which God ordaineth, however diſtaſteful to his ſenſe; to undertake that which God requireth, however difficult; to bear that which God impoſeth, how burthenſome ſoever; being content that divine wiſdom ſhall abſolutely ſway and reign over his wiſdom; that his reaſon ſhall be puzled, ſhall be baffled in many caſes; that his mind ſhall be rifled of all its prejudices, its fond curioſities, its preſumptuous confidences, of *every thought, and device* advancing it ſelf againſt divine truth. *Naz.* Or. 26. p. 454. Heb. 11. 8. ὐκ ἐπιστάμενος ποῦ ἔρχεται. 2 Cor. 10. 5.

He muſt abandon all good opinion of himſelf, all conceitedneſs of his own worth, merit, excellency, felicity in any kind; ſlighting his wealth, his power, his dignity, his wit, his wiſdom, and the like advantages natural or ſecular, which are ſo much prized in vulgar and worldly eſteem; as things in themſelves of no conſideration, nor otherwiſe valuable than as talents entruſted by God, or inſtruments of his ſervice; diſowning them from himſelf, as things freely diſpenſed by God, and abſolutely depending on his diſpoſal: ſaying with S. *Paul*, *Yea doubtleſs I count all things but loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus my Lord, for whom I have ſuffered the loſs of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Chriſt; and be found in him not having my own righteouſneſs, which is of the law; but that which is through the faith of Chriſt.* Phil. 3. 8, 9.

He alſo that cordially doth embrace the Chriſtian doctrine, with reſolution of conforming his practice thereto, muſt look for it to ſuſtain much diſgrace; to be hated, to be cenſured and taxed, to be ſlighted and ſcorned, to be reproached, to be ſpurned as a fool, an Idiot, a humouriſt, a ſilly, ſuperſtitious, phantaſtical, moroſe body, by the world, and the adherents to its corrupt principles, its vitious faſhions, its depraved ſentiments and practices; *who will wonder* (with indignation and ſcorn) *at thoſe, who do not run into the ſame exceſs of riot, ſpeaking evil* and railing *at them:* eſpecially in times, when wickedneſs *doth lift up its horn*, when profaneneſs doth not only much prevail, but doth inſult, and vapour over piety. Joh. 15. 18, 19. 1 Per. 4. 4. βλασφημοῦντες.

Every Chriſtian as ſuch immediately doth admit notions quite debaſing high conceit, which aſcribe all our good things purely to divine bounty, which allow us to own nothing but evils ſpringing from our defects, infirmities, and corruptions, from our guilty naughtineſs and folly; which diſplay our great imperfection, indigency, impotency, ignorance, errour, unworthineſs and forlorn wretchedneſs; which aſſure, that we do ſubſiſt in total dependance upon God, continually needing his protection, ſuccour and mercy.

He muſt undertake the practice of duties extremely croſs to proud humour; to comport with injuries and affronts, without revenge, without reſentment of them; to place himſelf beneath others; to be content with his ſtate how mean and poor ſoever; to bear patiently all events incident to him, however ſad and grievous; with the like, contrary to the guſt of a proud heart.

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He that doth thus demean himſelf, embracing ſuch notions, and complying with ſuch duties, how can he otherwiſe than be a very humble, ſober and modeſt perſon?

5. To faith much fortitude, much reſolution and courage muſt conſpire: for he that firmly perſuadeth himſelf to be a Chriſtian, doth embark in a moſt difficult, and dreadful warfare; doth undertake moſt high and hazardous enterprizes; doth engage in the boldeſt adventures, that a man can ſet upon; he intendeth to encounter moſt puiſſant, ſtout and fierce enemies; to fight many a bloody battel; to attack many a ſtrong hold, to ſuſtain many a ſharp brunt, to endure many ſore hardſhips, to run into many terrible dangers, to break through many tough difficulties, to ſurmount many great diſcouragements, impediments and oppoſitions.

1 Joh. 5. 4. He doth ſet himſelf in array againſt the world, the fleſh, and the Devil, that ſtrong confederacy bandied againſt him with their utmoſt force of ſtrength and ſubtilty.

Eph 2 2. 4. 22 Rom. 12. 2. 1 Cor 7. 31. 2 Pet. 1. 4. He muſt combat the world, by its fair looks, flatteries and careſſes enticing to ſin; by its frowns, menaces and rough treatments deterring from duty, enſnaring us by its profits, its glories, its pleaſures; ſeducing us by its bad cuſtoms, and examples, diſtracting us with its cares, and amuſements of buſineſs.

He muſt cope with the fleſh, that inteſtine and treacherous foe; which with its corrupt prejudices, and imaginations; with its ſtubborn proclivities, with its impetuous appetites, with its boiſterous paſſions,

1 Pet. 2. 11. Rom. 7. 23. doth *war againſt our ſoul, ſtriving to bring our minds into captivity under the law of ſin, which is in our members.*

Eph. 6. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 8, 9. Eph. 6. 11. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 2. 11. He muſt *grapple with* the Devil, that *ſtrong one*, that *greedy lion*, that *wily ſnake*, that ruful *dragon*, always waiting to ſurprize us, always gaping to devour us; always laying cloſe trains to entrap us, always throwing *fiery* darts of temptation, to conſume or ſcorch us;

Eph. 6. 12. *Our wreſtling* (as the Apoſtle doth expreſs it) *is againſt principalities, againſt powers, againſt the rulers of the darkneſs of this world, againſt ſpiritual wickedneſſes in high places.*

In theſe conflicts he muſt expect to meet with many a grievous repulſe, to bear many a hard knock, to feel many a ſore wound; to be often beat back, often knocked down, often thruſt through, often trampled on, and inſulted over.

To ſet on theſe things is ſurely the higheſt gallantry that can be; he that hath the heart to attempt and undergo ſuch things, is a daring and brave man indeed; he that ſucceſsfully can atchieve ſuch exploits is truly a Heroe; moſt deſerving notable trophies, and everlaſting monuments of renown.

The undertakings of *Alexander*, of *Hannibal*, of *Cæſar* did not ſignifie valour like to this, their atcheivements were but toyes in compariſon to theſe: thoſe famous gallants would have found it infinitely harder to conquer the world in this way; to have ſubdued their luſts, and maſtered their paſſions would have proved far more difficult, than to get advantage in ſcuffles with armed men; to diſcomfit legions of Devils, would have been to them another kind of work, than was the vanquiſhing ſquadrons of *Perſians*, of *Gauls*, of *Romans*: to have ſet upon their own ambition and vanity, their intemperance, their revenge, to have quelled thoſe inward enemies, to have ſuſtained affronts, diſgraces, afflictions with a calm and contented mind, would have more tried their courage, than all which they attempted; making a great ſhew, but ſignifying little of true fortitude.

6. The

6. The noble vertue of patience is likewiſe acceſſary to faith; thereto all kinds of patience muſt concurr; patience of labour in God's ſervice, and obedience to all his commands; *patience of hope* in waiting for the accompliſhment of God's pleaſure; patience of perſecution for God's ſake, and in conſcience of our duty to him; patience of croſſes and afflictions by God's Diſpoſal allotted to us for our inſtruction, our exerciſe, our probation, our correction and improvement in goodneſs. For 1 Theſ. 1. 3.

Chriſtianity is the great School, and ſpecial Academy of patience, wherein we are informed, are inured, are trained up and tried to bear all things: The croſs is the badge of our profeſſion, without willingly carrying which, we cannot be the children of God, or diſciples of Chriſt; whereby we are *conformed to the image of our Lord*, the *man of ſorrow, and acquainted with grief:* Tribulation is our lot, *to which we are appointed*; and to which *we are called*; perſecution is the condition, propoſed to us; it being told us, that *Every one, who will live godlily in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer perſecution*; affliction is the way toward our happineſs, *for by many afflictions we muſt enter into the Kingdom of heaven*; it is repreſented as a favour granted to us to ſuffer; for ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη, *to you* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *it hath been indulged, not only to believe in Chriſt, but to ſuffer for him*; it is *our glory*, our joy, our beatitude. Our work is *to run with patience the race that is ſet before us*; in fine, faith and patience are the pair, which being coupled together draw us to the *inheritance of the promiſes*; patience being *needful* to introduce and ſupport faith. Heb. 5. 8. Heb. 12. 6. Matt. 16. 24. Rom. 8. 29. Iſ. 53. 3. 1 Theſ. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 2. 21. 1 Tim. 3. 12. Act. 14. 22. Phil. 1. 29. Eph. 3. 13. Matt. 5. 11. Jam. 1. 2. Rom. 5. 3. Jam. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 14. 3. 14. Heb. 12. 1. Heb. 6. 12. Apoc. 13. 10. Heb. 10. 36. Luk. 21. 19.

7. With faith alſo muſt concurr the vertue of prudence; in all its parts and inſtances: therein is exerted a ſagacity, diſcerning things as they really are in themſelves, not as they appear through the masks and diſguiſes of fallacious ſemblance, whereby they would delude us; not ſuffering us to be abuſed by the gaudy ſhews, the falſe gloſſes, the tempting allurements of things; therein we muſt uſe diſcretion in prizing things rightly according to their true nature and intrinſick worth; in chuſing things really good, and rejecting things truly evil, however each kind may ſeem to our erroneous ſenſe; therein we muſt have a good proſpect extending it ſelf to the final conſequences of things, ſo that looking over preſent contingencies we deſcry what certainly will befall us through the courſe of eternal ages.

In faith is exerciſed that prudence, which guideth and prompteth us to walk by the beſt rules, to act in the beſt manner, to apply the beſt means toward attainment of the beſt ends.

The prudence of faith is indeed the only prudence conſiderable; all other prudence regarding objects very low and ignoble, tending to deſigns very mean or baſe, having fruits very poor or vain: To be wiſe about affairs of this life (theſe fleeting, theſe empty, theſe deceitful ſhadows) is a ſorry wiſdom; to be wiſe in *purveying for the fleſh*, is the wiſdom of a beaſt, which is wiſe enough to prog for its ſuſtenance; to be wiſe in gratifying fancy, is the wiſdom of a child, who can eaſily entertain and pleaſe himſelf with trifles; to be wiſe in contriving miſchief, or embroiling things is the wiſdom of a Fiend, in which the old ſerpent, or grand politician of hell doth exceed all the *Machiavels* in the world; this (as S. *James* ſaith) is *earthly, ſenſual deviliſh wiſdom*; but the wiſdom of faith, or that *wiſdom, which is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable; gentle, eaſie to be entreated, full of mercy and good works.* Rom. 13. 14. Jam. 3. 15. Jam. 3. 17.

8. In

8. In fine, the embracing Christian doctrine doth suppose a mind imbued with all kinds of vertuous disposition in some good degree; for seeing that doctrine doth highly commend, and strictly prescribe all Vertue, he must needs be a friend to all vertue, and a devoted servant thereto, who can heartily approve, and like it: his eye must be sound, and clear from mists of bad prejudice, who can ken the beauty, and bear the lustre of it; his palate must be pure from vitious tinctures who can relish its sweetness, his heart must be void of corrupt affections and desires, who sincerely doth affect it, and firmly doth cleave thereto: his conscience must be good, who can hope for the excellent rewards which it proposeth, who can stand proof against the terrible menaces it denounceth; his intentions must be upright, who dareth offer them to be scann'd by so exact rules; his life must in good measure be blameless, who can present it before the bar of so rigorous judgment; he must be a man of much goodness, ingenuity and integrity, who can think it expedient, who can be content and willing that such a doctrine be accounted true, which so plainly discountenanceth, which so peremptorily condemneth, which so severely punisheth all kinds of wickedness; for *He* (as our Saviour saith, and he alone) *who doeth the truth, doth come to the light, that his deeds may be manifested.* *Faith* therefore, *and good conscience* are well by S. *Paul* so often coupled, as inseparable associates.

Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. 3.

Joh. 3. 21. 1 Tim. 1. 5. 1. 19. 3. 9.

Where now are they, who wonder, that faith is so commended, doth find such acceptance with God, and is so crowned with reward; who would banish it from the company of vertues, and out of all moral consideration; who would have it taken for an involuntary act, forced on the mind, and issuing from dry speculation? for, seeing so many excellent dispositions of soul are its ingredients, essentially connected with it, seeing so many noble acts of will do concurr to its production, seeing it hath so many choice vertues inseparably adherent, as previous or concomitant, to it; it is no wonder that they should moralize it, should render it very considerable, so capable of praise, so worthy of recompence.

If we therefore do believe, because we will apply our minds to regard our best concerns, because we will yield due attention to the declarations and overtures of God, because we will take the pains to weigh the reasons persuasive of truth, because we look on things with an indifferent eye, and judge uprightly about them; because we have the courage, the patience, the prudence, the innocence, requisite for avowing such truths; then surely faith is voluntary; and therefore very commendable.

Whoever indeed will consider the nature of man, or will consult obvious experience, shall find, that in all practical matters, our will, or appetite hath a mighty influence upon our judgment of things; causing men with great attention to regard that which they affect, and carefully to mark all reasons making for it; but averting from that which they dislike, and making them to overlook the arguments which persuade it; whence men generally do fute their opinions to their inclinations; warping to that side where their interest doth lie, or to which their complexion, their humour, their passions, their pleasure, their ease doth sway them; so that almost any notion will seem true, which is profitable, which is safe, which is pleasant, or any-wise grateful to them; that notion false, which in any such respect doth cross them; very few can abstract their minds from such considerations, or embrace pure truth, devested of them; and those few, who do so, must therein

most

moſt employ their will, by ſtrong efforts of voluntary reſolution and patience diſengaging their minds from thoſe cloggs and byaſſes. This is particularly notorious in mens adherence to Parties, divided in opinion, which is ſo regulated by that ſort of cauſes, that if you do mark what any man's temper is, and where his intereſt lieth, you may eaſily prognoſticate on what ſide he will be; and with what degree of ſeriouſneſs, of vigour, of zeal he will cleave thereto: a timorous man you may be almoſt ſure will be on the ſafer ſide, a covetous man will bend to that party, where gain is to be had, an ambitious man will cloſe with the opinion paſſing in Court; a careleſs man will comply with the faſhion; affection ariſing from education, or prejudice will hold others ſtiff; few do follow the reſults of impartial contemplation.

—facilè quæ credita proſunt Credimus —

All faith therefore even in common things may be deemed voluntary, no leſs than intellectual; and Chriſtian faith is eſpecially ſuch, as requiring thereto more application of ſoul, managed by choice, than any other; whence the Ancients in their deſcription of it, do uſually include this condition, ſuppoſing it not to be a bare aſſent of the underſtanding, but a free conſent of the will: *Faith* (ſaith *Clemens Alex.*) *is a ſpontaneous acceptance, and complyance with divine religion*; and, *To be made at firſt was not in our power; but God perſuadeth us to follow thoſe things, which he liketh, chuſing by the rational faculties, which he hath given us, and ſo leadeth us to faith*; ſaith *Juſtin* the *Martyr*.

Πίστις ἑκούσιος ἔκδεξις καὶ ὁμολογία θείας θρησκείας; συγκατάθεσις, &c Clem. Strom. 2 p. 265.

Ἐθελουτὶ συνέπεσθαι τῷ συμφέροντι συνέσεως ἀρχῇ, *Ibid.* Τὸ μὲν ἀρχὴν γενέσθαι οὐκ ἡμέτερον ἦν· τὸ δ' ἐξακολουθῆσαι οἷς φίλον αὐτῷ αἱρεμένους δι' ὧν αὐτὸς ἐδωρήσατο λογικῶν δυνάμεων πείθει τε καὶ εἰς πίστιν ἄγει ἡμᾶς. Juſt. M. *Apol.* 2. (p. 58.)

The ſame is ſuppoſed in holy Scripture; where of believers it is ſaid, that they did ἀσμένως, *gladly*, or willingly *receive the word*, and they received it μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας *with all* willingneſs, or *readineſs of mind*. Act. 2. 41. Act. 17. 11.

And to defect of will infidelity is often aſcribed: *Ye will not come unto me* (ſaith our Saviour) *that ye might have life*; and, *How often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not?* and, *The Kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain King, which made a marriage for his ſon, and ſent forth his ſervants to call them that were bidden to the wedding, and they would not come*: and, *Of this* (ſaith S. *Peter* of ſome profane infidels) *they are willingly ignorant, that by the word of God the heavens were of old*; and of the like S. *Paul* ſaith, *that they received not the love of the truth, but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs*. Joh. 5. 40. Luk 13. 34. Matt. 22. 3. 2 Pet. 3. 5. 2 Theſ. 2. 10, 12.

Indeed to prevent this exception, that faith is a forced act, and therefore not moral; or to render it more voluntary, and worthy, God hath not done all that he might have done to convince men, or to wring belief from them: he hath not ſtamped on his truth that glaring evidence, which might dazle our minds; he doth not propoſe it armed with irreſiſtible cogency; he hath not made the objects of faith conſpicuous to ſenſe, nor the propoſitions thereof demonſtrable by reaſon, like theoremes of Geometry; this indeed would be to depoſe faith, to deveſt it of its excellency, and bereave it of its praiſe; this were to deprive us of that *bleſſedneſs*, which is adjudged to thoſe, who *believe and do not ſee*: this would proſtitute Wiſdom to be defloured by the fooliſh; and expoſe truth to be rifled by the profane: this would take from our reaſon its nobleſt exerciſe, and faireſt occaſion of improvement; this would confound perſons fit to be diſtinguiſhed, the ſagacious and the ſtupid, the diligent and the ſlothful, the ingenuous

Ἄπιστος, ὦ φίλον ψεῦδος ἀκέσιον. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* (pag. 268.) & Plat. (p. 841.)

Joh. 20. 29.

and the froward, the ſober and the vain, the pious and the profane; *the children of wiſdom*, which are apt to *juſtifie it*, and the ſons of folly, who *hate knowledge*; the friends of truth and vertue, and the lovers of falſhood and unrighteouſneſs.

Matt. 11. 19. Prov. 1. 29. 5. 12. 2 Theſ. 2. 10, 11, 12.

God therefore hath exhibited his truth, ſhining through ſome miſts of difficulty and doubt, that only thoſe who have clear eyes, who do look attentively, who are willing to ſee, may diſcern it; that thoſe who have eyes may ſee, and *thoſe who have ears may hear*. He meaneth this way of diſcovering his mind for a teſt to prove our ingenuity, for a field to exerciſe our induſtry, for an occaſion to expreſs his goodneſs in crowning the wiſdom and vertue of good believers; that — *the trial of your faith* (ſaith S. *Peter*) *being much more precious than of gold that periſheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praiſe, and honour, and glory at the appearing of Jeſus Chriſt; whom having not ſeen, ye love; in whom, though ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* He meaneth alſo thence to diſplay his juſtice in puniſhing the ſlothful, the vain, the perverſe, the profane; that (as the Apoſtle ſaith) *all men might be judged, who believed not the truth — but had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſs:* Hence, *there muſt of neceſſity be ſcandals*, ſaid our Saviour; hence our Lord was *ſet for a mark to be contradicted, that the thoughts of many hearts might be revealed*; and, *there muſt be hereſies*; ſaith S. *Paul*; why? that *they which are approved* (οἱ δόκιμοι, perſons that can bear the teſt) *may be manifeſted.*

Matt. 13. 11. ὑμῖν δέδοται. Chryſ. in Joh. Or. 5. 1 Pet. 1. 7, 8. Jam. 1. 3. 2 Theſ. 2. 12 Matt 18. 7. Luke 17. 1. Luke 2. 35. 1 Cor. 11. 19 (1 Joh 2. 19)

God dealeth with us, as he did with his ancient people; he to aſſure them of his gracious protection and providence over them; or to perſuade them of the truth of what he by *Moſes* taught them, did before their eyes perform ſtupendious works in their behalf, affording them miraculous deliverances from their enemies, and prodigious ſupplies of their needs; the ſight of which did extort a temporary belief; *then* (it is ſaid) *they believed his words, and ſang his praiſe*; and, when *Iſrael ſaw that great work which the Lord did upon the Ægyptians, the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his ſervant Moſes.* Yet withall God ſuffered divers things to fall out, *to humble them* (as it is ſaid), *and to prove them, and to know what was in their heart, whether they would keep his commandments, or no:* The reſult of which diſpenſations was, that they being inconſiderate, impatient and refractory, *believed not in God, and truſted not in his ſalvation; they deſpiſed that pleaſant land and gave no credence to his word*; So God dealt with that typical people; and in like manner doth he proceed with us; he hath miniſtred ſignal atteſtations to the Goſpel; he hath diſpenſed arguments abundantly ſufficient to convince well diſpoſed minds of its truth; but he hath not cleared it from all ſcruples, which may diſturb the froward or the delicate; he hath not exempted it from all ſcandals, which may diſguſt the perverſe, and ſtubborn; he hath not prevented all exceptions or cavils deviſable by curious or captious wits againſt it; he hath not guarded it wholly from the malicious oppoſition of thoſe, whoſe intereſt it might ſeem, in favour of their vices and follies, to impugn it; juſt it was, that to ſuch the Goſpel ſhould be *a ſtone of ſtumbling, and a rock of offence; who ſtumble at the word, being diſobedient, unto which they were appointed* (that is, God having ſo purpoſely ordered the Evangelical diſpenſation, that ſuch perſons ſhould not approve it, or comply with it) juſt it was, that they ſhould be debarred from a knowledge of that truth, which they ſhould abuſe, and *detain in unrighteouſneſs*; juſt

Pſ. 78, 105, 106. Pſ. 106. 12. Exod. 14. 31. Deut. 4. 32. 8. 2. 7. 19. Pſ. 78. 22, 32, 56, &c. Pſ. 106. 24. Neh. 9. 16. Deut. 1. 32. 1 Pet. 2. 7, 8. Rom. 1. 18, 28.

juſt it was, that they ſhould be puniſhed with ſuch temptations unto doubt and error, *who would not receive the love of the truth, that they might be ſaved.* 2 Theſ. 2. 10, 11, 12.

Indeed, more abundant light of conviction, as it would deprive good men of much praiſe and reward, ſo it might be hurtful to many perſons; who having affections indiſpoſed to comply with truth, would outface and outbrave it, however clear and evident; *they would* (as *Job* ſpeaketh) *rebel againſt the light*, although ſhining on them with a meridian ſplendour: they would plunge themſelves into an inexcuſable, and incorrigible ſtate of impiety, *doing deſpight to the ſpirit of grace*, and involving themſelves in the *unpardonable ſin*; as we have many inſtances in the Evangelical Hiſtory of thoſe, who beholding unqueſtionable evidences of divine power atteſting to our Lord's doctrine, which they could not but acknowledge, did yet oppoſe it, did blaſpheme againſt it, did outragiouſly perſecute it. Job 24. 14. Heb. 10. 29. Matt. 12. 31, 45. Matt. 9. 34. 12. 24. Luke 13. 17. Joh. 11. 47. 12. 37. 9. 28. Act. 4. 16.

Should God, as he once did in a dreadful manner, thunder out his laws, and *ſhake the earth with his voice*, yet many would little regard them: ſhould God in confirmation of his will perform every day as many miracles, as he did once in *Ægypt*, yet there would be *Pharaohs*, *hardning their hearts* againſt it; ſhould God himſelf deſcend from heaven, as once he did, and converſe with us, inſtructing us by diſcourſe and practice, diſplaying among us conſpicuous evidences of his power and goodneſs, yet *who would believe his report, to whom would the arm of the Lord be revealed?* how few cordially would embrace his doctrine, or ſubmit to his Law? as it was then, ſo it would be now; he would be hated, be ſcorned, be affronted and abuſed, by perſons qualified with like affections, as thoſe were, who ſo then did ſerve him; for in all times like perſons will do like things: as then only *his ſheep* (that is, well diſpoſed perſons, like ſheep, ſimple, harmleſs and ductile) *did hear his voice, and follow him*; ſo others *would not believe him, becauſe they were not of his ſheep*, being imbued with ſwiniſh, curriſh, wolviſh diſpoſitions, incapacitating them to follow his conduct; there would be perſons like to thoſe, of whom it is ſaid, *Behold ye ſcorners, and wonder, and periſh, for I work a work in your days, a work which you ſhall no wiſe believe, though a man declare it unto you.* Heb. 12. 18. 26. Joh. 12. 28. Rom. 10 16. Joh. 10. 27. Joh. 10. 26. Act. 13. 41.

(It is with inſtituted Religion, as it is with natural; the works of nature are ſo many continual miracles of divine power and wiſdom; in the common track of providence many wonderful things do occur; yet who by them is moved to acknowledge and adore God? notwithſtanding them how many *Atheiſts* and *Epicureans* are there? ſo will it be in regard to divine Revelations, which however clearly atteſted, will yet be queſtioned.)

Thoſe indeed whom ſufficient reaſons (ſuch as God hath diſpenſed to us) will not convince, upon them the greateſt motives would have ſmall efficacy; ſo Father *Abraham* told the rich man —— *If they hear not Moſes, and the Prophets, neither will they be perſuaded, though one roſe from the dead.* Γνώμης χρεία εὐγνώμων· κἂν μὴ αὐτῇ πάρῃ, σημείων ἔδην ὄφελον.

Chryſ. *in* Matt. Or. 43. Luk. 16. 30. Joh. 5. 47.

They may pretend, if they had more light, they would be perſuaded; like thoſe who ſaid, *Let him now come down from the croſs, and we will believe*; but it would not in effect prove ſo, for they would yet be deviſing ſhifts, and forging exceptions; or however they would oppoſe an impudent face, and an obſtinate will againſt the truth. Matt. 27. 42.

Wherefore it was for the common good, and to divine wiſdom it appeared ſufficient, that upon the balance truth ſhould much outweigh falſhood, if the ſcales were held in an even hand, and no prejudices were thrown in againſt it; that it ſhould be conſpicuous enough
Act. 28. 27. to eyes, which do not avert themſelves from it, *or wink* on purpoſe, or be clouded with luſt and paſſion; It was enough that infidelity is juſtly
Joh. 15. 22. chargeable on mens wilfull pravity; and that προφασιν ουκ εχουσι, *they have not* (as our Saviour ſaith) *any reaſonable excuſe* for it.

But ſo much for the cauſes and adjuncts of Faith; the effects and conſequences of it I reſerve for another occaſion.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON III.

OF THE Vertue and Reaſonableneſs OF FAITH.

2 PET. 1. 1.

----- *to them that have obtained like precious faith with us.*

OF all Chriſtian vertues, as there is none more approved and dignified by God, ſo there is none leſs conſidered or valued by men than Faith; the Adverſaries of our Religion have always had a ſpecial pique at it; wondring that it ſhould be commanded, as if it were an arbitrary thing or in our choice to believe what we pleaſe; why it ſhould be commended, as if it were praiſe-worthy to be ſubdued by reaſon; either by that which is too ſtrong for us to reſiſt, or by that which is too weak to conquer us.

But that Faith worthily deſerveth the praiſes and privileges aſſigned thereto, we may be ſatisfied, if we do well conſider its nature and ingredients, its cauſes and riſe, its effects and conſequences.

In its nature it doth involve knowledge, or the poſſeſſion of truth, which is the natural food, the proper wealth, the ſpecial ornament of our ſoul; knowledge of truths moſt worthy of us, and important to us,

us, as converſing about the higheſt objects, and conducing to the nobleſt uſe; knowledge peculiar and not otherwiſe attainable, as lying without the ſphere of our ſenſe, and beyond the reach of our reaſon; knowledge conveyed to us with great evidence and aſſurance; the greateſt indeed that well can be, conſidering the nature of its objects, and the general capacities of men, and the moſt proper way of working upon reaſonable natures.

It implieth (that which giveth to every vertue its form and worth) a good uſe of our reaſon, in carefully weighing, and uprightly judging about things, of greateſt concernment to us; it implieth a cloſing with God's providence diſpenſing opportunities, and repreſenting motives ſerving to beget it; a compliance with God's grace attracting and inclining our ſouls to embrace his heavenly truth: it implyeth alſo good opinions of God, and good affections toward him, which are requiſite to the believing (upon his teſtimony, promiſe, or command) points very ſublime, very difficult, very croſs to our fancy and humour.

The cauſes alſo, which concurr in its production, are very excellent; many vertuous diſpoſitions of ſoul are requiſite to the conception and birth of it: there muſt be a ſober, compoſed and wakeful mind, inquiſitive after truth, apt to obſerve its ſtarting, and ready to lay hold on it; there muſt be diligence and induſtry in attending to the propoſals, and conſidering the enforcements of it; there muſt be ſincerity and ſoundneſs of judgment, in avowing its cauſe, againſt the exceptions raiſed againſt it by prejudice and carnal conceit, by ſenſual appetites and paſſions, by temptations and worldly intereſt: there muſt be great humility, diſpoſing us to a ſubmiſſion of our underſtanding, and a reſignation of our will unto God, in admitting notions, which debaſe haughty conceit, in eſpouſing duties, which repreſs ſturdy humour: there muſt be much reſolution and courage in undertaking things very difficult, hazardous and painful; much patience, in adhering to a profeſſion, which exacteth ſo much pain, and expoſeth to ſo much trouble: there muſt be great prudence, in applying our choice (among ſo many competitions and pretences claiming it) to that which is only good; in ſeeing through fallacious diſguiſes, and looking over preſent appearances, ſo as to deſcry the juſt worth, and the final conſequence of things: there muſt in fine be a love of truth, and a liking of all vertue, which is ſo highly commended, and ſo ſtrictly preſcribed by the Chriſtian doctrine.

Theſe particulars, commending Faith to us, I have already largely proſecuted; I ſhall only therefore now inſiſt upon the laſt Head, concerning its effects, whereby (as the goodneſs of a tree is known by its fruits) the great excellency thereof will appear.

Its effects are of two ſorts, one ſpringing naturally from it, the other following it in way of recompence from divine bounty; I ſhall only touch the firſt ſort; becauſe in this its vertue is moſt ſeen, as in the other its felicity.

Faith is naturally efficacious in producing many rare fruits; naturally I ſay, not meaning to exclude ſupernatural grace, but ſuppoſing Faith to be a fit inſtrument thereof; for *God worketh in us to will, and to do*, but in a way ſutable to our nature, employing ſuch means as properly ſerve to incline and excite us unto good practice; and ſuch is Faith, ſupported and weilded by his grace; for indeed (Act. 11. 24)

Even in common life Faith is the compaſs by which men ſteer their practice, and the main ſpring of action, ſetting all the wheels of our activity on going: every man acteth with ſerious intention, and with vigour

vigour anſwerable to his perſuaſion of things, that they are worthy his pains, and attainable by his endeavours; what moveth the husbandman to employ ſo much care, toil and expence in manuring his ground, in plowing, in ſowing, in weeding, in fencing it: but a perſuaſion that he ſhall reap a crop, which in benefit will anſwer all? what ſtirreth up the merchant to undertake tedious voyages over vaſt and dangerous ſeas, adventuring his ſtock, abandoning his eaſe, expoſing his life to the waves, to rocks and ſhelves, to ſtorms and hurricanes, to cruel pirates; to ſweltry heats and piercing colds, but a perſuaſion, that wealth is a very deſirable thing, and that hereby he may acquire it? what induceth a man to conform unto ſtricteſt rules of diet and abſtinence, readily to ſwallow down the moſt unſavory potions, patiently to endure cuttings and burnings, but a faith that he thereby ſhall recover or preſerve health, that highly valuable good? from the ſame principle are all the carking, all the plodding, all the drudging, all the daring, all the ſcuffling in the world eaſily derivable: In like manner is Faith the ſquare and the ſource of our ſpiritual activity, diſpoſing us ſeriouſly to undertake; earneſtly, reſolutely, induſtriouſly and conſtantly to purſue the deſigns of vertue and piety, brooking the pains and hardſhips, breaking through the difficulties and hazards, which occurr in religious practice; engaging us to the performance of duty, deterring us from the commiſſion of ſin.

Heb. 12. 1. Phil. 3. 14. 1 Cor. 9. 24, 25. 2 Tim. 4. 7. 1 Tim. 1. 8. 6. 7.

What but Faith eyeing *the prize*, will quicken us *to run patiently the race, that is ſet before us?* what but faith, apprehending *the crown*, will animate us to *fight ſtoutly the good fight?* what but faith aſſuring the wages will ſupport us in working all the day with unwearied induſtry and patience? what can raiſe pious hope, what can kindle holy deſire, what can ſpurr on conſcientious endeavour, but a faith of attaining worthy recompences for doing well? what can impreſs an effectual diſlike and dread of offending, but a faith of incurring grievous puniſhment and ſad miſchiefs thence?

In reaſon a ſtrong and ſteady belief but of one point or two, would ſuffice to engage us upon all duty, and to reſtrain us from all ſin: did we only believe the future judgment, with the reſults of it, that alone would be an effectual both ſpurr and curb to us: for who believing that his ſoul then ſhall be laid bare, that his inmoſt thoughts, and ſecreteſt purpoſes ſhall be diſcloſed unto the view of all the world, will preſume to harbour in his breaſt any foul thought, or baſe deſign? who believing, that he ſhall then be obliged to render an account of *every idle word*, will dare to utter villainous blaſphemies, wicked curſes, fond oaths, profane jeſts, vile ſlanders or detractions, harſh cenſures, or bitter reproaches? who being perſuaded, that a rigorous amends will then be exacted from him for any wrong he doeth, will not be afraid with violence to oppreſs, or with fraud to circumvent his neighbour? who deeming himſelf accountable then for every talent and opportunity, will find in his heart to ſquander away or miſimploy his time, his power, his wealth, his credit, his wit, his knowledge, his advantages in any kind of doing God ſervice? who knowing himſelf obnoxious to a ſudden trial, whereat his eſtate, his reputation, his life, all his intereſt and welfare muſt lie at ſtake, will contentedly loſe his mind in wanton ſports, or wild frolicks? in fine, if we are really perſuaded, that preſently after this ſhort and tranſitory life, we ſhall openly in the face of God, Angels and Men be arraigned at an impartial bar, where all our thoughts, our words, our actions ſhall moſt exactly be

be sifted and scanned; according to which cognisance a just doom shall be pronounced, and certainly executed upon us, how must this needs engage us to be very sober and serious, very circumspect and vigilant over our mind, our tongue, our dealings or conversation, our whole life?

Again, If a man firmly believeth, that by a pious course of life, he shall gain the present favour and friendship of the Almighty, with all the real goods, whereof he is capable; and that hereafter he shall be rewarded for it with an eternal life in perfect rest, in glory, in joy, in beatitude unspeakable; that he shall obtain *an incorruptible inheritance, a treasure, that can never fail, a crown that will not fade, a kingdom that cannot be shaken*; wherein he shall enjoy the blissful vision of God, smiling in love upon him; the presence of his gracious Redeemer, embracing him with dear affection; the most delightful Society of blessed Angels, and *just spirits made perfect*; a state of felicity, surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it; of which the brightest splendours, and the choicest pleasures here can yield but a faint resemblance; how can he forbear earnestly to embrace and pursue such a course of practice? what zeal must such a persuasion inspire, what vigour must it rouze within him? who upon any terms would forfeit the hopes of such a happiness; who would not be glad to undertake any pains, or endure any hardships for it?

1 Per. 1. 4. Luke 12. 33. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Heb. 12. 28. 1 Cor. 2. 9.

And who likewise heartily is persuaded, that by vitious conversation, he shall incurr the wrath of Almighty God, and stand obnoxious to the stroaks of his severe justice; that persisting therein he infallibly must drop into the bottomless pit, into that utter darkness, that furnace of fire unquenchable, that lake of flaming brimstone; where is weeping and gnashing of teeth, where the immortal worm shall gnaw on his heart, and he must feel the pangs of a never-dying death; that state of most bitter remorse, of most horrid despair, of most forlorn disconsolateness, of continual and endless torment; wherein he shall be banished from the face of God, and by immutable destiny barr'd from all light, all ease, all solace; from any glimpse of hope, from any respite of pain; the wretchedness of which condition not the sharpest pain of body, not the sorest anguish of mind, not the saddest distress here can any-wise reach, or represent; whoever, I say, is possessed with a belief of these things consequent on a wicked life, will he not thence be effectually scared from it? what bait of temptation shall allure him, what force shall drive him thereto? will he for a flash of pleasure, for a puff of fame, for a lump of pelf; will he in complement or complaisance to others, in apish imitation or complyance with a fashion, out of mere wantonness, or in regard to some petty interest; will he in hope of any worldly good, or fear of any inconvenience here, suffer himself to be cast into that dismall state? will he not sooner go and shake a Lion by the paw, sooner provoke an Adder to bite him, sooner throw himself down a precipice, or leap into a caldron of burning pitch? certainly in reason to believe such things, and to sin can hardly be consistent.

Matt. 18. 30. Jud. 6. 2 Pet. 2. 4. Luke 4. 31. Apoc. 20. 3. Matt. 8. 12. 13. 42, 50. Mark 9. 43, 45. (Is. 33. 14) Rev. 20. 21.

Matt. 9. 44. Apoc. 20. 10. Dan. 12. 2. *Everlasting shame.*

2 Thes. 1. 9. Rom 2. 9. *Vox.*

Such a general influence is faith, looking with a provident eye upon future rewards and consequences of things, apt to have upon our practice: the which collaterally taking in the glorious attributes of God, the gracious performances of our Saviour, the beauty and sweetness of each divine precept, the manifold obligations and encouragements to

duty,

duty, the whole latitude and harmony of evangelical truth, all tending to the recommendation of holineſs, what efficacy muſt it needs have? how powerfully muſt it incite us to good practice?

ἁγνίζει ψυχὰς. 1 Pet. 1. 22. καθαρίζει καρδίας. Act. 15. 9.

We are told, that faith doth *purifie our ſouls*, and *cleanſe our hearts*; that is our whole interiour man, all the faculties of our ſoul; diſpoſing them to an univerſal obedience and conformity to God's holy will; And ſo it is; for Faith not only doth clear our underſtanding from its defects (blindneſs, ignorance, error, doubt) but it cleanſeth our will from its vitious inclinations from ſtubborn, froward, wanton, giddy humours) it freeth our affections from diſorder and diſtemper, in tendency toward bad objects, and in purſuit of indifferent things with immoderate violence; it purgeth our conſcience, or reflexive powers from anxious fear, ſuſpicion, anguiſh, dejection, deſpair, and all ſuch paſſions which corrode and fret the ſoul; how it effecteth this we might declare; but we cannot better ſet forth its efficacy and puiſſance, than by conſidering the ſpecial and immediate influence it plainly hath in the production of each vertue, or on the performance of every duty: *Add to your faith vertue*, ſaith S. *Peter*; implying the natural order of things, and that if true faith precede, vertue will eaſily follow.

2 Pet. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 6. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 22.

The chief of all vertues *piety* (compriſing the love of God, fear and reverence of him, confidence in him, gratitude for his favours and mercies, devotion toward him, a diſpoſition to worſhip and ſerve him) ſeemeth according to reaſon inevitably conſequent from it; for can we believe God ſuperexcellent in all perfection, and immenſly benign toward us; can we be perſuaded that in free goodneſs he did create us, and doth continually preſerve us in being; that his bounty hath conferred on us all our endowments of ſoul, and all our accommodations of life; that he hath a tender deſire of our welfare, from which even our moſt heinous offences and provocations cannot divert him; that he moſt wonderfully hath provided for our happineſs; in order thereto, when we had rebelled and revolted from him, ſending down out of his boſome, from the top of celeſtial glory and bliſs, his only dear Son, into this baſe and frail ſtate, to ſuſtain the infirmities of our nature, the inconveniences of a poor life, the pains of a bitter and ſhameful death, for our recovery from ſin and miſery; that with infinite patience he driveth on this gracious deſign, continually watching over us, attracting us to good, and reclaiming us from evil by his grace, notwithſtanding our frequent and ſtiff reluctancies thereto; can I ſay, we heartily believe theſe points, and not love him? can the eye of faith behold ſo lovely beauty, ſo raviſhing ſweetneſs in him, and the heart not be affected? can we apprehend ſo many miracles of nature, of providence, of grace performed by him for our ſake; and not be thankful to him? Can we likewiſe believe God infinitely powerful, infinitely juſt, infinitely pure, and withal not dread him, not adore him? Can we believe him moſt able, moſt willing, moſt ready to do us good; and not confide in him? or can we take him to be moſt veracious, moſt faithful, moſt conſtant, and not rely on his promiſes? Can we avow him to be our Maker, our Patron, our Lord, our Judge, and not deem our ſelves much obliged, much concerned to ſerve him? Can we believe, that God in our need is acceſſible, that he calleth and inviteth us to him, that he is ever willing and ever ready to hear us, that he is by promiſe engaged to grant us, whatever we do with humble fervency and conſtancy requeſt; yet forbear to pray, or eaſily deſiſt from it? do we believe his omnipreſence and omniſcience; that he

is

is with us, wherever we go; doth know all we think, hear all we say, see all we do, and will not belief engage us to think honestly, to speak reverently, to act innocently and decently before him? do we believe, that God's commands do proceed from that will, to which rectitude is essential; from that wisdom, which infallibly discerneth what is just and fit; from that goodness, which will require from us nothing but what is best for us; from that unquestionable and uncontroulable authority, to which all things are subject, and must submit; will not this sufficiently engage us to obedience? surely the real belief (such as we have about common things, apprehended by our reason or by our sense) of any such divine act, or attribute cannot fail to strike pious affection, and pious awe into us.

After piety the next great vertue is *charity*, the which also is easily derived *from a pure heart* (as S. *Paul* speaketh) *and faith unfeigned*: it repre- [2 Tim. i. 15.]
senting peculiar obligations and inducements thereto, from the most peremptory commands of God, from the signal recompences annexed to that duty, from the strict relations between Christians, from the stupendious patterns of charity set before us. Who can withhold love from him, whom he believeth his brother, in a way far nobler than that of nature, so constituted by God himself, the common Father, by spiritual regeneration, and adoption of grace; whom he believeth born of the same heavenly seed, renewed after the same divine image, quickned by the same holy Spirit; united to him not only in blood, but in soul; resembling him not in temper of body or lineaments of face, but in conformity of judgment and practice; partner of the one inheritance, and destinated to lead a life with him through all eternity, in peaceful consortship of joy and bliss? Who can deny him love, whom he believeth out of the same miserable case by the same price redeemed into the same state of mercy? for whom he by faith vieweth the common Saviour devesting himself of glory, pinching himself with want, wearying himself with labour, loaded with contumelies, groaning under pain, weltring in blood, and breathing out his soul, propounding all this as an example of our charity, and demanding it from us as the most special instance of our grateful obedience to him? what greater endearments can be imagined, what more potent incentives of love, what more indissoluble bands of friendship, than are these? Can such a believer forbear to wish his neighbour well, to have complacence in his good, to sympathize with his adversities, to perform all offices of kindness to him? can he in the need of his brother *shut up his bowels of compassion*, or withhold his hand from relieving him? Can a man know that God requireth this practice as the noblest fruit of our faith, and most acceptable part of our obedience, which he hath promised to crown with most ample rewards; can he believe, that God will recompence his *labour of love* with everlasting rest, and for a small expence of present goods will bestow immense treasures in the other world; and yet abstain from charitable beneficence? who can forbear sowing, that believeth he shall reap so plentiful a crop; or abstain from dealing in that heavenly trade, whereby he is assured to be so vast a gainer?

In like manner is Faith productive of *meekness*, in comporting with injuries, discourtesies, neglects and provocations of any kind: for who can be fiercely angry, who can entertain any rancorous grudge or displeasure against him, whom he believeth his brother, and that upon so many accounts he is obliged to love him? Who that believeth God

hath pardoned him so much, and doth continually bear so many wrongs, so many indignities from him, will not in conscience, and gratitude toward God, and in compliance with so great an Example, bear with the infirmities of his neighbour? who can look upon the pattern of his Saviour, patiently enduring so many grievous affronts, without a dispositon to imitate him, and to do the like for his sake? who that taketh himself for a child of God, a citizen of heaven, an heir of eternal glory, can be so much concerned in any trivial accident here; can design to have his passion stirred for any worldly respect? as if his honour could be impaired, or his interest suffer diminution by any thing said, or done here below.

Again, Faith is the mother of *sincerity*, that comprehensive vertue, which seasoneth all other vertues, and keepeth them sound: for it assuring us, that an all-seeing eye doth view our heart, doth *encompass our paths*, is present to all our closest retirements; that *all things are naked and open to the eyes of him, with whom we have to do*, how vain must it appear to us any-wise to dissemble, or prevaricate, speaking otherwise than we think, acting otherwise than we pretend, seeming otherwise than we are; concealing our real intents, or disguising them under masks of deceitful appearance? If we believe, that we shall be judged not according to the opinions of men concerning us, or our port and garb in this world, but as we are in our selves, and according to strictest truth; that in the close of things we shall be set forth in our right colours and complexion, all varnish being wiped away; that all our thoughts, words and deeds shall be exposed to most publick censure; that hypocrisie will be a sore aggravation of our sin, and much encrease our shame? how can we satisfie our selves otherwise than in the pure integrity of our heart, and clear uprightness of our dealing?

Ps. 139. 2. Heb. 4. 13.

Likewise the admirable vertue of *humility*, or sobriety of mind doth sprout from Faith; informing us, that we have nothing of our own to boast of, but that all the good we have, we can do, we may hope for are debts we owe to God's pure bounty and mercy; prompting us to assume nothing to our selves, but to ascribe all the honour of our endowments, of our performances, of our advantages unto God; keeping us in continual dependance upon God for the succours of his providence, and his grace; representing to us our natural weakness, vileness and wretchedness, together with the adventitious defects and disadvantages from our wilfull misbehaviour, the unworthiness of our lives, the many heinous sins we have committed, and the grievous punishments we have deserved.

He who by the light of faith doth see, that he came naked into the world, heir to nothing but the sad consequences of the original Apostacy; that he is a worm, crawling on earth, feeding on dust, and tending to corruption; that he liveth only by reprieve, from that fatal sentence, *the day thou sinnest thou shalt die*; that he was a caitiff wretch, a mere slave to sin, a forlorn captive of hell; and that all his recovery thence, or capacity of a better state is wholly due to mercy; that he subsisteth only upon alms, and hath nothing but his sins and miseries, which he may call his own; he that believeth these things, what conceit can he have of himself, what confidence in his own worth, what complacency in his estate?

Faith also doth engage to the vertue of *temperance*; discovering not only the duty, but the necessity thereof, in regard to our state, which is a state of continual exercise and strife; wherefore as wrestlers with many

many ſtrong adverſaries, as racers for a noble prize, we by good diet and conſtant labour muſt keep our ſelves in heart, in temper, in breath to perform thoſe combats; according to that of S. *Paul*, *Every man that ſtriveth for the Maſtery, is temperate in all things.* 1 Cor. 9. 25.

Again, Faith is productive of *contentedneſs* in our ſtate: for How is it poſſible, that he, who is fully ſatisfied, that God appointeth his ſtation, and allotteth his portion to each one; that all occurrences depend on his will, and are managed by his providence, ſhould take any thing amiſs; as if it could hap better, than as infinite goodneſs pleaſeth, and infinite wiſdom determineth? how can he, that believeth God moſt powerful and able, moſt kind and willing, ever preſent and ready to help him, be in any caſe diſconſolate, or deſpair of ſeaſonable relief? what can diſcompoſe him, who knoweth himſelf, if he pleaſeth, immovably happy; that his beſt good is ſecure from all attaques and beyond the reach of any misfortune; that deſiring what is beſt, he cannot fail of his deſire; that (himſelf excepted) all the world cannot conſiderably wrong, or hurt him?

He that is aſſured, thoſe precepts, *(Be careful for nothing, Caſt all your burthen on God, Be content with ſuch things as ye have)* were not given to mock and gull us; that thoſe declarations and promiſes *(There is no want to them that fear God; No good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly; There ſhall no evil happen to the juſt; The deſire of the righteous ſhall be granted; All things work together for good to them who love God; Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of God, and his righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you)* were ſeriouſly made, and will ſurely be performed, how looſe muſt his mind be from all ſolicitude and anxiety? how ſteady a calm, how ſweet a ſerenity will that faith ſpread over his ſoul, in regard to all worldly contingencies? Matt 6. 25. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. 1 Tim. 6. 17. Heb. 13. 5. Luke 12. 29. Pſ. 34. 9. 8. 11. Prov. 12. 21. 10. 24. Rom. 8. 28. Matt. 6. 33.

It will alſo beget a chearful *tranquility* of mind, and *peace of conſcience*, in regard to our future ſtate; that which S. *Paul* calleth *all joy* and *peace in believing*, which the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* termeth *the confidence, and rejoicing of hope*, of which S. *Peter* ſaith, *believing ye rejoice with joy unſpeakable and full of glory:* for he that is perſuaded that God (in whoſe diſpoſal his fortune, and felicity are) is reconciled and kindly affected toward him, that he doth concern himſelf in deſigning and procuring his ſalvation; that to purchaſe the means thereof for him the Son of God purpoſely came down, and ſuffered death; that an act of oblivion is paſt, and a full remiſſion of ſins exhibited to him, if he will embrace it; that now *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus*; and that, *being juſtified by faith we have peace with God*; that bleſſing is his portion, and that an eternal heritage of joy is reſerved for him, what eaſe muſt he find in his conſcience, what comfort muſt poſſeſs his heart? how effectually will that of the Prophet be accompliſhed in him, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whoſe mind is ſtayed on thee, becauſe he truſteth in thee?* Rom. 15. 13. Heb. 3. 6. 9. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Rom. 8. 1, 5. 1. Col. 1. 5. Iſ. 26. 3.

Again, it is Faith, which breedeth the *courage*, and upholdeth the *patience* requiſite to ſupport us in our ſpiritual courſe.

It doth inſpire *courage*, prompting to attempt the braveſt enterpriſes, diſpoſing to proſecute them reſolutely, and enabling happily to atchieve them: For he that believeth himſelf in his undertakings backed by omnipotence, and that, as S. *Paul*, *he can do all things through Chriſt ſtrengthning him*, what ſhould he fear to ſet upon, what difficulty ſhould keep him off, what hazard ſhould diſmay him? he that knoweth himſelf, Phil. 4. 13.

(Phil. 1. 28. 1 Joh. 4. 4) self, by reason of the succour attending him, infinitely to overmatch all opposition, whom should he not dare to encounter? may he not Ps. 27. 1. 118. 6. well say with *David*; *The Lord is my light, and my salvation, whom shall I fear; the Lord is the strength of my life, of whom shall I be afraid?* Let all the world, let earth and hell combine to invade him, how can *Chrys.* Tom. 7. p. 51. that mate his Spirit, if he believe they cannot overthrow him, or hurt Ps. 46. 1, 2. him, being secured by the invincible protection of him, to whose will all things do bow; in comparison to whom nothing is puissant, beside Matt. 10. 28. whom nothing is really formidable; seeing none but *He* can *kill*, none can touch the soul?

If we be armed with the spiritual panoply, having our head cover- Eph. 6. 15. 1 Thes. 5. 8. ed *with the helmet of salvation*, our heart guarded with *the breast-plate* Rom. 13. 12. *of righteousness*, our *loyns girt about with truth*, our *feet shod with the* 2 Cor. 6 7. *preparation of the Gospel of peace*, all our body sheltred by the impene- Heb. 4. 12. trable *shield of Faith*; and weilding in our hands by faith the *penetrant two edged sword of the Spirit*; *which is the word of God*; what assaults may we not sustain, what foes shall we not easily repel?

The most redoubtable enemy we have is our own *flesh*, which with Gal. 5. 17. Rom. 7. 23. a mighty force of violent appetites and impetuous passions is ever strug- 1 Pet. 2 11. ling with our reason, and warring against our soul; yet it Faith alone dareth to resist, and is able to quell, opposing to the present delights of sense the hopes of future joy, quashing transitory satisfactions by the fears of endless torment.

The *world* is another powerful enemy; ever striving by its corrupt principles, by its bad examples, by its naughty fashions, by its menaces of persecution, damage and disgrace, by its promises of vain honour, base profit and foul pleasure to overthrow and undo us; but a reso- 1 Joh. 5. 5. (2 Pet. 1. 4. lute Faith will defeat its attempts; for *He* (saith S. *John*) *that is* Eph. 4. 22.) *born of God, overcometh the world, and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith*; the faith of a better world will defend us from the frowns, and the flatteries of this; the riches, glories and joys of heaven thereby presented to our minds will secure us from being enchanted with the wealth, splendours and pleasures of earth.

1 Pet. 5. 8. Another fierce adversary is the cursed *Fiend*; who ever *like a roaring lion goeth about seeking to devour us*, or like a treacherous snake lieth in wait to bite us; raising panick fears to daunt and affright us; laying subtle trains of temptation, to abuse and seduce us; but him by resistence Jam. 4. 7. we may easily put to flight, *For resist the Devil*, saith S. *James*, *and* Eph. 4. 27. *he will flee from you*; and how we must resist him, S. *Peter* telleth us, 1 Pet. 5. 9. *Whom resist stedfast in faith*; and S. *Paul* also, *Above all* (saith he) Eph. 6. 16. *taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one*; if we hold forth this glittering shield, it will dazle his sight, and damp his courage; being not able to endure its lustre, or stand its opposition he will instantly retire; fearing that by our victory over his temptations, (through reliance on God's help, and adherence to his truth) our reward shall be heightned, and his torment (the torment of improsperous envy and baffled malice) be encreased.

Faith also will arm us with *patience* to endure what-ever events shall be dispensed, with alacrity and comfort; lightning the most heavy burthens imposed on us, sweetning the most distasteful occurrences incident to us: for

He, who is persuaded that by any damage here sustained for conscience toward God, he shall become a huge gainer, *receiving*, as the Matt. 19. 29. Luke 18. 30. Gospel promiseth, *an hundred fold, and inheriting eternal life*, what will

will he not gladly lose? will he not willingly put forth all he hath in this most profitable usury? will he not, as those *Hebrews* did, *take joyfully the spoiling of his goods, knowing that he hath in heaven a better and an enduring substance?* Phil. 3. 8. Heb. 10. 34.

He, who believeth, that in regard to any disgrace cast on him for his vertue, he shall be honoured by God, and crowned with heavenly glory, will he not in a manner be proud and ambitious of such disgrace; will he not, as the *Apostles* did, *rejoice, that he is counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Christ?* Matt. 5. 12. Act. 5. 41. 1 Pet. 4. 14.

He, who trusteth, that for a little pains taken in God's service, he shall receive πολλῳ μισθὸν, *abundant wages*, far exceeding the merit of his labour, will he not cheerfully bear any toil or drudgery therein? Matt. 5. 12. Luke 6. 35. 1 Cor. 3. 8.

He who, with S. *Paul*, *computeth, that the light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are not worthy to be compared with the glories that shall be revealed*; and that *those light momentary afflictions do work for us a far more exceeding weight of glory*; will they not indeed be light unto him; will he not feel them lying on him, as a few straws or feathers? Rom. 8. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 17.

He, who conceiveth our Lord's word true, that *by losing his life he shall find it*, or that death shall become to him a door into a happy immortality, would he not gladly upon such terms be *killed all the day long*, and *be always delivered unto death for Jesus?* Matt. 10. 39. 16. 25. Luke 17. 33. (Ps. 126. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 12. 1 Pet. 4. 13. Rom. 8. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 10. Phil. 1. 29.) Rom. 8. 36. 2 Cor. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 4. 9. Act. 20. 24. 21. 13.

He who by faith is assured, that any disasters befalling him, are not inflictions of wrath; but expressions of love toward him, by God in kindness dispensed as trials of his faith, as exercises of his vertue, as occasions of his acquiring more plentiful rewards, how can he be disgusted at them, or discomposed by them? why should he not rather accept them as favours, as felicities with a thankful and joyful heart; *counting it*, as S. *James* adviseth, *all joy, when he falleth into divers temptations?* Jam. 1. 3. 1 Pet. 1. 5. Rom. 5. 3. Matt. 5. 12. Jam. 1. 2. Rom. 5. 3. Luke 6. 23.

In fine, it is Faith alone, which can plant in us that which is the root of all contentedness and all patience; a just indifference and unconcernedness about all things here: it alone can untack our minds and affections from this world, rearing our souls from earth, and fixing them in heaven; for if we are persuaded, there is a state of life infinitely more desirable than the best condition here; if we believe there are things attainable by us, incomparably better than any which this world affordeth; in respect to which all these glories are but smoak, all these riches are but dirt, all these delights are but dreams, all these businesses are but triflings, all these substances are but shadows; how in our minds can we prize, how in our affections can we cleave unto these things? how then can we find in our hearts to spend upon them more care, or pain than is needful? Col. 3. 1. *Omnia imaginaria in seculo, & nihil veri.* Tert. *de Cor. c.* 13.

He that taketh himself here to be out of his element, that he is but *a stranger, and sojourner upon earth*, that he *hath here no abiding city*, no country, no house, no land, no treasure, no considerable interest, but that he is merely wayfairing, in passage toward his true home, and heavenly country, *the Jerusalem above*, whereof he is a citizen, where his grand concerns do lie, where he hath reserved for him immovable possessions, and unvaluable treasures; where he is designed to enjoy most noble privileges, and most illustrious dignities in the Court of the great King; how can he have his heart here sticking in this earthy clay, Ἡ ἀρετὴ ἀρετή, ἢ πάσα ἀρετὴ τὸ ξένον ἔχει τὸν κόσμον τοῦτον---Chrys. *in* Heb. 11. 13.

Gal. 6. 14. clay, entangled with the petty cares, amused with the sorry entertainments of this life? how can he otherwise than with S. *Paul* be dead, and *crucified to this world?* how can he withhold his mind from soaring thither in contemplation, and in affection dwelling there, whither his desires and hopes do all tend, where his joy and felicity are found, where the great objects of his esteem and love do reside?

Ἐκεῖ μετεωρίζεται τῷ ψυχῷ ἡ πίστις---- Chrys. Tom. 5. Or. 55.

But you will perhaps interpose, and say; these are indeed fine sayings, but where do such effects appear? who I pray doth practise according to these notions? where is that gallant to be found, who doth work so great exploits? where may we discern that height of piety, that tenderness of charity, that meek comportment with injuries and affronts, that clear sincerity, that depth of humility, that strictness of temperance, that perfect contentedness, and undisturbed calmness of mind, that stoutness of courage, and stiffness of patience which you talk of as the undoubted issues of faith? who is the man that with such glee doth hugg afflictions, or biddeth adversity so welcome to his home? where dwell they, who so little regard this world, or so much affect the other? do we not see men run as if they were wild after preferment, wealth and pleasure? what do they else, but scrape and scramble and scuffle for these things? doth not every man moan the scantness of his lot, doth not every man flinch at any trouble, doth not every one with all his might strive to rid himself of any thing disgustful to his sense or fancy? are not therefore such *encomiums* of Faith mere speculations, or brave *Rhodomontades* of Divinity?

The objection I confess is a shrewd one, but I must reply to it: You say, where are such effects, where are such men? I ask then, where is Faith, where are Believers? shew me the one, and I will shew you the other: If such effects do not appear, 'tis no argument that Faith cannot produce them, but a sign, that Faith is wanting; as if a tree doth not put forth in due season, we conclude the root is dead; if a foun-
Jam. 2. 18. tain yield no streams, we suppose it dried up: *Shew me* (saith S. *James*) *thy faith by thy works*; implying, that if good works do not shine forth in the conversation, 'tis suspicious there is no true faith in the heart: for such faith is not a feeble weening, or a notion swimming in the head, 'tis not a profession issuing from the mouth, 'tis not following such a garb, or adhering to such a party, but a persuasion fixed in the heart by good reason, by firm resolution, by
Rom. 10. 8. lively sense; it is *with the heart*, as S. *Paul* saith, *man believeth unto righteousness*; that is the Faith we speak of and to which we ascribe the production of so great and worthy effects: if a man wanteth that, attested by practice sutable, though he know all the points exactly, though he readily will say *Amen* to every Article of the Creed, though he wear all the badges of a Christian, though he frequent the Congregations, and comply with the Forms of our Religion, yet is he really an Infidel: for is he not an Infidel, who denieth God? and is he not such a *Renegado*, who liveth impiously? he is so in S. *Paul*'s account;
Tit. 1. 16. for *they profess* (saith he of such persons) *that they know God, but in*
Rom. 2. 28. *works they deny him*; and *He is not a Jew*, saith the same Apostle (he is not a Christian, may we by parity of reason affirm) *who is one outwardly*; *but he is a Christian who is one inwardly, and faith is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God*: we may attribute to a barren conceit, or to a formal profession the name of Faith, but it is in an equivocal or wide sense, as a dead man is called a man; or a dry stick resting in the earth, a tree;

for

for ſo *faith* (ſaith S. *James*) *without works is dead*; is indeed but a trunk, or carcaſe of faith, reſembling it in outward ſhape; but void of its *ſpirit* and life. Jam. 2. 17. Jam. 2. 26.

To our infidelity therefore, that overſpreading vice; to the unſincerity, or deadneſs of our faith, the great defects of our practice are to be imputed; that is the grand ſource, from which impiety doth ſo oreflow; that ſo few inſtances of ſprightly vertue are viſible, may be a ſign the time is the ſame, or very like to that, of which our Lord ſaith, *When the Son of man cometh, ſhall he indeed find faith upon the earth?* Luke 18. 8.

But if ſuch effects can now rarely be found, yet time hath been, when they were more rife, ſcarce any time hath been quite deſtitute of them; Every Age ſince the foundation of things may have tokens and trophees to ſhew of faith's victorious efficacy; ſo many actions as there have been truly great and glorious, ſo many gallant feats have been atchieved by Faith: If we ſurvey the lives of the ancient *Patriarchs*, of the *Prophets*, of the *Apoſtles*, of the *Martyrs* and *Confeſſours* of true Religion, their faith in all their works is moſt conſpicuous.

Faith recommended that *excellent ſacrifice of Abel* to divine acceptance, and advanced him to the rank of firſt *Martyr* for piety. Heb. 11. 4.

On the wings of faith did *Enoch* mount to heaven, ſnatching the reward due to his faithful, and therefore *well-pleaſing* obedience.

Faith preſerved *Noah* from two mighty deluges, one of ſin, the other of water, overflowing the earth; by it he ſtemmed the torrent of the one, and rode on the back of the other; it encouraged him to be *a preacher of righteouſneſs* againſt the grain, and a practiſer of it againſt the faſhion of the world; not regarding the common hatred and envy which he did incurr thereby; it moved him to undertake that great and ſtrange work of building the Ark, for a ſanctuary and ſeminary of mankind; the type of that ſpiritual veſſel, by embarking into which through faith we are ſaved from utter ruine. 2 Pet. 2. 5. Gen. 7. 1.

Faith diſpoſed *Abraham* to forſake his country and home, his eſtate, his kindred, following divine conduct *he knew not whither*; to wander abroad and ſojourn among barbarous ſtrangers: Faith inclined him at God's command, to ſacrifice his only Son, a goodly youth in the flower of his age and hopes, worthily moſt dear unto him; the Son of his old age, and the comfort thereof given to him by miracle, and in ſpecial favour; the prop of his Family, and the heir of promiſe, by whom his ſeed was to be propagated, and his memory to flouriſh; him was he ready in obedience with his own hand to ſlay, quelling nature and his bowels, thwarting his own hopes, defying all ſemblances of contradiction, or claſhing between the commands and promiſes of God. Heb. 11. 8. *Chryſ.* Tom. 7. p. 17.

Faith through the rudeſt efforts of envy and malice, through the diſmal calamities of exile and ſlavery, through hideous ſnares of temptation, through villainous ſlanders, through loathſome priſons and fetters of iron, all along ſuſtained with admirable moderation and preſence of mind, did rear up *Joſeph* to the helm of that great Kingdom.

The ſame inclined *Moſes* to exchange the dignities and delights of a Court for a ſtate of vagrancy and ſervility; it heartned him to outbrave the invincible obſtinacy of a mighty Prince; it ſteeled him with patience to conduct for the ſpace of fourty years, through a wild deſert, a moſt perverſe and mutinous herd of people.

Faith was mother of that renowned patience, which exhauſted *Satan's* quiver, ſpent all his artillery, and wore out his invention in ſuggeſting miſchiefs; *I know that my Redeemer liveth*, was the rock, on which that unſhakable patience of *Job* was founded. *Chryſ.* Ibid. Job 19. 25.

That

That pricked the ruddy Stripling forward, naked and unarmed, with undaunted heart and countenance, to invade the Monſter of *Gath*, that tower of fleſh, ſwelling with rage and pride, and all fenced with braſs
1 Sam. 17. 45. and ſteel; *Thou comeſt to me*, ſaid he, *with a ſword and with a ſpear, and with a ſhield, but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hoſts*; there lay his confidence, thence ſprung his admirable courage.

To *this* the bold attempts, and the glorious victories of *Joſhuah*, of *Gideon*, of *Barak*, of *Jephtha*, of *Sampſon*, of *Jonathan*, of the *Maccabees*, are worthily aſcribed, who with ſmall forces, upon great diſadvantages, did aſſault, did vanquiſh mighty Enemies, and Oppreſſors.

1 Kings 18. 36. 19. 20. *This* enflamed the zeal of *Elias*, by which he *alone* did check and controll the degenerate follies of his Nation, ſurmounting the indignation
2 Kings 2. 11. of Princes which favoured them; it fed him in the Wilderneſs by the purveyance of Ravens; it framed the wheels of that fiery Chariot, which tranſported him into heaven.

This made *Jeremy*, with like zeal and courage, dare to carry moſt unwelcome news, and unpleaſant meſſages to an outragious people,
Jer. 38. 4, 6. not daunted by their angry menaces, or cruel miſuſages; *his feet ſunk into the mire*, but faith bore up his heart above all diſcouragement.

This ſaved the conſcience of thoſe three brave Youths clear from that impiety, into which barbarous violence would have driven them; ſo that neither the fury of that great Monarch, nor his gaping furnace could terrifie them into ſin; faith putting into their mouths thoſe manful words, *O Nebuchadnezzar we are not careful to anſwer thee in this*
Dan 3. 19. (16, 18, 27.) *matter*; *If it be ſo, our God whom we ſerve, is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O King*; *but if not, be it known unto thee, that we will not ſerve thy gods, nor worſhip the golden image, which thou haſt ſet up*; their faith carried them undaunted into the flames, and kept them untoucht within them; ſo that they became as gold not waſted, but tried and purified in the furnace.

Heb. 11. 33. Dan. 6. 10, 22, 23. Neither could a danger no leſs terrible ſcare the noble *Daniel* from his devotions; his faith did *ſtop the Lions mouths*; and *He* (ſaith the Text) *was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, becauſe he truſted in his God.*

Such exploits of ſpiritual proweſs were atchieved by an *Old-Teſtament*-Faith, relying upon God's attributes and providence, although wanting a clear revelation of the promiſes, which then lay wrapped up in myſteries and ſhadows; But more heroical acts of fortitude and patience did the bright ſunſhine of grace and glory upon the minds of our Apoſtles, and primitive Saints produce; Animated by faith a little troop of them marched out with reſolution to attack all the Powers of hell, and to beat down the Kingdom of darkneſs, to diſpatch all the prejudices and errors of mankind, and to ſubdue the world to the obedience of Chriſt; ſo armed, ſucceſsfully did they knock down and trample upon all oppoſition to their glorious deſigns; they defeated all the ſecular power and policy, they baffled all the wit, the learning, the eloquence, which ſtood in their way, or gave them reſiſtence; they triumphed
Rom. 8. 35. over perſecutions, and in regard to all ſufferings *were more than conquerors*; to forſake and forfeit all they had, was their gain; to *have*
Eph. 3. 13. *nothing* was their wealth, to incurr diſgraces was their glory; to be in continual labour and travel was their eaſe; faſtings, hunger and thirſt
Act. 16. 25. were their pleaſure, their feaſt, their luxury; priſons were chapels to them, in which they preached, and prayed, and ſang praiſes to God; their

their joy was to ſuffer, to receive ſtripes, and undergo torments was their triumph and their glory; they conſtantly defied, they often courted death.

That they were able to perform ſuch prodigious acts, and to endure things ſo inſupportable, was not from a ſtupid inſenſibility of things, from a ſturdineſs of ſpirit, or ſtiffneſs of humour; but from a true magnanimity inſpired by faith; Becauſe they were perſuaded of God's will, becauſe they confided in God's help, becauſe they relied on God's word, becauſe they did expect rewards from God able to ſatisfie for all their pains and loſſes; this made them to undertake ſo bold enterpriſes, and carried them with inſuperable conſtancy through all; hence were they glad to abandon their eaſe and pleaſure, to proſtitute their honour and reputation, to part with their ſubſtance, to venture their ſafety, to ſacrifice their lives for God's truth; *Therefore do we both labour, and ſuffer reproach, becauſe we truſt in the living God, who is the ſaviour of all men, ſpecially of thoſe that believe*, is the ſhort account, which S. *Paul* rendreth of it: And infallibly the like effects will Faith produce, wherever it is found, in a degree proportionable to its ſincerity and ſtrength.

1 Tim. 4. 10. (Rom. 8. 17. 2 Tim. 2. 11. 1 Pet. 1. 7. 4. 13. 2 Tim. 4. 8.)

A grain of Faith (our Saviour ſaith) *is able to remove mountains*; that is to accompliſh things in appearance very ſtrange and difficult; and *To him that believeth all things are poſſible*, ſaith the ſame mouth of truth; and *He* (ſaith our Lord again) *that believeth in me, the works that I do, he alſo ſhall do, and greater works than thoſe ſhall he do*; if this be true in reference to works concerning the frame of nature, it is ſurely no leſs true in regard to thoſe which lie within the more proper ſphere of Faith, to moral and ſpiritual operations: If Faith can obtain the help of God, enabling to transfer a mountain, it alſo can procure his grace diſpoſing to reſtrain an appetite, or repreſs a paſſion.

Matt. 17. 20. 21. 21. Luke 17. 6. 1 Cor. 13. 2. Mark 11. 23. Mark 9. 23. Joh 12. 14. *Chryſ.* Tom. 7. Or. 64.

Now that which is in it ſelf ſo worthy and lovely, which is attended with ſo good conſorts; which is the daughter of ſo excellent cauſes, the ſiſter of ſo great vertues, the parent of ſo admirable effects, how can it otherwiſe than be very precious, very laudable, very acceptable? how can we at all wonder that it ſhould be graced with ſuch commendations, and crowned with ſuch rewards?

Let us therefore (to conclude) be exhorted, if we do want it, to endeavour the acquiſt of it by all proper means (by ſerious contemplation and ſtudy, by prayer to God, by voiding all obſtructions of it): if we have it, to hold it faſt, to cheriſh it, to improve it, as by all good ways, ſo eſpecially by good practice; that we may produce the good fruits, and obtain the happy rewards thereof; through the mercies of God in Jeſus Chriſt our Lord, to whom for ever be all praiſe.

Chryſ. in *Joh.* Or. 6.

Now the God of all hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the holy Ghoſt. Amen. Rom. 15. 13.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON IV.

OF JUSTIFYING FAITH.

ROM. 5. 1.

Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore; that word implies the text to be a conclusion (by way of inference, or of recapitulation) resulting from the precedent discourse; it is indeed the principal conclusion, which (as being supposed a peculiar and a grand part of the Christian doctrine, and deserving therefore a strong proof and clear vindication) S. *Paul* designed by several arguments to make good. Upon the words, being of such importance, I should so treat; as first to explain them, or to settle their true sense; then to make some practical application of the truths they contain.

As to the explicatory part, I should consider first, what the faith is, by which we are said to be justified; 2. what being justified doth import; 3. how by such faith we are so justified; 4. what the peace with God is, here adjoined to justification; 5. what relation the whole matter bears to our Lord Jesus Christ; or how through him being justified we have peace with God; in the prosecution of which particulars it would appear, who the persons justified are, and who justifies us; with other circumstances incident.

I shall at this time only insist upon the first particular, concerning the notion of Faith proper to this place, in order to the resolution of which inquiry, I shall lay down some useful observations: and

1. *First*, I observe, that *Faith*, or belief in the vulgar acception doth signifie (as we have it briefly described in *Aristotle*'s Topicks 'a σφοδρὰ πίστις, *an earnest opinion* or persuasion of mind concerning the truth of some matter propounded. Such an opinion being produced by, or grounded upon some forcible reason (either immediate evidence of the matter; or sense and experience; or some strong argument of reason, or some credible testimony; for whatever we assent unto, and judge true upon any such grounds and inducements, we are commonly said to believe) this is the popular acception of the word; and according thereto I conceive it usually signifies in holy Scripture; which being not penn'd by Masters of humane art or science; nor directed to persons of more than ordinary capacities or improvements, doth not intend to use words otherwise than in the most plain and ordinary manner. Top. 4. 5.

Aut proba esse quæ credis; aut si non probas, quomodo credis. Tertul. adv. Marc. V. 1.

Ὅταν γὰρ πῶς πιστεύῃ, καὶ γνώσεώς αὐτῷ ὥσιν αἱ ἀρχαὶ, ἐπίσταται. Arist. Eth. 6. 3.

Ἀεὶ στέλλῃ τὸ ἐπόμενον τῇ δόξῃ μὴ κρῖμα ὡς ἀληθὲς, τόδε τι πίστιν εἶδ φησι. Clem. Strom. 2. p 287.

Ἔνιοι γὰρ πιστεύουσιν ἐλπὶν ἴσον οἷς δοξάζουσιν, ἢ ἕτερόν οἷς ἐπαινοῦσι. Arist. 7. 3. (Eth.)

Belief therefore in general, I suppose, denotes a firm persuasion of mind concerning the truth of what is propounded; whether it be some one single proposition (as when *Abraham* believed, that *God was able to perform what he had promised*; and *Sarah*, that *God, who had promised was faithful*) or some systeme of propositions, as when we are said to *believe God's word* (that is all, which by his Prophets was in his name declared) to *believe the truth* (that is all the propositions taught in the true religion as so) to *believe God's commandments* (that is the doctrines in God's Law to be true, and the precepts thereof to be good) to *believe the Gospel* (that is to be persuaded of the truth of all the propositions asserted, or declared in the Gospel.) Rom. 4. 21. Heb. 11. 19. Heb. 11. 11. Ps. 106. 24. 78. 32. 2 Thes. 2. 12. Ps. 119. 66. Mark 1. 15. Phil. 1. 27.

2. I observe *Secondly*, that whereas frequently some person, or single thing is represented *(verbo tenus)* as the object of faith, this doth not prejudice, or in effect alter the notion I mentioned; for it is only a figurative manner of speaking, whereby is always meant the being persuaded concerning the truth of some proposition (or propositions) relating to that person or thing: for otherwise it is unintelligible how any incomplex thing (as they speak) can be the complete, or immediate object of belief: beside simple apprehension (or framing the bare *Idea* of a thing) there is no operation of a man's mind terminated upon one single object; and belief of a thing surely implies more than a simple apprehension thereof: what it is, for instance, to believe this, or that proposition about a man, or a tree (that a man is such a kind of thing, that a tree hath this, or that property) is very easie to conceive; but the phrase believing a man, or a tree (taken properly, or excluding figures) is altogether insignificant, and unintelligible: indeed to believe (πιστεύειν) is the effect τῦ πεπεῖσθαι (of a persuasive argument,) and the result of ratiocination; whence in Scripture it is commended, or discommended, as implying a good or bad use of reason. The proper object of Faith is therefore some proposition deduced from others by discourse; as it is said, that *many of the Samaritans believed in Christ, because of the woman's word, who testified that He told her all that ever she did*; or as S. *Thomas believed, because he saw*; or as when it is said, that *many believed on our Lord's name, beholding the miracles* Joh. 4. 39. Joh. 20 29. Joh. 2. 23.

Exod. 14. 31. Joh. 5. 45, &c. *which he did*; when then, for example, the *Jews* are required to believe *Moses* (or to believe in *Moses*, after the *Hebrew* manner of speaking) it is meant, to be perſuaded of the truth of what he delivered, as proceeding from divine revelation; or to believe him to be what he 2 Chr. 20. 20. profeſſed himſelf, a meſſenger or prophet of God. So *to believe the Prophets* or in the Prophets, בַּנְּבִיאָיו) was to be perſuaded concerning the truth of what they uttered in God's name (that the doctrines were true, the commands were to be obeyed, the threats and promiſes ſhould be performed, the predictions ſhould be accompliſhed: *to be-* Luke 24. 25. Act. 24. 14. *lieve all which the Prophets did ſay*, as our *Saviour* ſpeaks, *to believe all things written in the Prophets*, as S. *Paul.*) So to *believe God's works* Pſ. 78. 32. (a phraſe we have in the *Pſalms*) ſignifies, to be perſuaded, that thoſe works did proceed from God, or were the effects of his good provi- Jer. 17. 5. 46. 25. Pſ. 118. 8. &c. dence: to *believe in man* (that which is ſo often prohibited, and diſſuaded) denotes the being perſuaded, that man in our need is able to relieve and ſuccour us; laſtly *to believe in God* (a duty ſo often injoyned, and inculcated) is to be perſuaded, that God is true in whatever he ſays, faithful in performance of what he promiſes; perfectly wiſe, powerful and good; able and willing to do us good; the being perſuaded, I ſay, of all theſe propoſitions, or ſuch of them as ſute the preſent circumſtances and occaſion, is to believe in God: thus, in fine, to believe on a perſon, or thing, is only a ſhort expreſſion (figuratively) denoting the being perſuaded of the truth of ſome propoſition relating in one way, or other to that perſon, or thing (which way is commonly diſcernible by conſidering the nature, or ſtate of ſuch a perſon, or ſuch a thing) the uſe of which Obſervation may afterward appear.

3. I obſerve *thirdly*, that (as it is ordinary in like caſes concerning the uſe of words) the word *belief* is by a kind of *ſynecdoche*, (or *metonymie* if you pleaſe) ſo commonly extended in ſignification, as together with ſuch a perſuaſion as we ſpoke of to imply whatever by a kind of neceſſity (natural, or moral) doth reſult from it; ſo comprehending thoſe acts of will, thoſe affections of ſoul, and thoſe deeds, which may be preſumed conſequent upon ſuch a perſuaſion: for inſtance, when God commanded *Abraham* to forſake his country, promiſing him a happy eſtabliſhment in the land of *Canaan*, with a perpetual bleſſing upon his poſterity; *Abraham* was perſuaded concerning the power, and fidelity of God; and concerning the truth of what was promiſed and foretold; in that perſuaſion his faith, according to the firſt, proper and reſtrained ſenſe, did conſiſt: but becauſe from ſuch a perſuaſion Rom. 4. 20. (being ſincere, and ſtrong enough) there did naturally, and duly reſult a ſatisfaction, or acquieſcence in the matter injoyned as beſt to be done; a choice, and reſolution to comply with God's appointment; an effectual obedience; a cheerful expectation of a good iſſue thereupon; therefore all thoſe diſpoſitions of ſoul, and actions concurring become expreſſed by the name of faith (that firſt perſuaſion being the principle, and root of them:) for it is for his faith that he is highly commended; it is for it that he obtained ſo favourable an approbation and acceptance from God: Yet ſuppoſing *Abraham* to have had ſuch a perſuaſion concerning God; and yet to have diſliked what God required, or to have reſolved againſt doing it, or to have indeed diſobeyed, or to have diſregarded the happy ſucceſs; it is plain that *Abraham* as to the whole matter deſerved rather much blame, than any commendation; Jam 2. 23. and would not upon that account have had *righteouſneſs imputed to him*, and

and have been *called the friend of God*: when therefore his *faith* is so magnified, that *word* comprehends not his bare persuasion only, but all those concomitants thereof, which if they had not gone along therewith, it had been a proof, that such a persuasion was not sincere (not ἀνυπόκριτος πίστις, *an undissembled faith*; such as S. *Paul* commends in *Timothy*) or not strong enough (not ἀδιάκριτος πίστις, *an undoubting faith*) but *a weak, a small, a dead*, an ineffectual faith; which come under blame, and reproof, but the effect shewed, that he did not (as S. *Paul* says) ἀσθενεῖν τῇ πίστει, had not a weak, or sickly faith; nor *staggered at the promise of God*; but *was strong in faith, giving glory to God*; which he did not only in believing his word, but in suting his affections, and yielding obedience thereto: (πίστει ὑπήκουσεν ἐξελθεῖν, *by faith he obeyed, so as to forsake his country*, says the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*; And Faith thus taken is not only a single act of a man's understanding, or will, but a complex of many dispositions and actions, diffused through divers faculties of a man, denoting the whole complication of good dispositions, and actions relating to one matter; which attend upon a true and earnest persuasion concerning it; right choice, submission and satisfaction of mind, firm resolution, dutiful obedience, constant and cheerful hope; or the like.

1 Tim. 1. 5. 2 Tim. 1. 5. Jam. 3. 17. Rom. 4. 20. Rom. 14. 1. 1 Cor. 8. 10. Rom. 4. 19. Matt. 6. 30. 8. 26, &c. Jam. 2. 17, 20. Gal. 5. 6. Heb. 11. 8.

4. I observe more nearly to our purpose, *fourthly*, that the Faith here spoken of (being here, and otherwhere put absolutely, or by it self, without any adjunct of limitation or distinction) is often set down with terms annexed thereto, explaining and determining it; being sometimes styled the *faith of Christ*, *of Jesus*, *of God* (τοῦ χριστοῦ, τοῦ ἰησοῦ, τοῦ θεοῦ) sometimes *faith upon Christ* (εἰς χριστὸν, and ἐπὶ χριστὸν) *faith in Christ* (ἐν χριστῷ) *faith to Christ*, to the Lord, to God (πιστεύειν τοῦ χριστῷ, τοῦ κυρίῳ, τοῦ θεῷ) faith *upon the name of Christ* (εἰς ὄνομα) *faith of his name* (πίστις τοῦ ὀνόματος) *faith to his name* (τοῦ ὀνόματι;) which phrases, all questionless denoting the same thing, do imply this faith to consist in being persuaded concerning the truth of some propositions chiefly relating to our Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, either as grounded upon his Authority, or appertaining to his Person: Now what such propositions are we may learn from other expressions, descriptions, or circumlocutions declaring the nature and quality of this faith: it is sometimes called *the belief of the Gospel* (that is of the whole systeme of doctrines, and laws, and promises, and prophecies taught, delivered, or declared by Christ, and his Apostles. *Repent*, said S. *John the Baptist, and believe the Gospel*) the *belief of the truth*, (that body of truth, signally so called, which was taught by the same Authors) the *acknowledgment of the* same *truth* (ἐπίγνωσις τῆς ἀληθείας are in S. *Paul* the same) equivalent to those descriptions of this faith are those expressions, which set it out by yielding assent (generally) to what our *Lord Christ*, and his *Apostles* taught, or to some chief points of their doctrine, inferring the rest; the [a] *believing*, [b] *hearing*, [c] *receiving the word of God*, of *Christ*, of the *Apostles*, [d] the *receiving Christ's testimony*, and (which is the same) [e] *receiving Christ himself*; [f] *coming unto Christ* (that is as disciples to their Master, as servants to their Lord, as persons oppressed and enslaved to their Deliverer) [g] *The believing* (and *knowing*) *that Jesus was sent by God*, *and came from him*; The believing, that *Jesus* was, what he professed himself to be;

Rom. 3. 3, 21, 26. Gal. 2. 16, 20. 3. 22. Phil. 3. 9. Apoc. 2. 13. 14. 12. εἰς. Act. 20. 21. 24, 25. 26. 18. Col. 2. 5. &c. ἐπὶ Heb. 6. 1. Act 9. 42. 22. 19, &c. ἐν. Gal. 3. 26. 1 Tim. 3. 13. 2 Tim. 3. 15. Act. 13. 39, &c. τοῦ χρ. Act. 5. 14. 16. 34. 18. 8. 27. 25. Joh. 5. 24. 10. 37, 38. 14. 11, &c. εἰς ὄνομα. Joh. 1. 12. 2. 23. 1 Joh. 5. 13, &c. Act. 3. 16. τοῦ. 1 Joh. 3. 23. τῷ.

Mar. 1. 15. Phil. 1. 27. 1 Pet. 4. 17. 2 Thes. 2. 12, 13. * 1 Tim. 4. 3. 2. 4. 1 Tit. 1. 1. Heb. 10. 26. 1 Tim. 2. 4, &c.

[a] Joh. 5. 47, 48. [b] Joh. 12. 47. [c] Joh. 12. 48. 17. 8. Act. 11. 1. [d] Joh. 3. 33. [e] Joh. 1. 12. 13. 20. 5. 43. [f] Joh. 6. 37, 44, 65. 5. 20. Matt. 11. 28. [g] Joh. 17. 8. 5. 24. 6. 29. 11. 42. 16. 30. 17. 21. Joh. 8. 24. 13. 19.

be; [k] the *confessing*, that *Jesus Christ is come in the flesh*; *that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, He which should come into the world*; *the King of Israel*; *that God raised him from the dead*; by the belief of which one point, as involving the rest, S. *Paul* expresseth this faith: [l] *If thou* (saith he) *shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe with thy heart, that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

[k] 1 Joh. 4. 2. 15. 1 Joh. 5. 1, 5. Joh. 4. 42. Joh. 1. 50. Joh. 20. 31. Act. 8. 37.
[l] Rom. 10. 9.
Ὁ ἀκούσας παρὰ πατρὸς καὶ μαθὼν. John 6 45.

The result upon considering all which expressions declaratory of the nature of this Faith (for this surely is not different from that, which is so commonly otherwhere represented in our Saviour, and his Apostles discourses and writings, as a great duty required of us; as a vertue (or act of vertue) highly commendable, as an especial instrument of our salvation, as a necessary condition prerequisite to our partaking the benefits, and privileges by divine favour conferred on Christians) the result I say is this, that by this Faith (as to the first, and primary sense thereof) is understood the being truly and firmly persuaded in our minds, that *Jesus* was what he professed himself to be, and what the Apostles testified him to be; the *Messias*, by God designed, foretold and promised to be sent into the world, to redeem, govern, instruct and save mankind; our Redeemer and Saviour; our Lord and Master; our King and Judge; the Great high Priest, and Prophet of God; the being assured of these, and all other propositions connexed with these; or in short, the being thoroughly persuaded of the truth of that Gospel; which was revealed and taught by Jesus and his Apostles. That this notion is true, those descriptions of this faith, and phrases expressing it, do sufficiently shew; the nature and reason of the thing doth confirm the same; for that such a faith is, in its kind and order, apt and sufficient to promote God's design of saving us; to render us capable of God's favour; to purge our hearts, and work that change of mind, which is necessary in order to the obtaining God's favour, and enjoying happiness; to produce that obedience, which God requires of us, and without which we cannot be saved; these things are the natural results of such a persuasion concerning those truths; as natural, as the desire and pursuit of any good doth arise from the clear apprehension thereof, or as the shunning of any mischief doth follow from the like apprehension; as a persuasion that wealth is to be got thereby, makes the merchant to undergo the dangers and pains of a long voyage; *(verifying that, Impiger extremos currit mercator ad Indos, Per mare pauperiem fugiens, per saxa, per ignes)* as the persuasion that health may thereby be recovered, engages a man not only to take down the most unsavoury potions, but to endure cuttings and burnings *ut valeas ferrum patieris, & ignes)* as a persuasion, that refreshment is to be found in a place, doth effectually carry the hungry person thither: So a strong persuasion that Christian Religion is true, and the way of obtaining happiness, and of escaping misery doth naturally produce a subjection of heart, and an obedience thereto; and accordingly we see the highest of those effects which the Gospel offers, or requires, are assigned to this faith, as results from it, or adjuncts thereof: Regeneration; *Whosoever*, saith S. *John*, *believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God*; Spiritual union with God; *Whosoever shall confess, that Jesus is the Son of God, God abideth in him, and he in God: if what ye have heard from the beginning, abide in you, ye shall also abide in the Father and the Son.* The obtaining God's love; *The father loves you, because you have loved me, and*

1 Joh. 5. 1. 1 Joh. 1. 12. 1 Joh. 4. 5. 1 Joh. 2. 24.

and have believed, that I came from God; Victory over the world: *Who is he, that overcometh the world, but he who believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* Freedom from spiritual slavery; and becoming true disciples of Christ; *If ye abide in my word, ye are truly my disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.* Obtaining everlasting life; *He that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me* (that is, who believeth my word, which is indeed the word of God, who sent me, and in whose name I speak) *hath everlasting life.* And, *These things were written, that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing it, you may have life in his name.* Interest in God and Christ, *He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, He* (ἐκεῖνος) *hath the Father and the Son. Verily verily, I say unto you, he that believeth upon me, hath eternal life. Rising with Christ* (that is as to capacity and right:) *Buried with him in baptism, wherein you are risen with him through faith of the operation of God; who raised him from the dead.* Being saved: *Whoever confesses with his mouth the Lord Jesus to be the Son of God; and in his heart believes that God raised him from the dead, shall be saved.* Lastly being justified; for (S. *Paul* adjoins) *a man believeth* (in the manner before mentioned) *to righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made to salvation.* So we see, that the chief of those excellent benefits, to the procuring of which faith (however understood) is any-wise conducible, or requisite, do belong to the persuasion concerning Evangelical truths. We may also observe in the history concerning our Lord, and his Apostles proceedings toward persons, whom they had converted to Christianity, and did admit to a participation of the privileges thereof, that no other faith was by them required in order thereto; upon such a persuasion appearing they received them into the Church, baptized them, pronounced unto them an absolution from their sins, and a reception into God's favour: This was the faith of *Martha*, which gave her interest in the promise of eternal life: *Every one* (said our Saviour to her) *living, and believing in me, shall never die: dost thou believe this? She saith unto him: Yes Lord, I have believed, that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world:* this was the faith, for which our Saviour commends S. *Peter*, and pronounces him happy: Upon appearance of this faith S. *Peter* baptized and admitted into the Church the three thousand persons whom he had converted (*Then*, says the Text, *they who gladly* (or willingly) *received his word* (that is, were persuaded of the truth of that doctrine, which is before set down concerning our Lord) *were baptized; and the same day were added* (to the Church) *about three thousand souls.*) Upon the like faith the *Samaritans* were baptized (Ὅταν ἐπίστευσαν τῷ Φιλίππῳ, *when they gave credence to Philip's doctrine:*) and upon the same account did the same *Evangelist* say it was lawful to baptize the *Eunuch*, and accordingly did perform it: *If, saith Philip, thou believest with thy whole heart, it is lawful* (or thou mayst be baptized) *He answering said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; so he baptized him:* This was the faith, upon which S. *Paul* baptized *Lydia, when she had yielded assent unto* (so προσέχειν doth import in the *Acts*; not only προσέχειν νῷ to yield attention, but προσέχειν πίστει to give assent unto) *the things spoken by Saint Paul*; thus also of those *Jews* in another place of the *Acts*, when S. *Paul* had *opened, and alledged, out of the Scriptures, that Christ was to suffer, and to rise again from the dead, and that Jesus was the Christ*, it is said, τινὲς ἐξ αὐτῶν ἐπείσθησαν καὶ προσεκληρώθησαν, *were persuaded*, and *consorted with Paul, and Silas* (that

Joh. 16. 27. *Vid.* 2. Thes. 2. 13. Eph. 1. 13. Act. 15. 7, 9. 1 Joh. 5. 5. Joh. 8. 31, 32. Joh. 5. 24. Joh. 20. 31. 2 *Ep.* Joh. 9. Joh. 6. 47. 3. 36, 15, 16. Col. 2. 12. Rom. 10. 9. Rom. 10. 10. Joh. 11. 26. Matt. 16. 16. Joh. 6. 69. Οἱ ἀσμένως ἀποδεξάμενοι τὸν λόγον. Act. 2. 41. Act. 8. 12. Act. 8. 37, 38. Act. 16. 14, 15. Act. 17. 4. Act. 17. 3, 4. Act 9. 20. 16. 32. 17. 11, 12.

(that is, were received into Christian communion with them.) The same is intimated in other passages of the Apostolical history; by all which it appears, that the Apostles method was to declare, and inculcate the main points of the Christian history and doctrine, attesting to the one, and proving the other by testimonies and arguments proper to that purpose; and whoever of their hearers declared himself persuaded of the truth of what they taught, that he did heartily assent thereto, and resolved to profess and practise accordingly, him without more to do, they presently baptized, and instated him in the privileges appertaining to Christianity; or (in S. *Paul*'s language) did justifie them, according to their subordinate manner, as the ministers of God. And thus did the Primitive Church practise after the Apostles; as *Justin* the *Martyr* fully relates of it: — ὅσοι ἂν πεισθῶσι, καὶ πιστεύωσιν ἀληθῆ ταῦτα τὰ ὑφ' ἡμῶν διδασκόμενα, καὶ λεγόμενα εἶναι, καὶ ἐθέλωσι ζῆν οὕτως δύνασθαι ἐπαγγέλλονται, &c. ---- ἄγονται ὑφ' ἡμῶν ἔνθα ὕδωρ ἐστὶ, καὶ τρόπον ἀναγεννήσεως, ὃν καὶ ἡμεῖς αὐτοὶ ἀνεγεννήθημεν ἀναγεννῶνται ---- *Apol.* 2. *Whoever* (saith he) *are persuaded, and do believe these things by us taught, and said to be true, and undertake that they can live so according to them;* ---- *are brought thither, where water is, and are regenerated after the same manner as we have been regenerated.* I farther add, that even this faith is expressed to be the effect of divine grace, and inspiration; for, when Matt. 16. 17. S. *Peter* had confessed that *Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God,* our *Saviour* tells him, *That flesh and blood had not revealed that unto* 1 Cor. 12. 3. *him, but his Father in heaven*; and, *No man* (S. *Paul* tells us) *can call* 1 Cor. 2. 10. *Jesus Lord, but by the holy Ghost*; And, *Every Spirit, which confesseth* 2 Cor. 4. 6. *Jesus Christ to have been come in the flesh, is of God* (saith S. *John.*) So 2 Pet. 1. 19. that even, this is a faith, in respect to which the holy Ghost is called 1 Joh. 4. 2. (Eph. 1. 17, 18.) *the spirit of faith*, which is the *fruit of the spirit*; and *the gift of God*; 2 Cor. 4. 13. that which *no man can* have without *God's drawing him*; and teaching Gal. 5. 22. Eph. 2. 8. him; *No man can come unto me except the Father that hath sent me shall* Phil. 1. 29. Joh. 6. 44, 45. *draw him* (ἑλκύσῃ αὐτόν.) *Every one that hath heard from the Father,* Act. 16. 14. *and hath learned, cometh unto me:* to which it is ordinarily required, that God should *open the heart*, as he did *Lydia*'s heart, *to attend, and assent unto what Saint Paul taught:* Neither doth the Scripture (as I conceive) attribute any thing unto faith, which doth not agree to this notion.

We might lastly adjoin, that this was the common, and current notion of Faith among the ancient Christians; neither do we, I suppose, meet with any other in their Writings; all which things do abundantly confirm the truth thereof.

5. But I must farther observe particularly (in correspondence to what was before more generally observed,) that this Faith doth not only denote precisely, and abstractedly such acts of mind, such opinions and persuasions concerning the truth of matters specified, but doth also connote, and imply (indeed comprehend according to the meaning of those, who use the word) such acts of will, as, supposing those persuasions to be real and complete, are naturally consequent upon them, and are in a manner necessarily coherent with them; a firm resolution constantly to profess, and adhere unto the doctrine, of which a man is so persuaded; to obey all the laws and precepts, which it contains; forsaking in open profession, and in real practices all principles, rules, customs inconsistent with those doctrines and laws; that which is called *conversion*, or *returning*

Solv. *de provid.* IV. 1. *Cum hoc sit hominis Christiani fides, fideliter Christi mandata servare, fit absq; dubio ut nec fidem habeat qui infidelis est, nec Christum credat, qui Christi mandata conculcat,* &c.

to

to the Lord (that is, leaving a course of rebellion, and disobedience to those laws, which the Lord in the Gospel commands, and resolvedly betaking themselves to the observance of them) πολύς τε ὄχλος πιστεύσας ἐπέστρεψεν ὅτι τῷ Κυρίῳ, *a great multitude* (it is said) *believing, did return unto the Lord*; their faith did carry with it such a conversion. Hence this faith is styled πειθαρχεῖν θεῷ (*to obey God's command,*) ὑπακούειν τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ, *to obey the Gospel,* ὑπακοὴν τῇ πίστει, *to obey the faith*; ὑποταγὴ τῆς ὁμολογίας εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον (*subjection of professing the gospel of Christ*) *with purpose of heart to adhere unto God*; *stipulation of a good conscience toward God* (that which S. *Peter* intimates, as a necessary concomitant of baptism, it being a sincere undertaking, and engaging ones self to obey God's commandments) in fine, to *repent*; which is either adequately the same thing with faith, or included therein, according to the Apostolical meaning of the word; for that remission of sins, which is sometime made the consequent of faith, is otherwhere expressly annex'd to repentance: The summ of the Gospel our Saviour himself expresses by the preaching in his name *repentance, and remission of sins in all nations*: and *Repent*, (S. *Peter* preached,) *and let every one of you be baptized*: And, *Repent*, (said he again) *and return, that your sins may be blotted out*; and, *Then to the Gentiles* (say those in the *Acts*) *hath God given repentance unto life*; which signifies the same with that other expression concerning the same persons, *God's having purified their hearts by faith*; in which places I take repentance to import the same thing with faith; being in effect nothing else, but sincere embracing Christian Religion. Now the word *faith* is thus extended (beyond its natural and primary force) to comprehend such a compliance of will, or purpose of obedience, because this doth naturally arise from a persuasion concerning the truth of the Gospel, if it be real and strong enough, in that degree, which Christianity requires, and supposes to the effects mentioned in the Gospel; if it be ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ *in the heart* (or a hearty faith) as S. *Paul* speaks; if it be such, as *Philip* exacts of the *Eunuch*, *a belief* ἐξ ὅλης τῆς καρδίας, *from the whole heart*; if it have that due plerophorie, that stability, that solidity, which the Apostles speak of: for a weak, faint, slight, ill-grounded, ill-rooted opinion concerning the truth of the Gospel (such as those in another case had, whom our Saviour rebuked with a τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι; *why are ye fearful, O ye small in faith?* such as S. *Peter* had, when our Saviour said to him, ὀλιγόπιστε τί ἐδίστασας; *O thou of small faith, why didst thou doubt?* which faith could not keep them, nor him from sinking; not such as those had, who *heard the word, and gladly received it*; *but wanted root, so that, when persecution, or affliction did arise for the word*; *they were presently scandalized*; not such a faith, as those many *Rulers* had, who are said to have *believed in Jesus, but for fear of the Pharisees, did not confess him*; not such, as *Simon Magus* had, who is said to *have believed Philip*, but to no good effect, *because his heart was not right before God*; he having not thoroughly resolved to obey the Gospel; not such as *Agrippa* had, whom S. *Paul* had *almost persuaded to be a Christian*) these sorts of faith are in comparison to that we speak of, but equivocally so called; it includes a firm resolution to perform carefully all the duties injoyned to Christians, to undergo patiently all the crosses incident to Christianity; it is the same with becoming a disciple of Christ, which a man cannot be without renouncing all other interests and concernments, without *denying ones self, forsaking all and following him*; without *taking his yoke upon him,*

Acts 11. 21. *Vid.* Acts 9. 35. 14. 15. 26. 18.
Acts 5. 32. 1 Thes. 1. 8.
Rom. 1. 6.
Acts 17. 16. 16. 2 Cor. 9. 13.
Acts 11. 23.
1 Pet. 3. 21.
Luke 24. 47. Acts 2. 38. Acts 3. 19. 17. 30.
Acts 11. 18.
Acts 15. 9.
Rom. 10. 9.
Acts 8. 37.
Heb 10 22. 23. 6. 11. 11. 1 Thes. 1. 5. Col. 1. 23. 2. 5. 7. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 8. 7. Matt. 8 26. Matt. 14. 30.
Matt. 13. 20.
Joh. 12. 42.
Acts 8. 12. 21.
Acts 26. 28.
Mat. 10. 38. 11. 29. Luke 9. 23 14. 26, 27 16. 24.

going after, and bearing his cross: it supposes (as our Saviour also teaches us,) that a man hath cast up with himself the gain and loss he is like to receive by the bargain; and being satisfied therein to contract *bonâ fide* with God; that a man hath weighed all the pains and dangers he shall be put upon by entring into this warfare; and so resolvedly to adventure upon it; it is productive of *love to the truth*, yea of love to God, and charity to men; without which all faith is unprofitable, and ineffectual, as S. *Paul.* teaches us. In short, this Faith is nothing else but a true, serious, resolute embracing Christianity; not only being persuaded that all the doctrines of Christ are true, but submitting to his will and command in all things.

Matt. 13. 44, 45. Luke 14. 28, 31. 2 Thes. 2. 10 (1 Cor. 13. 2. Gal. 5. 6.) *Credere se in Christum quo modo dicit, qui non facit quod Christus facere præcepit?* Cypr. *de Un. E.*

But to prevent mistakes, and remove objections, I shall yet further observe,

That this Faith hath, although not an adequate, yet a peculiar respect unto that part of Christian truth, which concerns the merciful intentions of God toward mankind, and the gracious performances of our Saviour in order to the accomplishing them; the promises of pardon to our sins, and restoral into God's favour upon the terms propounded in the Gospel, of sincere faith and repentance; whence the Gospel is called λόγος καταλλαγῆς *(the word of reconciliation)* and this is expressed as a summary of the Apostolick ministery or message; that *God was in Christ reconciling the world, not imputing their sins*; And, this our Saviour did order, in especial manner to be preached in his name; this accordingly they did mainly propound and inculcate; that God had exalted *Jesus to his right hand as a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins; that he should receive remission of sins, whoever did believe in his name; Let it be known unto you, brethren, that by this man remission of sins is * denounced unto you,* (so did they preach.) Whence this faith is *(signanter)* called *belief in the blood of Christ:* Indeed of all Christian doctrines this is most proper first to be propounded and persuaded; as the most attractive to the belief of the rest; most encouraging and comfortable to men; most apt to procure glory to God by the illustration of his principal attributes, his justice and his goodness; most suitable to the state of things between God, and man; for men being in a state of rebellion and emity toward God, in order to their reducement and recovery thence it was most proper that in the first place an overture of mercy and pardon should be made; an act of oblivion should be passed and propounded to them: Yet are not these propositions and promises the adequate or entire object of this faith; for other Articles of faith are often propounded in a collateral order with those, yea sometimes (as in the case of the *Eunuch*) others are expressed, when that is not mentioned; but only understood: neither if any one should believe all the doctrines of that kind; if he did not withal believe that *Jesus* is his Lord, and shall be his Judge; that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, and a judgment to come, with the like fundamental verities of our Religion, would he be a believer in this sense.

2 Cor. 5. 18, 19. Luke 24. 47. Act. 5. 31. Act. 10. 43. Act. 13. 38. * καταγγέλλεται. Rom. 3. 25. Rom. 3. 26. 15. 9. Eph. 1. 6. Act. 8. 37. Rom. 10. 9.

Fides dicit, parata sunt magna & incomprehensibilia dona à Deo fidelibus suis: dicit spes mihi illa bona servantur, charitas dicit curro ego ad illa. Bern.

7. I observe farther, that this Faith doth relate only to propositions revealed by God (or at least, deduced from principles of reason, such as are, that there is a God; that God is good, veracious and faithful; that our religion is true in the gross; that the holy Scriptures were written by divine inspiration; which propositions we believe upon rational grounds and motives) not unto other

other propositions concerning particular matter of fact, subject to private conscience or experience; nor to any conclusions depending upon such propositions: For instance, it is a part of this faith to believe that God is merciful and gracious; that he bears good will unto, and is disposed to pardon every penitent sinner; or (which is all one) that supposing a man doth believe, and hath repented, God doth actually love him, and doth forgive his sins; this is, I say indeed a part of the faith we speak of, its object being part of the Gospel revealed unto us: but the being perswaded that God doth love me, or hath pardoned my sins, or that I am in a state of favour with God, may, as my circumstances may be, not be my duty; however it is no part of this faith, but a matter of opinion, dependent upon private experience: For such a perswasion must be grounded upon my being conscious to my self of having truly and thoroughly repented (this being required by God, as a necessary condition toward my obtaining pardon and his favour) of having performed which duty I may presume, when it is false (and therefore cannot then be obliged to believe it) and may doubt, when it is true, and that not without good reason; considering the blindness and fallibility of man's mind, and that man's *heart is deceitful above all things*, as the Prophet tells us; upon which account, then a man may not be obliged to have such a perswasion: it is indeed a great fault to doubt, or distrust on that hand, which concerns God; about his goodness, his truth, his wisdom, or power; but it is not always (perhaps not commonly) blameable to question a man's own qualifications, or his own performances, whether in kind, or degree they be answerable to what God requires; *that* is inconsistent with true faith, but *this* not: We cannot have any good religious affections toward God, if we do not take him to be our gracious father; but we may have in us such affections toward him, and he may be favourably disposed toward us, when we suspect our selves to be untoward children, *unworthy* (as the *prodigal Son* in the Gospel confessed himself) *to be called the sons of God*; the *Centurion* in the Gospel did confess himself *unworthy that Christ should enter under his roof*; but he declared his perswasion, that *if Christ should only speak a word, his child should be healed*; and our *Saviour* thereupon professes, *that he had not found so much faith in Israel:* to the *blind men* imploring his relief our Saviour puts the question, *Do ye believe that I can do this? they answered, Yes Lord*; he required no more of them; but said thereupon, *according to your faith, let it be done unto you.* And that for which *Abraham* the Father of believers his faith is represented so acceptable, is, his firm perswasion concerning God's power; *because* (saith S. *Paul*) *he had a plerophory, that what was promised, God was able to perform*; by doing thus, he was a believer, and thereby *gave glory to God* (as the *Apostle* there adds) if we do not then distrust God, we may have faith, although we distrust our selves. It is true (generally, and absolutely speaking) we should endeavour so fully and clearly to repent, and to perform whatever God requires of us; that we may thence acquire a good hope concerning our state; we should labour, that *our hearts may not condemn us of* any presumptuous transgressing our duty; and consequently that we may become in a manner confident of God's favour towards us; but when we have done the best we can, even when we are not conscious of any enormous fault or defect, yet we may consi-

Je. 17. 9.

Qui perseveraverit usq; ad finem, hic salvus erit; quicquid ante finem fuerit, gradus est, quo ad fastigium salutis asconditur, non terminus, quo jam culminis summa teneatur, &c. Cypr. *de Unit. Eccl. p.* 259.

Luke 15. 19.

Matt. 8. 8, 10.

Matt. 9. 28. *Vid* Matt. 15 27.

Rom. 4 21. 11. Heb. 11. 19.

πληροφορηθεις.

Rom. 4 20.

Col. 1. 23. Heb. 3. 6. 1 Joh. 3. 21.

1 Cor. 4. 4. der with S. *Paul*, *that we are not thereby justified*; but abide liable to the
1 Sam. 16. 7. more certain cognisance and judgment of God, *who seeth not as man seeth*; that we are not capable, or competent judges of our selves; nor are ever the better for thinking well of our selves; since (as
2 Cor. 10. 18. S. *Paul* tells us again) *he is not approved that commends himself, but*
Ps. 19. 11. *whom the Lord commendeth:* for that, *delicta sua quis intelligit? who*
Prov. 20. 9. *can thoroughly understand and scann his own errors? who can say I have made my heart clean, I am purged of my sin?* who can know (if the *Psalmist* implieth that he could not) until God hath searched him and
Ps. 139. 24. discovers it, *whether there be any secret way of wickedness in him*; whether he be sufficiently grieved for having offended God, fully humbled under the sense of his sins, thoroughly resolved to amend his life? however it often happens that true faith and sincere repentance are in de-
Μὴ ὑψηλοφρόνει, ἀλλὰ φοβοῦ. Rom. 11. 20. gree very defective; in which case we may, without prejudicing the truth of our faith, suspect the worst, yea I conceive it is more safe, and commendable so to do: if in any, then chiefly, I suppose, in this most important and critical affair, the Wise-man's sentence doth hold,
Prov. 28. 14. *Blessed is he that feareth always*; so feareth, as
Nunquam est de salute propriâ mens secura sapientis. Salv. *ad Eccl. Cath. lib.* 2. thereby to become more solicitous and watchful over his heart, and ways; more careful and stu-
2 Pet. 1. 10. dious of securing his salvation finally; to render
Quem censeas digniorem, nisi emendatiorem: quem emendatiorem, nisi timidiorem? Tertul. *de Pœnit.* 6. his calling and election in the event more firm, and in his apprehension more hopeful. I dare say of two persons otherwise alike qualified, he that upon this ground (fearing his own unworthiness, or the defect of his performances) is most doubtful of his state, doth stand really upon better terms with God; as the *Pharisee*, who *justified himself*, and took himself to be in a very good condition, was indeed *less justified*
Luke 18. 14. 10. 29: (somewhat the less for that conceit of his) than the poor *Publican*, who was sensible of his own unworthiness, and condemned himself in his own opinion: the great danger lies on that hand of being presumptuous, arrogant and self-conceited, which God hates; and on this hand there usually lies humility, modesty and poverty of Spirit, which
Luke 16. 15. 18. 14. God loves. As *every high thing* (every elevation of mind) *is abomina-*
2 Sam. 22. 28. *ble in God's sight*; and he *depresseth him that exalteth himself*; so lowly
Ps. 34. 18. Isa. 66. 2. 57. 15. thoughts are gracious in God's regard; *he raiseth him, that humbleth himself, and is lowly in his own eyes:* he hath an especial respect to him, *that is of a poor and contrite heart, and trembleth at his word.* It is a property of good men (being such as often reflect upon their own
Gen. 32. 10. hearts and ways, and thence discern the defects in them) with *Jacob*,
Ps. 119. 120. to think themselves *less than the least of God's mercies*; with *David* to
Phil. 2. 12. be *afraid of God's judgments*; it is their duty to pass the time of *their*
1 Pet. 1. 17. 2 Pet. 1. 10. *sojourning here in fear, to work out their salvation with fear and trembling.* I may add, that sometime a person much loving God, and
Ps. 102. 6. 38. 3. much beloved of him, may be like a *Pelican in the wilderness, and an Owle of the desart*; from an apprehension of God's anger may have *no soundness in his flesh, nor rest in his bones by reason of his sin*; may have his
143. 4. *spirit overwhelmed, and his heart within him desolate:* may fear that
Jer. 5. 25. Matt. 27. 46. his sins have *separated between him and his God*; and that he is *forsaken*
Ps. 22. 1. Ps. 30. 7. 89. 46. 42. 5. 69. 16. 31. 22. *of God*; God *hiding his face, and withdrawing his light of his countenance*, he may be *troubled*; may have *his soul cast down and disquieted within him*; may be ready to say, *I am cut off from before thine eyes*; even such a man in such a state of distress and doubt, may continue a believer; he retaining honourable thoughts of God (in which the worth

worth and vertue of true faith consisteth) although dejected by the conscience of his own infirmities, by suspicion of his own indispositions, and consequently by the fear of God's displeasure.

Farther, that this Faith doth not essentially include a respect to such particular propositions, or does not (as many in these two latter ages have deemed and taught) consist in our being persuaded that our sins are pardon'd, or our persons just in God's esteem; that we are acceptable to God, and stand possessed of his favour, it appears from hence, that faith is in holy Scripture represented in nature precedaneous to God's benevolence (especial I mean, not general benevolence, for that prevents all acts and dispositions of us, or in us) to his conferring remission of sins, accepting and justifying our persons; it is a previous condition, without which (as the *Apostle* teaches us) *it is impossible to please God*; it is Heb. 11. 6. a reason of God's love (*The Father*, saith our Lord, *loves you, because* Joh. 16. 27. *ye have loved me, and believed that I came from God.*) it is a ground of divine acceptation and good-will (*Abraham believed him*, saith Jam. 2. 23. S. *James*, *and it was accounted unto him for righteousness, and he was called the friend of God*) it is a mean, or instrument (so it is constantly represented) by which we are justified, obtain God's favour, and the remission of our sins; and therefore is in order of nature previous and prerequisite thereto; it is therefore required before baptism, in which remission of sins is consigned: God justifies, accepts and pardons him, that hath been impious, but not him that is an infidel: This is the method plainly declared in Scripture; wherefore if faith implies a persuasion that God hath remitted our sins, it must imply an antecedent faith (even a justifying faith, antecedent to it self,) or that we believe before we believe, and are justified before we are justified. I add, that by this notion many, or most (I will not after the Council of *Trent* say all) humble and modest Christians are excluded from being believers; even all those who are not confident of their own sincerity and sanctity, and consequently cannot be assured of their standing in God's favour: and on the other side, the most presumptuous and fanatical sort of people are most certainly the truest and strongest believers, as most partaking of the most essential property thereof, according to that notion; for of all men living such are wont to be most assured of God's especial love unto them, and confident that their sins are pardoned; Experience sufficiently shews this to be true, and consequently that such a notion of Faith cannot be good.

Sed fide hoc beneficium accipiendum est, quâ credere nos oportet, quòd propter Christum nobis donentur remissio peccatorum, & justificatio Conf. Aug.

Quum justificamur fide, vult te intueri filium Dei sedentem ad dextram Patris, Mediatorem, interpellantem pro nobis, & statuere, quòd tibi remittantur peccata; quòd justus, id est acceptus reputeris. Melanct. *Loc. com. p.* 418.

Much less is that notion of faith right, which defines faith to be a firm and certain knowledge of God's eternal good-will toward us particularly, and that we shall be saved; which notion (taught in the beginning of the Reformation by a man of greatest name and authority) was thus lately expressed by the *Professours* of *Leyden* in their *Synopsis purioris Theologiæ: Faith* (*they say*, in their definition thereof) *is a firm assent* —— *by which every believer with a certain trust resting in God, is persuaded not only that remission of sins is in general promised to them who believe, but is granted to himself particularly, and eternal righteousness, and from it life, by the mercy of God, &c.* which notion

Calv. *Inst. Lib.* 3. §. 7, & 28. *compar. Nunc justa fidei definitio nobis constabit, si dicamus esse divinæ erga nos benevolentiæ firmam, certamq; cognitionem, &c.*

Jam in divina benevolentia quam respicere dicitur fides, intelligimus salutis ac vitæ æternæ possessionem obtineri, &c.

---firmus assensus-- quo cert.i fiduciâ in Deo acquiescens firmiter unusquisq; fidelis statuit, non solùm promissum esse credentibus in genere remissionem peccatorum, sed sibi in particulari concessum, æternamq; justitiam, & ex eâ vitam, &c.

notion seems to be very uncomfortable, as rejecting every man from the company of believers, who is either ignorant or doubtful, not only concerning his present, but his final state; who hath not, not only a good opinion, but a certain knowledge of his present sincerity and sanctity; yea not only of this, but of his future constant perseverance therein; so that if a man be not sure he hath repented, he is (according to this notion) sure that he hath not repented, and is no believer: how many good people must this doctrine discourage and perplex? To remove it, we may consider, 1. that it altogether inverts and confounds the order of things declared in Scripture, wherein Faith (as we observed before) is set before obtaining God's good-will, as a prerequisite condition thereto; and is made a means of salvation (*without faith it is impossible to please God*; *By grace we are saved, through faith.*) And if we must believe before God loves us, (with such a love as we speak of) and before we can be saved; then must we know that we believe before we can know that God loves us, or that we shall be saved; and consequently we must indeed believe before we can know that God loves us, or that we shall be saved. But this doctrine makes the knowledge of God's love and of salvation in nature antecedent to faith, as being an essential ingredient into it; which is preposterous: Consider this circle of discourse: A man cannot know that he believes, without he does believe (this is certain) a man cannot know that he shall be saved, without knowing he doth believe (this is also certain, for upon what ground, from what evidence can he know his salvation, but by knowing his faith.) But again backward, A man (say they) cannot believe (and consequently not know that he believes) without being assured of his salvation: What an inextricable maze and confusion is here? this doctrine indeed doth make the knowledge of a future event to be the cause of its being future; it supposes God to become our friend (as *Abraham* was by his faith) by our knowing that he is our friend; it makes us to obtain a reward by knowing that we shall obtain it; it supposes the assurance of our coming to a journeys end to be the way of getting thither; which who can conceive intelligible, or true? Our *Saviour* doth indeed tell us, that it is *the way to life* everlasting (or conducible to the attaining it) *to know* (that is, to believe, as it is interpreted in the *8th* verse of that chapter; for what upon good grounds we are persuaded of, or judge true, we may be said to know) *the true God, and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent*; but he doth not say it is life everlasting (or conducible to the obtaining it) to know, that we shall have life everlasting: that were somewhat strange to say. S. *Peter* exhorts us to *use diligence to make our calling and election sure* (or firm, and stable) but he doth not bid us know it to be sure; if we did know it to be so, what need should we have to make it so; yea how could we make it so? he doth not injoin us to be sure of it in our opinion, but to secure it in the event by sincere obedience, and a holy life; by so impressing this persuasion upon our minds, so rooting the love of God and his truth in our hearts, that no temptation may be able to subvert our faith, or to pluck out our charity.

Heb. 11. 6. Eph. 2. 8. Rom. 10. 9.

Jam. 2 23.

Joh. 17. 3, 8.

2 Pet. 1. 10.

2. This notion plainly supposes the truth of that doctrine, that no man being once in God's favour can ever quite lose it; the truth of which I shall not contest now (nor alledge the many clear passages of Scripture, nor the whole tenour of the Gospel, nor the unanimous consent of all Christendom for fifteen hundred years against it) but shall only

only take notice, that their notion of faith necessarily presupposing the truth of this doctrine is yet thereby everted: for it follows thence, that no man, who doth not assent to that doctrine, is, or can be a believer: for he that is not assured of the truth of that opinion (although we suppose him assured of his present sincerity, and being in a state of grace) cannot know that he shall be saved: So that only such as agree with them in that opinion can be believers, which is somewhat hard, or rather very absurd; and to aggravate this inconvenience I adjoin; 3. that according to their notion scarce any man (except some have had an especial revelation concerning their salvation) before the late alterations in Christendom, was a believer; for before that time it hardly appears, that any man did believe, as they do, that a man cannot fall from grace; and therefore scarce any man could be assured, that he should be saved; and therefore scarce any man could be a believer in their sense.

S. *Augustine* himself (whose supposed patronage stands them in so much stead upon other occasions) hath often affirmed, that divers have had given them that faith, that charity, that justification, wherein if they had died, they should have been saved; who yet were not saved: which persons surely, when they were in that good state, (admitting them according to S. *Augustine*'s supposal to have been in it) were as capable of knowing their salvation, as any other man can be, yea S. *Augustine* himself (considering that *Accidere cuiquam quod potest, cuivis potest*, what was another man's case might be his, there being no ground of difference) could not be more sure of his own salvation at any time, than such persons were at that time: According to S. *Augustine's* judgment therefore no man could know that he should be saved (his salvation depending upon perseverance, which in his opinion not being given to all, must as to our knowledge (whatever it might be in respect to God's decree) be contingent and uncertain) it follows I say upon his suppositions, yea he expressly affirms it; (*lib. 2. de bono pers.*) *Itaq;* (says he) *utrum quisq; hoc (perseverantiæ) munus acceperit, quamdiu hanc vitam ducit, incertum est: Whether any have received this gift of perseverance while he leads this life is uncertain.* Wherefore S. *Augustine* could not be assured of his own salvation; and therefore (according to these mens sense) he was no believer, no Christian; which I suppose yet they will not assert, though it be so plainly consequent on their own position. I might, 4. ask of them, if a man should confess ingenuously, that although he did hope for mercy from God in that day, yet that he was not assured of his salvation, whether such a person should be rejected from Christian communion, as no believer: it seems, according to their notion of faith, he should; since by his own (in this particular infallible) judgment it is notorious that he (as being no believer) hath no title unto, or interest in the privileges of Christianity; but this proceeding would very much depopulate the Church, and banish from it, I fear, the best (the most humble and modest, yea the wisest and sobereſt) members thereof.

De Corr. & gr. cap. 9 & 13. De bon. pers. cap. 8. 13.

---- nec sibi quisq; ita notus est, ut sit de sua crastina conversatione securus. Aug. *Ep 121. ad Probam.*

In hoc mundo, & in hac vita nulla anima possit esse secura. Ibid.

Quamdiu vivimus, in certamine sumus, & quamdiu in certamine, nulla certa est victoria. Hier. *adv. Pæleg 2. 2*

But so much I think suffices for the removal of that new harsh notion, to say no worse of it.

There is another more new than that, devised by some (who perceived the inconveniences of the former notions, yet it seems did affect to substitute some new fine one in their room) which if it be not so plainly false,

Vid Ames. *Med lib. 1. cap. 27. Christus adæquatum ob.* Ames.

falſe, yet is (it ſeems) more obſcure and intricate: it is this; that Faith is not an aſſent to propoſitions of any kind, but a recumbency, leaning, reſting, rolling upon, adherency to (for they expreſs themſelves in theſe ſeveral terms, and others like them) the perſon of Chriſt; or, an apprehending and applying to our ſelves the righteouſneſs of Chriſt; his perſon it ſelf, and his righteouſneſs, as ſimple incomplex things; not any propoſition (that they expreſly caution againſt) are the objects, ſay they, of our faith: they compare our faith to a hand that lays hold upon Chriſt, and applies his righteouſneſs; and to an eye that looks upon him, and makes him preſent to us; and by looking on him (as on the brazen Serpent) cures us: but this notion is ſo intricate, theſe phraſes are ſo unintelligible, that I ſcarce believe the deviſers of them did themſelves know what they meant by them; I do not, I am ſure: for what it is for one body to lean upon, or to be rolled on another; what for one body to reach at, and lay hold upon another; what it is to apply a garment to one's body, or a ſalve to one's wounds, I can eaſily underſtand; but what it is for a man's mind to lean upon a perſon (otherwiſe than by aſſenting unto ſome propoſition he ſpeaks, or relying upon ſome promiſe he makes) to apply a thing, otherwiſe than by conſenting to ſome propoſition concerning that thing, I cannot apprehend, or reach, there is not (as we noted before) any faculty or operation of a man's mind, which anſwers the intent of ſuch notions or phraſes. Let me put this caſe: ſuppoſe a great Province had generally revolted from its Sovereign, whereby the People thereof had all deſerved extreme puniſhment ſutable to ſuch an offence; but that the King moved with pity, and upon the interceſſion of his only beloved Son (together with a ſatisfaction offered and performed by him) ſhould reſolve to grant a general pardon to them, upon juſt, and fit, and withall, very eaſie terms; And that for the execution of this gracious purpoſe toward them, he ſhould depute and ſend his Son himſelf among them to treat with them, by him declaring his merciful intentions toward them, with the conditions, upon complyance wherewith all, or any of them ſhould be pardon'd their offence, and received into favour; thoſe conditions being, ſuppoſe it, that firſt they ſhould receive and acknowledge his Son for ſuch as he profeſſed himſelf to be (the King's Son indeed, who truly brought ſuch a meſſage unto them from his Majeſty) then that they ſhould ſeriouſly reſolve with themſelves, and ſolemnly engage to return unto their due allegiance; undertaking faithfully for ever after to obſerve thoſe laws, which the ſaid Prince in his Father's name ſhould propound unto them. Suppoſe farther, that the Prince in purſuance of this commiſſion and deſign, being come into the Country, ſhould there ſend all about Officers of his injoining them to diſcover the intent of his coming, what he offered, and upon what terms; withall, impowering them in his name to receive thoſe, who complied, into favour, declaring them pardoned of all their offences, and reſtored to the benefit of the King's protection, and all the privileges of loyal ſubjects; ſuppoſe now, that theſe Officers ſhould go to the people, and ſpeak to them in this manner: The King makes an overture of pardon and favour unto you upon condition, that any one of you will recumbe, reſt, lean upon, or roll himſelf upon the perſon of his Son (reſt upon his perſon, not only rely upon his word, that you are to underſtand) or in caſe you will lay hold upon, and apply to your ſelves his Son's righteouſneſs, by which he hath procured of the King his Father, this

mercy

mercy and favour for you (not only being perſuaded that he hath performed thus much for you, this is not enough) do you think theſe meſſengers ſhould thus well expreſs themſelves, or perform their meſſage handſomely and with advantage? ſhould not they do much better, laying aſide ſuch words of metaphor and myſtery, to ſpeak in plain language; telling them, that their King his Son (by plain characters diſcernable to be truly ſuch) was come among them upon ſuch an intention; that if they would acknowledge him, and undertake thereafter to obey him, they ſhould receive a full pardon, with divers other great favours and advantages thereby? the caſe is apparently ſo like to that which ſtands between God and man, and doth ſo fully reſemble the nature of the Evangelical diſpenſation, that I need not make any application, or uſe any more argument to refute that notion; I ſhall only ſay that I conceive theſe new phraſes (for ſuch they are) not known to ancient Chriſtians, no delivered, either in terms, or ſenſe in Scripture, for the places alledged in favour or proof of them by *Ames*, one of the firſt broachers of them, (all we may preſume that they could find any-wiſe ſeeming to favour their notion) do not, as if time would permit might eaſily be ſhewed, import any ſuch thing, but are ſtrangely miſapplied) that I ſay theſe phraſes do much obſcure the nature of this great duty, and make the ſtate of things in the Goſpel, more difficult and dark than it truly is; and thereby ſeem to be of bad conſequence, being apt to beget in people both dangerous preſumptions and ſad perplexities: for they hearing that they are only, or mainly bound to have ſuch a recumbency upon Chriſt, or to make ſuch an application of his righteouſneſs, they begin (accordingly as they take themſelves to be directed) to work their minds to it; and when they have hit upon that poſture of fancy, which they gueſs to ſute their Teachers meaning, then they become ſatisfied, and conceit they believe well, although perhaps they be ignorant of the principles of the Chriſtian faith, and indiſpoſed to obey the precepts of our Lord: ſometimes, on the other ſide, although they well underſtand, and are perſuaded concerning the truth of all neceſſary Chriſtian doctrines, and are well diſpoſed to obſerve God's commandments, yet becauſe they cannot tell whether they apprehend Chriſt's perſon dexterouſly, or apply to themſelves his righteouſneſs in the right manner, as is preſcribed to them (of which it is no wonder that they ſhould doubt, ſince it is ſo hard to know what the doing ſo means) they become diſturbed and perplexed in their minds; queſtioning whether they do believe or no: Thus by theſe notions (or phraſes rather) are ſome men tempted fondly to preſume, and other good people are wofully diſcouraged by them; both being thence diverted, or withdrawn from their duty: whereas what it is to believe, as Chriſtians anciently did underſtand it, and as we have aſſayed to explain it, is very eaſie to conceive; and the taking it ſo, can have no other than very good influence upon practice, as both reaſon (as we have inſinuated) ſhews, and the Scripture largely and plainly affirms. But let thus much ſuffice for the enquiry concerning the genuine nature and notion of Faith proper to this place (that faith by which in this Text we are ſaid to be Juſtified) the other particulars I cannot ſo much as touch upon at this time.

I end with thoſe good prayers of our Church:

O *Lord, from whom all good things do come, Grant to us thy humble ſervants, that by thy holy inſpiration we may think thoſe things that* Fifth Sunday for *Easter.*

be good; and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

14th. Sunday after *Trinity.* *Almighty and Everlasting Lord, give unto us the encrease of faith, hope and charity, and that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Amen.

I Believe, &c.

SERMON V.

OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH.

ROM. V. 1.

Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

IN order to the understanding of these words I did formerly propound divers particulars to be considered and discussed: the *first* was, What that Faith is, by which Christians are said to be justified? This I have dispatched: The *next* is, What Justification doth import? the which I shall now endeavour to explain; and I am concerned to perform it with the more care and diligence, because the right notion of this term hath in latter times been canvased with so much vehemence of dissension and strife.

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In former times, among the *Fathers* and the *School-men*, there doth not appear to have been any difference or debate about it; because (as it seems) men commonly having the same apprehensions about the matters, to which the word is applicable, did not so much examine or regard the strict propriety of expression concerning them: consenting in *things*, they did not fall to cavil and contend about the exact meaning of *words*. They did indeed consider distinctly no such point of doctrine as that of *justification*, looking upon that *word* as used incidentally in some places of Scripture; for expression of points more clearly expressed in other terms; wherefore they do not make much of the *word*, as some *Divines* now do.

Περὶ λέξεων λόγον μάχεσθαι. Naz.

But in the beginning of the Reformation, when the discovery of some great errors (from the corruption and ignorance of former times) crept into vogue, rendred all things the subjects of contention, and multiplied controversies, there did arise hot disputes about this Point; and the right stating thereof seemed a matter of great importance; nor scarce was any controversie prosecuted with greater zeal and earnestness: whereas yet (so far as I can discern) about the real Points of doctrine, whereto this *word* (according to any sense pretended) may relate, there hardly doth appear any material difference; and all the Questions depending, chiefly seem to consist about the manner of expressing things, which all agree in; or about the extent of the signification of words capable of larger, or stricter acception: whence the debates about this Point among all sober and intelligent persons might (as I conceive) easily be resolved, or appeased, if men had a mind to agree, and did not love to wrangle; if at least a consent in believing the same things, although under some difference of expression, would content them, so as to forbear strife.

Articulis stantis, & cadentis Ecclesiæ, Luth.

To make good which observation, tending as well to the illustration of the whole matter, as to the stating and decision of the controversies about it, let us consider the several divine acts, to which the term Justification is, according to any sense pretended, applicable: I say divine acts; for that the justification we treat of is an act of God simple or compound (in some manner) respecting, or terminated upon man, is evident, and will not I suppose be contested; the words of S. *Paul* in several places so clearly declaring it; as in that, *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? it is God that justifieth*, and in that, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*: Now according to the tenour of Christian doctrine such acts are these. Rom. 8. 33. 4. 5. 3. 26.

1. God (in regard to the obedience performed to his will by his beloved Son, and to his intercession) is so reconciled to mankind, that unto every person, who doth sincerely believe the Gospel, and (repenting of his former bad life) doth seriously resolve thereafter to live according to it, he doth (upon the solemn obsignation of that faith, and profession of that resolution in Baptism) entirely remit all past offences, accepting his person, receiving him into favour; assuming him into the state of a loyal subject, a faithful servant, a dutiful Son; and bestowing on him all the benefits and privileges futable to such a state; according to those passages: *It behoved Christ to suffer --- and that repentance, and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations: Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins*; and, *To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his name, whosoever believeth in* Luke 24. 47. Act. 2. 38. 3. 19. 5. 31. Act. 10. 43. 2 Cor. 5. 19.

Rom. 3. 24, 25. *in him shall receive remission of sins*; and, *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins*; and in other places innumerable.

2. As any person persisting in that sincere faith, and serious purpose of obedience, doth assuredly continue in that state of grace and exemption from the guilt of sin, so in case that out of humane frailty such a person doth fall into the commission of sin, God (in regard to the same performances and intercessions of his Son) doth upon the confession and repentance of such a person remit his sin, and retain him in or restore him to favour; according to those sayings of S. *John: If we confess our sins, he is faithful, and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*; and, *If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ, the righteous.*

1 Joh. 1. 9. 2. 1.

3. To each person sincerely embracing the Gospel, and continuing in stedfast adherence thereto, God doth afford his holy Spirit, as a principle productive of all inward sanctity and vertuous dispositions in his heart, enabling also and quickning him to discharge the conditions of faith, and obedience required from him, and undertaken by him; that which is by some termed making a person just, infusion into his Soul of righteousness, of grace, of vertuous habits; in the Scripture style it is called *acting by the Spirit, bestowing the gift of the holy Ghost, renovation of the holy Ghost, creation to good works, sanctification by the Spirit, &c.* which phrases denote partly the collation of a principle enabling to perform good works, partly the design of religion tending to that performance.

Rom. 8. 14. Gal. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 12. 2 Tim. 2. 7. Act. 2. 38. Rom. 8. 9. Tit. 3. 5. (Eph. 2. 22.) Eph. 2. 10. 4. 23.

Now all these acts (as by the general consent of Christians, and according to the sense of the ancient Catholick Church, so) by all considerable Parties seeming to differ, and so earnestly disputing about the Point of Justification, are acknowledged and ascribed unto God; but with which of them the act of Justification is solely or chiefly coincident; whether it signifieth barely some one of them, or extendeth to more of them, or comprehendeth them all (according to the constant meaning of the word in Scripture) are questions coming under debate, and so eagerly prosecuted: Of which questions whatever the true resolution be, it cannot methinks be of so great consequence, as to cause any great anger or animosity in dissenters one toward another, seeing they all conspire in avowing the acts, whatever they be, meant by the word *Justification*, although in other terms; seeing all the dispute is about the precise and adequate notion of the word *Justification*: whence those questions might well be waved as unnecessary grounds of contention; and it might suffice to understand the points of doctrine which it relateth to in other terms, laying that aside as ambiguous and litigious. Yet because the understanding the righteſt, or most probable notion of the word may somewhat conduce to the interpretation of the Scriptures, and to clearing the matters couched in it, somewhat also to the satisfaction of persons considerate and peaceable, I shall employ some care faithfully (without partiality to any side) to search it out, and declare it: in order whereto I shall propound some Observations, seeming material.

I. Whereas it were not hard to speak much, and criticise about the primitive sense of the word, and about its various acceptions both in holy Scripture and other Writings, I do question whether doing that would be pertinent, or conducible to our purpose of understanding its right notion here: for knowing the primitive sense of words can seldom

Verba valent ut nummi.

dom or never determine their meaning any where, they often in common use declining from it; and the knowing variety of acceptions doth at most yield only the advantage of chusing one sutable to the subjacent matter and occasion. We are not therefore to learn the sense of this word from mere *Grammarians*.

II. The sense of this word is not to be searched in extraneous Writers; both because no matter like to that we treat upon did ever come into their use or consideration, and because they do seldom or never use the word in a sense any-wise congruous to this matter: in them most commonly the word δικαιόω doth signifie (as the like word ἀξιόω) to deem a thing just, equal, or fit (or simply to deem about a thing.) Sometimes also (yet not often, as I take it) being applied to an action, or cause, it importeth to make it appear lawful, or just, as when we ordinarily say to justifie what one saith or doeth; (whence δικαίωμα in *Aristotle* is an argument proving the justice of a cause, *firmamentum causæ*) but in them very seldom or never it is applied to persons; and an example, I conceive, can hardly be produced, wherein it is so used. Ἐδικαίωσαν, ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐδίκασαν. Ball. *in Syn. Chalced. Can.* 1.

III. In the Sacred Writings at large it is commonly applied to persons, and that according to various senses, some more wide and general, some more restrained and particular. It there sometime denoteth generally to exercise any judicial act upon, in regard unto, or in behalf of a person; to do him right, or justice, in declaring the merit of his cause, or pronouncing sentence about him; in acquitting, or condemning him for any cause, in obliging him to, or exempting him from any burthen, in dispensing to him any reward or punishment, indifferently: thus *Absalom* said, *O that I were made a judge in the land, that every man, which hath any suite or cause might come unto me,* וְיִצְדְּקֵנִי, καὶ δικαιώσω αὐτὸν, *and I would justifie him,* that is, *I would do him right:* and, in the 82. *Psalm* this charge is given to the Princes, or Judges; *Defend the poor, and fatherless,* הַצְדִּיקוּ, δικαιώσατε, *justifie the poor and needy*; that is, do right, and justice to them. 2 Sam. 15. 4. Ps. 82. 3.

But more particularly the word signifieth (and that according to the most usual and current acception) so to do a man right, as to pronounce sentence in his favour, as to acquit him from guilt, to excuse him from burthen, to free him from punishment; whence we most often meet with the word placed in direct opposition to that of condemnation: as in that law, *If there be a controversie between men, and they come unto judgment, that the Judges may judge them, then they shall justifie the righteous, and condemn the wicked:* And in *Solomon*'s prayer, *Then hear thou in heaven, and do, and judge thy servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way upon his head, and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness:* and in the *Proverbs, He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even both are an abomination unto the Lord:* And, in the Gospel our Saviour saith; *By thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.* Deut. 25. 1. 1 King 8. 32. 2 Chr. 6. 23. Prov. 17. 15. Matt. 12. 37. (Ez. 5. 23. 43. 9)

In consequence upon this sense, and with a little deflection from it, to justifie a person sometime denoteth to approve him, or esteem him just, a mental judgment, as it were, being passed upon him; so *wisdom* is said to be *justified*, that is, approved *by her children:* So in the Gospel some persons are said to *justifie themselves*, that is, to conceit themselves righteous: and the *Publican went home justified rather than the Pharisee*, that is, more approved and accepted by God: So also it is said, that *All the people, and the Publicans justified God, being baptized with John's baptism*; they justified God, that is, they declared their approbation of God's proceeding, in the mission of *John*. Matt. 11. 19. Luke 10. 29. 16. 15. Luke 18. 14. Luke 7. 29.

In

In like manner, Justification is taken for exemption from burthens;
Act. 13. 39. as where in the *Acts* S. *Paul* saith, *And from all things, from which by the law of Moses ye could not be justified, in this is every one that believeth justified.*

It may also sometimes be taken for deliverance from punishment; as
Exod. 23. 7. where in the Law God saith: *The innocent and righteous slay thou not; for I will not justifie the wicked*; that is, not let him escape with impunity; according to that in the *Proverbs*; *Though hand joyn in hand the wicked shall not go unpunished.*

IV. We may observe, that (as every man hath some phrases and particular forms of speech in which he delighteth, so) this term is somewhat peculiar to S. *Paul*, and hardly by the other Apostles applyed to that matter, which he expresseth thereby: they usually in their Sermons, and Epistles, do speak the same thing (whatever it be) in
Act. 13. 38. other terms, more immediately expressive of the matter. S. *James* in-
2. 38. 3. 19. 5. 30. 10. 43. 22. 16. Luke 24. 47. deed doth use it, but not so much, it seemeth, according to his usual manner of speech, as occasionally; to refute the false and pestilent conceits of some persons, who mistaking S. *Paul*'s expressions and doctrine, did pervert them to the maintenance of *Solifidian*, *Eunomian* and *Antinomian* positions, greatly prejudicial to good practice. And seeing the term is so proper to S. *Paul* in relation to this matter, the right sense and notion thereof seemeth best derivable from considering the nature of the subject he treateth on, observing the drift of his discourse and manner of his reasoning, comparing the other phrases he useth equivalent to this, and interpretative of his meaning.

V. Following this method of enquiry, I do observe and affirm that the last notion of the Word, as it is evidently most usual in the Scripture, so it best suteth to the meaning of S. *Paul* here, and otherwhere commonly, where he treateth upon the same matters; that God's justifying solely, or chiefly, doth import his acquitting us from guilt, condemnation and punishment, by free pardon and remission of our sins, accounting us, and dealing with us as just persons, upright and innocent in his sight and esteem: the truth of which notion I shall by divers arguments and considerations make good.

1. This sense doth best agree to the nature of the subject matter, and to the design of S. *Paul*'s discourse; which I take to be this, the asserting the necessity, reasonableness, sufficiency and excellency of the Christian dispensation in order to that, which is the end of all Religion, the bringing men to happiness, and consequently to the rendring men acceptable to God Almighty, who is the sole Author and donour of happiness; this is that, which in general he aimeth to assert and maintain.

This, I say, is that which he chiefly driveth at, to maintain, that it is not unreasonable that God should so proceed with men (whose good and felicity, as their gracious Maker, he greatly tendreth,) as the Christian Gospel declareth him to do, but that rather such proceeding was necessary and fit in order to our salvation; and withall conformable to the ordinary method of God's proceedings toward the same purpose.

Now God's proceeding with man according to the Gospel, the general tenour thereof doth set out to be this; that, God, out of his infinite goodness and mercy, in consideration of what his beloved Son, our blessed Lord hath performed and suffered, in obedience to his will, and for the redemption of mankind (which by transgression of his

laws

laws and defailance in duty toward him had grievously offended him and fallen from his favour, was involved in guilt, and stood obnoxious to punishment) is become reconciled to them (passing by, and fully pardoning all offences by them committed against him) so as generally to proffer mercy upon certain reasonable and gentle terms, to all that shall sincerely embrace such overtures of mercy, and heartily resolve to comply with those terms, required by him; namely, the returning and adhering to him, forsaking all impiety and iniquity, constantly persisting in faithful obedience to his holy commandments: this, I say, is the proceeding of God, which the Christian Gospel doth especially hold forth, and which according to our Lord's commission and command the Apostles did first preach to men; as whosoever will consider the drift and tenour of their preaching, will easily discern; which therefore S. *Paul* may reasonably be supposed here to assert and vindicate against the *Jews*, and other Adversaries of the Gospel; consequently the terms he useth should be so interpreted as to express that matter; whence being justified, will imply that which a person embracing the Gospel doth immediately receive from God, in that way of grace and mercy; *viz.* an absolution from his former crimes, an acquittance from his debts, a state of innocence and guiltlesness in God's sight, an exemption from vengeance and punishment; all that which by him sometimes, and by the other Apostles is couched under the phrases of *remission of sins*, having sins *blotted out* and *washed away*, being *cleansed from sin*; and the like: Thus considering the nature of the matter, and design of his discourse, would incline us to understand this word.

Luke 24. 47.

Act. 13. 38. 22. 16. 2. 38. 3. 19. 5. 31. 1 Joh. 1. 7.

2. Again, the manner of his prosecuting his discourse, and the arguments by which he inferreth his conclusions concerning the Gospel, do confirm this notion. He discourseth, and proveth at large; that all mankind, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, were *shut up under sin*, that *all had sinned and did fall short of the glory of God* (that is, of rendring him his due glory by dutiful obedience) that *every mouth was stopped*, having nothing to say in defence of their transgressions, and *that all the world stood obnoxious to* the severity of *God's judgments*; that not only the light of nature was insufficient to preserve men from offending inexcusably, even according to the verdict of their own consciences, but that the written Law of God had (to manifold experience) proved ineffectual to that purpose, serving rather *to work wrath*, to bring men under a curse, to aggravate their guilt, to convince them of their sinfulness, to discourage and perplex them; upon which general state of men (so implicated in guilt, so lyable to wrath) is consequent a necessity either of condemnation and punishment, or of mercy and pardon.

Rom. 3. 9. 11. 32. 3. 19, 23. Gal. 3. 22.

ὑποδικος τῷ Θεῷ.

Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 3. 21. Rom. 4. 15. 3. 20. 7. 7. Gal. 2. 16. 10. Rom. 5. 20. 7. 8.

He doth also imply (that which in the *Epistle* to the *Galatians*, where he prosecuteth the same argument, is more expressly delivered) that no precedent dispensation had exhibited any manifest overture, or promise of pardon; for the light of nature doth only direct unto duty, condemning every man in his own judgment and conscience, who transgresseth it, but as to pardon in case of transgression it is blind and silent; and the law of *Moses* rigorously exacteth punctual obedience, denouncing in express terms a condemnation and curse to the transgressours thereof in any part; from whence he collecteth, that *no man can be justified by the works of the Law*, (*natural*, or *Mosaical*; or that no precedent dispensation can justifie any man) and that *a man is justified by faith*, or hath absolute need of such a justification as that, which

Rom. 1. 20. 2. 15. Gal. 3. 10, 12.

Rom. 3. 20.

which the Gospel declareth and tendreth; λογιζόμεθα ἔν, *we hence* (saith he) *collect*, or argue, *that a man is justified by faith, without the works of the Law:* which justification must therefore import the receiving that free pardon, which the criminal and guilty world did stand in need of, which the forlorn and deplorable state of mankind did groan for, without which no man could have any comfort in his mind, any hope, or any capacity of salvation. If the state of Man was a state of rebellion, and consequently of heinous guilt, of having forfeited God's favour, of obnoxiousness to God's wrath; then that justification, which was needful, was a dispensation of mercy, remitting that guilt, and removing those penalties.

Again, S. *Paul* commendeth the excellency of the Evangelical dispensation from hence, that it entirely doth ascribe the justification of men to God's mercy and favour, excluding any merit of man, any right or title thereto grounded upon what Man hath performed; consequently advancing the glory of God, and depressing the vanity of Man: *If* (saith he) *Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to boast, for that to him, who worketh, wages are not reckoned as bestowed in favour, but are paid as debt*; so it would be, if men were justified by works, they might claim to themselves the due consequences thereof, impunity and reward; they would be apt to please themselves, and boast of the effects arising from their own performances; but if, as the Gospel teacheth, *men are justified freely (gratis) by God's mercy and grace*, without any regard to what they formerly have done, either good, or bad, those who have lived wickedly and impiously (upon their compliance with the terms proposed to them) being no less capable thereof, than the most righteous and pious persons; then *where is boasting? it is excluded*; then surely no man can assume any thing to himself, then all the glory and praise are due to God's frank goodness: the purport of which reasoning (so often used) doth imply, that a man's justification signifieth his being accepted or approved as just, standing *rectus in curia*, being in God's esteem, and by his sentence absolved from guilt and punishment, the which cannot otherwise be obtained, than from divine favour declared and exhibited in the Gospel; according as S. *Paul* otherwhere fully speaketh: *To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved; in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*

Rom 4. 2, 4. 3. 27. Tit. 3. 5. Eph. 2. 9. Rom. 11. 6. Rom. 3. 24. Rom. 4. 5. Rom. 3. 27. Eph. 2. 9. Eph. 1. 6.

Again, S. *Paul* expresseth Justification as an act of judgment, performed by God, whereby he declareth his own righteousness, or justice; that justice consisting in acceptance of a competent satisfaction offered to him in amends for the debt due to him, and in reparation of the injury done unto him, in consequence thereof acquitting the debtor, and remitting the offence; so those words declare: *Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him, which believeth in Jesus:* Justification there we see is expressed a result of Christ's redemption, and the act of God consequent thereon; so is remission of sins; God by them jointly demonstrating his justice, and goodness, so that they may be well conceived the same thing diversly expressed, or having several names according to some divers formalities of respect. So in other places, sometimes

Rom. 3. 24.

times justification, sometimes remission of sins are reckoned the proper and immediate effects of our Saviour's passion: *Being* (saith S. *Paul* in the 5th to the *Romans*) *justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath:* and *In whom* (saith he again in the first of the Epistle to the *Ephesians*) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins*; which argueth the equivalency of these terms. Rom 5. 9. Eph. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14.

So likewise a main point of the Evangelical Covenant on God's part is made justifying of a man by his faith, or upon it; and remission of sins upon the same condition, is also made the like principal point, which sometime is put alone as implying all the benefits of that covenant. Gal. 3. *per. tot.* Rom. 11. 27.

Again, justification is by S. *Paul* made the immediate consequent, or special adjunct of Baptism; therein he saith we *die to sin* (by resolution and engagement to lead a new life in obedience to God's commandment) and so dying we are said to be justified from sin (that which otherwise is expressed, or expounded by being freed from sin;) now the freedom from sin obtained in Baptism is frequently declared to be the remission of sin then conferred, and solemnly confirmed by a visible seal. Rom. 6. 2. Rom. 6. 6, 7. 6. 18, 22.

Whereas also so frequently we are said to be *justified by faith*, and according to the general tenour of Scripture the immediate consequent of faith is Baptism; therefore dispensing the benefits consigned in Baptism is coincident with justification; and that dispensation is frequently signified to be the cleansing us from sin by entire remission thereof. Eph. 5. 26. Tit. 3. 5. Act. 13. 38. 22. 16.

3. Farther, The same notion may be confirmed by comparing this term with other terms and phrases equivalent, or opposite to this of justification.

One equivalent phrase is imputation of righteousness: *As* (saith S. *Paul*) *David speaketh of that man's blessedness, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; Blessed are they, whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man, to whom the Lord will not impute sin*; whence to him that considers the drift and force of S. *Paul*'s discourse it will clearly appear, that justification, imputing righteousness, not imputing sin, and remission of sin are the same thing; otherwise the Apostle's discourse would not signifie or conclude any thing. Rom. 4. 6.

For confirmation of his discourse (arguing free justification by God's mercy, not for our works) S. *Paul* also doth alledge that place in the Psalm, *For in thy sight shall no man living be justified*; the sense of which place is evidently this, that no man living, his actions being strictly tried and weighed, shall appear guiltless, or deserve to be acquitted; but shall stand in need of mercy, or can no otherwise be justified than by a special act of grace. Rom. 3. 20. Gal. 2. 16. Ps. 143. 2.

Again, imputing faith for righteousness is the same with justifying by faith (*Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*) but that imputation is plainly nothing else, but the approving him, and taking him for a righteous person in regard to his faith. Rom. 4. 3, 22. Gal. 3. 6.

Again, justification is the same with being righteous before God, as appeareth by those words: *Not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified*; but being just before God, plainly signifieth nothing else but being accepted by God, or approved to his esteem and judgment. Rom. 2. 13.

Being reconciled to God seemeth also to be the same with being justified by him; as appeareth by those words, *Much more then being now justified* Rom. 5. 9, 10.

by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him; for if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life: where πολλῷ μᾶλλον δικαιωθέντες, and πολλῷ μᾶλλον καταλλαγέντες, seem to signifie the same; but that reconciliation is interpreted by remission of sins: *God was in Christ, reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.*

2 Cor. 5. 19.

To obtain mercy is another term signifying justification, and what doth that import but having the remission of sins in mercy bestowed on us?

Rom. 11. 30, 31, 32. 1 Pet. 2. 10.

Again, Justification is opposed directly to condemnation: *As* (saith he) *by the offence of one man* (judgment came) *upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one man* (the free gift came) *upon all men to justification of life* (*justification of* life, that is, a justification so relating to life, or bestowing a promise thereof, as the condemnation opposite thereto respected death, which it threatned.) In which place S. *Paul* comparing the first *Adam* with his actions, and their consequences, to the second *Adam* with his performances, and what resulted from them, teacheth us, that as the transgression of the *first* did involve mankind in guilt, and brought consequently upon men a general sentence of death, (forasmuch as all men did follow him in commission of sin;) so the obedience of the *second* did absolve all men from guilt, and restored them consequently into a state of immortality (all men, under the condition prescribed, who (as it is said) should *receive the abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness* tendered to them;) the justification therefore he speaketh of doth so import an absolution from guilt and punishment, as the condemnation signifieth a being declared guilty, and adjudged to punishment.

Rom. 5. 16, 18.

V. 17.

Bellarm. *de Justif.* 2. 3. 1. 1.

Bellarmine indeed (who in answering to this place objected against his doctrine, blunders extremely, and is put to his trumps of Sophistry) telleth us, that in this place to maintain the parallel or *antithesis* between *Adam* and *Christ*, justification must signifie infusion of grace, or putting into a man's soul an inherent righteousness; because *Adam's* sin did constitute us unjust with an inherent unrighteousness: but (with his favour) justification and condemnation being both of them the acts of God, and it being plain, that God condemning doth not infuse any inherent unrighteousness into man, neither doth he justifying (formally) (if the *antithesis* must be patt,) put any inherent righteousness into him: inherent unrighteousness in the former case may be a consequent of that condemnation, and inherent righteousness may be connected with this justification; but neither *that*, nor *this* may formally signifie those qualities respectively: as the inherent unrighteousness consequent upon *Adam's* sin is not included in God's condemning, so neither is the inherent righteousness proceeding from our Saviour's obedience contained in God's justifying men.

But however most plainly (and beyond all evasions) justification and condemnation are opposed otherwhere in this *Epistle: Who* (saith S. *Paul*) *shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?* (or criminate against them) *'tis God who justifieth, who is he that condemneth?* what can be more clear, than that there justification signifieth absolution from all guilt and blame?

Rom. 8. 33, 34. Τίς ἐγκαλέσει κ.τ.λ.

4. Farther, this notion may be confirmed, by excluding that sense, which in opposition thereto is assigned, according to which justification is said to import not only remission of sin, and acceptance with God,

God, but the making a man intrinsecally righteous, by infusing into him (as they speak) a habit of grace, or charity; the putting into a man a *righteousness, by which* (as the Council of *Trent* expresseth it) *We are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and are not only reputed, but are called, and become truly righteous, receiving righteousness in our selves.* Bell. l. 3. *Justitiam in nobis recipimus.*

Now admitting this to be true, as in a sense it surely is, that whoever (according to S. *Paul's* meaning in this *Epistle*) is justified, is also really at the same time endewed with some measure of that intrinsick righteousness, which those men speak of (for as much as that faith, which is required to justification, (being a gift of God, managed by his providence, and wrought by his preventing grace,) doth include a sincere and stedfast purpose of forsaking all impiety, of amendment of life, of obedience to God, which purpose *cleanseth the heart*, and is apt to produce as well inward righteousness of heart, as outward righteousness of practice; for that also to every sound believer upon his faith is bestowed the spirit of God, as a principle of righteousness, dwelling in him, directing, admonishing, exciting him to do well; assisting and enabling him sufficiently to the performance of those conditions, or those duties, which Christianity requireth, and the believer thereof undertaketh; which, the man's honest and diligent endeavour concurring, will surely beget the practice of all righteousness, and in continuance of such practice will render it habitual) avowing, I say, willingly, that such a righteousness doth ever accompany the justification S. *Paul* speaketh of, yet that sort of righteousness doth not seem implied by the word Justification, according to S. *Paul's* intent, in those places, where he discourseth about justification by faith; for that such a sense of the word doth not well consist with the drift and efficacy of his reasoning, nor with divers passages in his discourse. For Rom. 8. 9. 1 Cor. 3. 16. Act. 2. 38. Eph. 4. 23, 24. 2 Cor. 5. 17.

1. Whereas S. *Paul* from the general depravation of manners in all men (both *Jews* and *Gentiles*) argueth the necessity of such a justification, as the Christian Gospel declareth and exhibiteth, if we should take Justification for infusing an inherent quality of righteousness into men, by the like discourse we might infer the imperfection and insufficiency of Christianity it self, and consequently the necessity of another dispensation beside it; for that even all Christians (as Saint *James* saith) do offend often, and commission of sin doth also much reign among them; so that S. *Paul's* discourse (justification being taken in this sense) might strongly be retorted against himself. Jam. 3. 2.

2. Supposing that sense of Justification, a *Jew* might easily invalidate S. *Paul's* ratiocination, by saying, that even their Religion did plainly enough declare such a justification, which God did bestow upon all good men in their way, as by their frequent acknowledgments and devotions is apparent; such as those of the *Psalmist: Create in me a clean heart, O God, renew a right Spirit within me. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God: Make me to go in the path of thy commandments; incline my heart unto thy testimonies*; which sort of prayers God hearing did infuse righteousness, and justified those persons in this sense; so that Christianity herein could not challenge any thing peculiar, or could upon this score appear so necessary, as S. *Paul* pretendeth. Ps. 51. 10. Ps. 143. 10. Ps. 119. 35, 36.

3. From the justification S. *Paul* speaketh of, all respect to any works, and to any qualifications in men (such as might beget in them any confidence in themselves, or yield occasion of boasting) is excluded; it cannot therefore well be understood for a constituting Man intrinsecally righteous, or infusing worthy qualities into him; but rather

ther for an act of God terminated upon a man as altogether unworthy of God's love, as impious, as an enemy, as a pure object of mercy; so it is most natural to understand those expressions, importing the same thing; *God justifieth the ungodly; we being sinners Christ died for us* purchasing, as the following words imply, justification for us) *being yet enemies we by his death were reconciled* (or justified, for reconciliation and justification, as we before noted, do there signifie the same.)

Rom. 4. 5. 5. 8. 5. 10.

4. *Abraham* is brought in as an instance of a person justified in the same manner, as Christians are according to the Gospel: but his justification was merely the approving and esteeming him righteous, in regard (not to any other good works, but) to his stedfast faith, and strong persuasion concerning the power and faithfulness of God --- because *he was fully persuaded, that what God had promised he was able to perform*; to which faith and justification consequent thereon, S. *Paul* comparing those of Christians subjoineth; *Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him, that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead.* As then it were an idle thing to fansie a righteousness, upon the score of that belief, dropt into *Abraham*; and as his being justified is expresly called, having righteousness, upon the account of his faith, imputed (or ascribed) to him; So our justification (like and answerable to his) should correspondently be understood, the approving and accounting us, notwithstanding our former transgressions, as righteous persons, in regard to that honest and stedfast faith, wherein we resemble *that Father of the faithful.*

Rom. 4. 21. Rom. 4. 23, 24.

Even S. *James* himself, when he saith that *Abraham* and *Rahab* were justified by works, 'tis evident that he meaneth not that they had certain righteous qualities infused into them, or were made thence by God intrinsecally more righteous than they were before, but that they were approved and accepted by God, because of the good works they performed (in faith and obedience to God,) one of them offering to sacrifice his Son, the other preserving the Spies sent from God's people.

5. The so often using the word Imputation of righteousness, instead of Justification, doth imply this act not to be a transient operation upon the soul of Man, but an act immanent to God's mind, respecting Man only as its object, and translating him into another relative state: With this sense that word excellently well agreeth, otherwise it were obscure, and so apt to perplex the matter, that probably S. *Paul* would not have used it.

6. Again, When it is said again and again, *that faith is imputed for righteousness*, it is plain enough, that no other thing in Man was required thereto; to say, that he is thereby sanctified, or hath gracious habits infused, is uncouth and arbitrarious: the obvious meaning is, that therefore he is graciously accepted and approved, as we said before.

7. We might in fine add, that the word Justification is very seldom, or never used in that sense of making Persons righteous, or infusing righteousness into them. *Bellarmine* and *Grotius*, having searched with all possible diligence, do alledge three or four places, wherein (with some plausible appearance) they pretend it must be so understood; but as they are so few, so are they not any of them thoroughly clear and certain; but are capable to be otherwise interpreted without much straining; The clearest place, *Dan.* 12. 3. the LXX read מצדקים, ἀπὸ δικαίων, which the *Hebrew*, and sense will bear. Wherefore the other sense, which we have maintained, being undeniably common and current

rent in the Scripture, and having so many particular reasons shewing it agreeable to S. *Paul*'s intent, seemeth rather to be embraced.

In S. *Paul*'s Epistles I can only find three or four places, wherein the word *Justifying* may with any fair probability be so extended as to signifie an internal operation of God upon the Soul of men; they are these;

*And such were some of you; but ye have been washed, but ye have been sanctified, but ye have been justified in the name of Christ Jesus, and * by the Spirit of our God*; where Justification being performed by the Spirit of God, seemeth to imply, a spiritual operation upon a man's soul, as an ingredient thereof. 1 Cor. 6. 11. * ἐν.

According to his mercy he saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the holy Ghost; which he poured on us richly by Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we may be made heirs; according to the hope of everlasting life; where God's justifying us by the Grace of Christ seemeth to include the renewing by the holy Ghost. Tit. 3. 6, 7.

He that dieth, is justified from sin; where S. *Paul* speaking about our obligation to lead a new life in holy obedience, upon account of our being dedicated to Christ, and renouncing sin in Baptism, may be interpreted to mean a being really in our hearts purified and freed from sin. Rom. 6. 7.

Whom he predestinated, those he called; and whom he called, those he justified, and whom he justified, those he glorified; where the chief acts of God toward those, who finally shall be saved, being in order purposely recited, and Justification being immediately (without interposing Sanctification) coupled to Glorification, the word may seem to comprize Sanctification. Rom. 8. 30.

If considering these places (which yet are not clearly prejudicial to the notion we have made good, but may well be interpreted so as to agree thereto) it shall seem to any, that S. *Paul* doth not ever so strictly adhere to that notion, as not sometime to extend the word to a larger sense, I shall not much contend about it; It is an ordinary thing for all Writers to use their words sometimes in a larger, sometimes in a stricter sense; and it sufficeth to have shewn, that where S. *Paul* purposely treateth about the matter we discourse upon, the purport of his discourse argueth, that he useth it according to that notion, which we have proposed.

8. I shall only add one small observation, or conjecture favouring this notion; which is the probable occasion of all S. *Paul*'s discourse and disputation about this Point, which seemeth to have been this. That Christianity should (upon so slender a condition or performance, as that of Faith) tender unto all persons indifferently, however culpable, or flagitious their former lives had been, a plenary remission of sins and reception into God's favour, did seem an unreasonable and implausible thing to many; The *Jews* could not well conceive, or relish that any man so easily should be translated into a state equal, or superiour to that, which they took themselves peculiarly to enjoy; The *Gentiles* themselves (especially such as conceited well of their own wisdom and vertue) could hardly digest it; *Celsus* in *Origen* could not imagine or admit that bare faith should work such a miracle, as presently to turn a dissolute person into a Saint, beloved of God, and designed to happiness. Vid. *Cyrill.* adv. *Julian.* lib. 7. p. 248. *where Justification is very well described.* ψιλὴ πίστις.

Zozimus saith of *Constantine*, that he chose Christianity as the only Religion, that promised impunity and pardon for his enormous practices;

ces; intimating his dislike of that Point in our Religion; This prejudice against the Gospel S. *Paul* removeth; by shewing that because of all mens guilt and sinfulness such an exhibition of mercy, such an overture of acceptance, such a remission of sin was necessary in order to salvation, so that without it no man could be exempted from wrath and misery; and that consequently all other Religions (as not exhibiting such a remission,) were to be deemed in a main Point defective: When therefore he useth the word Justification to express this matter, it is reasonable to suppose that he intendeth thereby to signifie that remission, or dispensation of mercy.

It may be objected that S. *Austin* and some others of the *Fathers* do use the word commonly according to the sense of the *Tridentine* Council: I answer, that the point having never been discussed, and they never having thoroughly considered the sense of S. *Paul*, might unawares take the word as it sounded in *Latine*, especially the sense they affixed to it, signifying a matter very true and certain in Christianity. The like hath happened to other *Fathers* in other cases; and might happen to them in this, not to speak accurately in points that never had been sifted by disputation. More I think we need not say in answer to their authority.

VI. So much may suffice for a general explication of the notion; but for a more full clearing of the Point, it may be requisite to resolve a question concerning the time, when this act is performed, or dispensed; It may be enquired when God justifieth, whether once, or at several times, or continually: To which question I answer briefly:

1. That the justification which S. *Paul* discourseth of, seemeth in his meaning, only or especially to be that act of grace, which is dispensed to persons at their Baptism, or at their entrance into the Church, when they openly professing their faith, and undertaking the practice of Christian duty God most solemnly and formally doth absolve them from all guilt, and accepteth them into a state of favour with him; that S. *Paul* only or chiefly respecteth this act, considering his design, I am inclined to think, and many passages in his discourse seem to imply.

If his design were (as I conceive it probable) to vindicate the proceeding of God, peculiarly declared in the Gospel, in receiving the most notorious and hainous transgressours to grace in Baptism, then especially must the justification he speaketh of relate to that; to confirm which supposition we may consider, that

1. In several places Justification is coupled with baptismal regeneration and absolution: *Such were some of you, but ye have been washed, ye have been sanctified, ye have been justified in the name of Christ Jesus:* (where by the way being sanctified, and being justified, seem equivalent terms, as in that place, where Christ is said to *have given himself for the Church, that he might sanctifie it, and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word*, Sanctification (I conceive) importeth the same thing with Justification.) Again, *He saved us by the laver of Regeneration, that having been justified by his grace, we may be made heirs of everlasting life.*

1 Cor. 6. 11.

Eph. 5. 25, 26. Heb. 10. 29. Tit. 3. 6, 7. Heb. 10. 22, 23.

2. S. *Paul* in expressing this act, as it respecteth the faithful, commonly doth use a tense referring to the past time: he saith not δικαιέμενοι, being justified, but δικαιωθέντες, *having been justified*; not δικαιέδε, ye are justified, but δικαιώθητε, ye have been justified, namely at some remarkable time, that is at their entrance into Christianity. (Our Translators

Rom. 5. 1, 9. Tit. 3. 7. 1 Cor. 6. 11.

tors do render it according to the present time, but it should be rendred, as I say, in our Text, and in other places.)

3. S. *Paul*, in the 6th to the *Romans*, discourseth thus; Seeing we in Baptism are cleansed and disentangled from sin, are *dead to it, and so justified from it*, God forbid that we should return to live in the practice thereof, so abusing and evacuating the grace we have received; which discourse seemeth plainly to signifie, that he treateth about the justification conferred in Baptism. Rom. 6.

4. He expresseth the justification he speaketh of by the words πάσεσις τῶν προγεγονότων ἁμαρτημάτων, *the passing over foregoing sins*, which seemeth to respect that universal absolution, which is exhibited in Baptism. *Being* (saith he) *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption, that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.* Rom. 3. 25.

5. The relation this justification hath to faith, being dispensed in regard thereto (or upon condition thereof) doth infer the same: Faith is nothing else, but a hearty embracing Christianity, which first exerteth it self by open declaration and avowal in Baptism (when we *believe with our hearts to righteousness, and confess with our mouth to salvation*;) to that time therefore the act of Justification may be supposed especially to appertain: (then, when the Evangelical covenant is solemnly ratified, the grace thereof especially is conferred.) Upon such considerations I conceive that S. *Paul*'s justification chiefly doth respect that act of grace, which God consigneth to us at our Baptism. But farther, Rom. 10. 10.

2. The vertue and effect of that first justifying act doth continue (we abide in a justified state) so long as we do perform the conditions imposed by God, and undertaken by us at our first justification; *holding fast the profession of our hope without wavering*; *keeping faith, and a good conscience*; so long as we do not forfeit the benefit of that grace by *making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience*, relapsing into infidelity, or profaneness of life. Our case is plainly like to that of a subject, who having rebelled against his Prince, and thence incurred his displeasure, but having afterward upon his submission by the clemency of his Prince obtained an act of pardon, restoring him to favour, and enjoyment of the protection and privileges sutable to a loyal subject, doth continue in this state, until by forsaking his allegiance, and running again into rebellion, he so loseth the benefit of that pardon, that his offence is aggravated thereby; so if we do persevere firm in faith and obedience, we shall (according to the purport of the Evangelical covenant) continue in the state of grace and favour with God, and in effect remain justified; otherwise the virtue of our justification ceaseth; and we in regard thereto are more deeply involved in guilt. Heb. 10. 23. 1 Tim. 1. 19. 2 Pet. 2. 20, &c. Heb. 10. 26, 38. 6. 1.

3. Although Justification chiefly signifieth the first act of grace toward a Christian at his Baptism, yet (according to analogy of reason, and affinity in the nature of things) every dispensation of pardon granted upon repentance, may be styled Justification; for as particular acts of repentance, upon the commission of any particular sins, do not so much differ in nature, as in measure or degree from that general conversion, practised in embracing the Gospel; So the grace vouchsafed upon these penitential acts, is only in largeness of extent, and solemnity of administration diversified from that; Especially considering that repentance after Baptism is but a reviving of that first great resolution and engagement we made in Baptism; that remission of sin upon it *Pœnitentia imitatur Baptismatis gratiam.* Hier. adv. Pelag. 1. 10.

it is only the renovation of the grace then exhibited; that the whole transaction in this case is but a reinstating the covenant then made (and afterward by transgression infringed) upon the same terms, which were then agreed upon; that consequently (by congruous analogy) this remission of sins, and restoring to favour granted to a penitent are only the former justification reinforced: whence they may bear its name; but whether S. *Paul* ever meaneth the word to signifie thus, I cannot affirm.

Now according to each of these notions all good Christians may be said to have been justified; they have been justified by a general abolition of their sins, and reception into God's favour in Baptism; they so far have enjoyed the virtue of that gracious dispensation, and continued in a justified state, as they have persisted in faith and obedience; they have upon falling into sin, and rising thence by repentance, been justified by particular remissions. So that *having been justified by faith, they have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

I Believe in God,

SERMON VI.

THE Being of GOD Proved from the FRAME OF THE WORLD.

JER. 51. 15.

Jer. 10. 12. *He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the World by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the Heaven by his understanding.*

THE attentive observation of this World, or visible Frame, is not only in it self a most worthy employment of our thoughts (much more noble than any of those petty cares, which commonly possess, or distract our minds) but if either the example of the best men, or the great usefulness thereof, to the best purposes, can oblige us, even a considerable duty not to be neglected by us. For it is

is that which affords most cogent and satisfactory arguments to convince us of, and to confirm us in the belief of that truth which is the foundation of all Religion and piety, The Being of one God, incomprehensibly excellent in all perfections, the maker and upholder of all things; It instructs us not only that God is, but more distinctly shews what he is; declaring his chief and peculiar attributes of wisdom, goodness, and power superlative; It also serves to beget in our minds affections toward God, suitable to those notions; a reverent adoration of his unsearchable wisdom; an awful dread of his powerful Majesty; a grateful love of his gracious benignity and goodness: To these uses we find it applied by the best men, not only by the wisest Philosophers among Heathens, but by the holy Prophets of God; who frequently harp upon this string, and make sweetest melody thereon; exciting both in themselves and others, pious thoughts and holy devotions therewith; strengthning their faith in God; advancing their reverence toward him; quickning and enflaming their love of him; magnifying his glory and praise thereby; by the consideration (I say) of those wonderful effects, discernible in nature; or appearing to us in this visible world. And if ever to imitate them herein were necessary, it seems to be so now, when a pretence to natural knowledge, and acquaintance with these things hath been so much abused to the promoting of Atheism and irreligion; when that instrument which was chiefly designed, and is of it self most apt, to bring all reasonable creatures to the knowledge, and to the veneration of their Maker, hath (in a method most prepostrous and unnatural) been perverted to contrary ends and effects. To the preventing and removing which abuse, as every man should contribute what he can, so let me be allowed to endeavour somewhat toward it, by representing briefly what my meditation did suggest, serving to declare, that (as the Prophet asserts, or implies in the words I read) even in this visible World, there are manifest tokens, or footsteps by which we may discover it to be the work, or product of one Being, incomprehensibly wise, powerful and good; to whom consequently we must owe the highest respect and love, all possible worship and service. Of these footsteps (or signs) there be innumerably many which singly taken, do discover such perfections to be concerned in the production of them; the relation of several to each other do more strongly and plainly confirm the same; the connexion and correspondence of all together doth still add force and evidence thereto, each attesting to the existence of those perfections, all conspiring to declare them concentred and united in one Cause and Being.

Ps. 8. 3. 19. 1. 33. 5. 89. 11. 148. 5. 104. 5. 115. 16. 119. 64. 145. 10. 147. 4.

I. View we first singly those things, which are most familiar and obvious to our senses (for only some such I mean to consider, such as any man awake, and in his senses, without any study or skill more than ordinary; without being a deep Philosopher, or a Curious *Virtuoso*; may with an easie attention observe and discern) View we such objects, I say; for instance first, those plants we every day do see, smell and taste; Have not that number, that figure, that order, that temperament, that whole contexture and contemperation of Parts we discern in them, a manifest relation to those operations they perform? were not such organs so fashioned, and so situated, and so tempered, and in all respects so fitted, some of them in order to the successive propagation of them (that they might in kind never fail or perish, but in that respect become as it were immortal) some in regard to their present nutrition and maintenance (that the individuals themselves might not, before their due period of subsistence run through, be spent, or

Ἵνα τὸ ἀεὶ, καὶ τὸ θεῖον κατὰ χωσιν, ἡ δυνατὸν μετέχει. Arist. de An. 2. 4.

 destroyed)

deſtroyed) ſome for ſhelter and defence againſt all ſort of cauſes prejudicial to either of thoſe continuances in being reſpectively; to omit thoſe, which ſerve for grace and ornament; (Do not, I ſay, the ſeed moſt evidently reſpect the propagation of the kind; the root the drawing of nouriſhment, the nervous filaments the conveyance of that; the skin or bark the keeping all together cloſe and ſafe; the husks and ſhells preſervation of the ſeed; the leaves defence of the fruit?) that ſuch a conſtitution of parts is admirably fit for ſuch purpoſes, we cannot be ſo ſtupid as not to perceive; we cannot but obſerve it neceſſary, for that by detraction, or altering any of them, we obſtruct thoſe effects. Whence then, I enquire, could that fitneſs proceed? from Chance, or caſual motions of matter? But, is it not repugnant to the name and nature of Chance, that any thing regular, or conſtant ſhould ariſe from it? That by it cauſes vaſtly many in number and different in quality (ſuch as are the ingredients into the frame of the leaſt organ in a plant) ſhould not once, not ſometimes, not often only but always in one continual unaltered method concur to the ſame end and effect (to the ſame uſeful end, to the ſame handſome effect?) are not confuſion, diſparity, deformity, unaccountable change and variety the proper iſſues of Chance? 'Tis *Ariſtotle*'s diſcourſe: *That one, or two things, ſaith he, ſhould happen to be in the ſame manner, is not unreaſonable to ſuppoſe; but that all things ſhould conſpire by chance, it looks like a fiction to conceive: what is univerſal and perpetual cannot reſult from Chance. We can only* (ſaith he again) *with good reaſon aſſert, or ſuppoſe ſuch cauſes of things, as we ſee generally, or frequently to occur.* Now did we ever obſerve (or ever any man through the whole courſe of times) any new thing like, or comparable to any of theſe to ſpring up caſually? do we not with admiration regard (as a thing very rare and unaccountable) in other pieces of matter any groſs reſemblance to theſe, that ſeemeth to ariſe from contingent motions and occurrences of bodies? If Chance hath formerly produced ſuch things, how comes it, that it doth not ſometime now produce the like; whence becomes it for ſo many ages altogether impotent and idle? is it not the ſame kind of cauſe? hath it not the ſame inſtruments to work with, and the ſame materials to work upon? The truth is, as it doth not now, ſo it did not, it could not ever produce ſuch effects; ſuch effects are plainly improper and incongruous to ſuch a cauſe: Chance never writ a legible Book; Chance never built a fair houſe; Chance never drew a neat picture, it never did any of theſe things, nor ever will; nor can be without abſurdity ſuppoſed able to do them, which yet are works very groſs and rude, very eaſie and feaſible (as it were) in compariſon to the production of a flower, or a tree. 'Tis not therefore reaſonable to aſcribe thoſe things to chance: to what then? will you ſay, to Neceſſity? If you do, you do only alter the phraſe; for neceſſary cauſality (as applicable to this caſe, and taken without relation to ſome wiſdom, or counſel that eſtabliſhed it) is but another name for chance; they both are but ſeveral terms denoting blindneſs, and unadviſedneſs in action; both muſt imply a fortuitous determination of cauſes, acting without deſign or rule. A fortuitous determination,

---*fortuna amica varietati conſtantiam reſpuit.* Cic. *de Nat. D.* 2.

Ὁλίαν ὑφ' ἑνὸς ἀλλοίου ἀεὶ κινεῖσθαι οὐ δύναται μετέχειν τάξεως· θείας δὲ δὴ τοῦτο δυνάμεως ἔργον, ἥτις καὶ τὸν δὲ συνέχει τὸ πᾶν. Ariſt. *Pol.* 7. 4.

Τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἓν ἢ δύο τῶτον τρόπον ἔχειν, οὐδὲν ἄτοπον. τὸ δὲ πάντ' ὁμοίως πλάσμαθ' ἕοικεν, ἅμα δὲ ἐκ δίκης ἐν τοῖς φύσι τὸ ὡς ἔπυχεν. οὐδὲ τὸ παγίαχοῦ, ᾧ πᾶσιν ὑπάρχον τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς τύχης. *De Cælo.* 2. 8.

Μόνα γὰρ ταῦτα θετέον εὐλόγως, ὅσα ἐδὴ πολλῶν, ἢ πάντων ὁσαύτως ὑπάρχοντα. *Id. de Cælo.*

determination, I ſay; for motions of matter, not guided by art, or counſel, muſt be in their riſe fortuitous (inſomuch as that according to the nature of the thing there is no repugnance, and we may eaſily conceive it poſſible, that the matter might have been moved otherwiſe; there being therein no principle originally determining it to this more than to that ſort of motion) and the ſame motions in their proceſs muſt be determinate, becauſe in their ſubject there is no principle, whereby it can alter its courſe. The ſame effect therefore of this kind, if neceſſary is caſual as to its original, and in that reſpect may be ſaid to come from chance; if caſual, is neceſſary in the progreſs, and may thence be ſaid to proceed from neceſſity. And although we ſhould ſuppoſe the beginning of theſe cauſes in their action, or motion to be eternal, it were all one; for whether now, or yeſterday, or from eternity, inferrs no difference (except the entangling our minds, and encumbring the caſe with impertinent circumſtances) as to our purpoſe; not the circumſtance of the time, but the quality of the cauſe being only here conſiderable; the ſame cauſes (abſtracting from all counſel ordering them) being alike apt, or inept yeſterday as to day, always as ſometimes, from all eternity, as at any ſet time to produce ſuch effects. Neither can we therefore reaſonably attribute the effects we ſpeak of to neceſſity; except only to ſuch an hypothetical neceſſity, as implies a determination from cauſes acting by will and underſtanding; of ſuch a neceſſity matter is very ſuſceptive; being perfectly obedient to art directing it with competent force; As on the other hand we find it by reaſon and experience altogether unapt, without ſuch direction, of it ſelf (that is either neceſſarily or contingently) to come into any regular form, or to purſue any conſtant courſe; it being, as we ſee; ſhattered into particles innumerable, different in ſize, ſhape and motion, according to all variety more than imaginable; thence only fit in their proceedings to croſs and confound each other: The determination therefore of ſuch cauſes as theſe to ſuch ends and effects, can be only the reſult of wiſdom, art and counſel; which alone (accompanied with ſufficient power) can digeſt things, void of underſtanding, into handſom order, can direct them unto fit uſes, can preſerve them in a conſtant tenour of action; Theſe effects muſt therefore, I ſay, proceed from wiſdom, and that no mean one, but ſuch as greatly ſurpaſſes our comprehenſion, joined with a power equally great: For to digeſt bodies ſo very many, ſo very fine and ſubtile, ſo divers in motion and tendency, that they ſhall never hinder or diſturb one another, but always conſpire to the ſame deſign, is a performance exceedingly beyond our capacity to reach how it could be contrived, or accompliſhed; all the endeavours of our deepeſt skill, and moſt laborious induſtry cannot arrive to the producing of any work not extremely inferiour to any of theſe, not in compariſon very ſimple and baſe; neither can our wits ſerve to deviſe, nor our ſenſe to direct, nor our hand to execute any work, in any degree like to thoſe. So that it was but faintly, though truly, ſaid of him in *Cicero*, concerning things of this kind: * *Natures powerful ſagacity no skill, no hand, no artiſt can follow by imitation.*

* *Naturæ ſolertiam nulla ars, nulla manus, nemo opifex conſequi poſſit imitando.* Cic. *de N. D. pag.* 83.

And if we have reaſon to acknowledge ſo much wiſdom and power diſcovered in one plant, and the ſame conſequently multiplied in ſo many thouſands of divers kinds; how much more may we diſcern them in any one animal, in all of them? the parts of whom in unconceivable variety, in delicate minuteneſs, in exquiſiteneſs of ſhape, poſition and temper do indeed ſo far exceed the other, as they appear deſigned to

functions far more various and more noble; the enumeration of a few whereof, obvious to our ſenſe, in ſome one living creature, together with conjectures about their manner of operation, and their uſe, how much induſtry of man hath it employed; how many volumes hath it filled, and how many more may it do, without detecting a ten thouſandth part of what is there moſt obvious and eaſie; without piercing near the depth of that wiſdom, which formed ſo curious a piece? So much however is palpably manifeſt, that each of theſe ſo many organs was deſigned, and fitted on purpoſe to that chief uſe, or operation we ſee it to perform; this of them to continue the kind, that to preſerve the *individuum*; this to diſcern what is neceſſary, convenient or pleaſant to the creature; or what is dangerous, offenſive or deſtructive thereto; that to purſue or embrace, to decline or ſhun it; this to enjoy what is procured of good; that to remove what is hurtful or uſeleſs; or to guard from miſchief and injury; That each one is furniſhed with ſuch apt inſtruments, ſutable to its particular needs, appetites, capacities, ſtations is moſt apparent; And I muſt therefore here ask again (and that with more advantage) whence this could proceed: whence all theſe parts came to be faſhioned and ſuted; all of them ſo neceſſary, or ſo convenient, that none without the imperfection and the prejudice of the creature, ſome not without its deſtruction can be wanting? who ſhaped and tempered thoſe hidden ſubtile ſprings of life, ſenſe, imagination, memory, paſſion; who impreſſed on them a motion ſo regular, and ſo durable, which through ſo many years, among ſo many adverſe contingencies aſſailing it, is yet ſo ſteadily maintained? can this however proceed from giddy chance, or blind neceſſity? could ever (of old, or lately 'tis all one) ſenſleſs matter jumble it ſelf ſo fortunately, into ſo wonderful poſtures, ſo that of thoſe innumerable myriads of atoms, or ſmall inſenſible bodies (which compoſe each of theſe curious engines) none ſhould in its roving miſs the way; none fail to ſtop and ſeat it ſelf in that due place, where exacteſt art would have diſpoſed it? Could ſo many, ſo dimm, ſo narrow marks be hit without the aim of a moſt piercing and unerring eye; without the guidance of a moſt ſteady and immoveable hand? all that grace and beauty which ſo delights our ſenſe beholding it; and all that correſpondence and ſymmetry which ſo ſatisfies our mind conſidering it; all that virtue and energy, extending to performances ſo great and admirable, muſt they be aſcribed to cauſes of no worth, and ſuppoſed done to no purpoſe? That eye which reaches the very ſtars, and in a moment renders all the world as it were preſent to the creature that uſeth it; that ear which perceives the leaſt ſtirring of the air about it, and ſo ſubtly diſtinguiſhes the ſmalleſt differences in its motion; that tongue which ſo readily is compoſed to imitate ſo many petty diverſities of tune; thoſe other organs, which are affected by the leaſt breath or vapour, by the leaſt tangue or ſavour, ſo that it by them can both perceive the preſence, and diſtinguiſh the quality of whatever is near, that it may not be diſappointed in miſſing what is beneficial, nor be ſurpriſed by the aſſault of what is noxious thereto; all theſe and many more, the defect, diſtemper, or diſlocation of which would be diſgraceful, incommodious, or deſtructive to the creature; all theſe I ſay, can any man, endewed with common ſenſe, or ordinary ingenuity affirm to have proceeded

Ἔπελθε δὴ μικρῶν ἁπάντων τῷ διάπλασιν, τὸ σῶμα, τὰς ἐνεργείας, τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα συμφωνίαν καὶ πίστις πόλεως εὐνομωμένης· καὶ φιλοσόφες ἅπαντας τοὺς πολίτας ἐχούσης ἀκριβεστέραν ὄψιν τῶν μελῶν τὴν πρὸς ἄλληλα πολιτείαν. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 69.

Ibid. Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. ιά.

Μὴ πάντα χρησάσθω τρισὶν τοῖς ἐπιγαστρίοις; πῶς δὲ συνεχρήσατο καὶ ταύταις ὡς μάλιστα πρεπόντως ἐδύνατο; ὁ διέκρινε δι' αὐτῆς τὸ ἄρρεν καὶ τὸ θῆλυ, &c. Epiſt. 1. 16.

ded from any other cauſe, than from a wiſdom and power incomprehenſible? May not the moſt excellent pieces of humane artifice, the faireſt ſtructures, the fineſt portraictures, the moſt ingenious and uſeful enquiries, ſuch as we are wont moſt to admire and commend, with infinitely more eaſe, happen to exiſt without any contrivance or induſtry ſpent upon them? if we cannot allow thoſe rude imitations of nature, to ſpring up of themſelves, but as ſoon as we eſpy them are ready to acknowledge them products of excellent art, though we know not the artiſt, nor did ſee him work; how much more reaſon is there that we ſhould believe thoſe works of nature, ſo incomparably more accurate, to proceed alſo from art, although inviſible to us, and performing its workmanſhip by a ſecret hand? I can aſſure you of thoſe, who have with greateſt attention contemplated theſe things, and who paſs for men moſt able to judge in the caſe (even thoſe who have diſcovered leaſt affection to Religion, or indeed are more than ſuſpected of an averſion from it; whoſe words therefore may be taken at leaſt for impartial dictates of common ſenſe) that even from ſuch the irreſiſtible force and evidence of the thing hath extorted clear and ample confeſſions to this purpoſe; That in nature nothing is performed without reaſon or deſign; but every thing in the beſt manner, and to the beſt end; beyond what is done in any art; is frequently aſſerted, and aſſumed by *Ariſtotle* himſelf as a moſt evident truth: That in contriving the frame of our bodies (and the ſame holdeth concerning the bodies of other animals) a wiſdom inſcrutable; in accompliſhing it a power inſuperable; in deſigning to them ſo much of decency and convenience, a benignity worthy of all veneration are demonſtrated; *Galen* in ſeveral places, with language very full and expreſs, yea very earneſt and pathetical doth acknowledge. That who doth attently regard a locuſt, or a caterpillar, or any other viler *animal*, ſhall every where therein diſcover a wonderful art and diligence, is an aphoriſm dropt even from the gloomy pen of *Cardan*. That *if any man ſhall view thoroughly all the inſtruments both of generation and nutrition, and doth not perceive them to have been made, and ordered to their reſpective offices by ſome mind* (or intelligent agent) *he is to be reputed himſelf void of mind* (or out of his wits) is the expreſſion of another perſon well known among us, whom few do judge partial to this ſide, or ſuſpicious of bearing a favourable prejudice to Religion. Thus doth common ſenſe from theſe ſort of beings, whereof there be innumerable expoſed daily to our obſervation, even ſingly conſidered, deduce the exiſtence of a wiſdom, power and goodneſs unconceivably great; and there are probably divers others (*ſtones*, *metals*, *minerals*, &c.) no leſs obvious, even here upon the earth, our place of dwelling, which were our ſenſes able to diſcern their conſtitution and texture, would afford matter of the ſame acknowledgment.

Ariſt. *de part. An.* 1. 1. Μᾶλλον δ' ἕξει τὸ ἕνεκα, καὶ τὸ καλὸν ἐν τοῖς τῆς φύσεως ἔργοις, ἢ ἐν τοῖς τῆς τέχνης

Ἡ φύσις ἀεὶ ποιεῖ τῶν ἐνδεχομένων τὸ βέλτιστον. *Phyſ.* 2. 8.

Ἡ φύσις ἔδειν ἀλόγως ἀλλὰ μάτην ποιεῖ. *de Cœlo* 2. 11.

Ἕνεκα τοῦ ἅπαντα ὑπάρχει τὰ φύσει. *de Anima* 3. 12.

Gal. *de placitis* Hippoc. & Plat *l.* 7. *de uſu part.* 3. Οὔτ' ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ τιλὼ σοφίαν, οὔτ' ἐμοὶ τιλὼ δύναμιν, ὁποῖόν τιλὼ χρηστότητα, &c.

Card. *de variet.* 7. 27. *pag.* 283. Hobbs. *de hom. cap.* 1.

Itaque ad ſenſus procedo, ſatis habens ſi hujusmodi res attigero tantum, plenius autem tractandas aliis reliquero, qui ſi machinas omnes tum generationis, tum nutritionis ſatis perſpexerint, nec tamen eas à mente aliqua conditas, ordinatáſque ad ſua quaſque officia viderint, ipſi profectò ſine mente eſſe cenſendi ſunt.

II. But if paſſing from ſuch particulars, we obſerve the relation of ſeveral kinds of things, each to other, we ſhall find more reaſon to be convinced

Νῦν δ' Διὰ καὶ τοὺς θεοὺς ἐν ὅλῳ γεγονότων ἀπέφηνε πρὸς τὸ αἰδέσιμα δ' ἀφροσύνας τῷ αἰδήμονι, καὶ εὐχαρίστῳ. Epict. 1. 16.

convinced concerning the same excellent perfections farther extending themselves. By such comparison we may easily discern, that what speaks much of art in it self singly considered, declares more thereof in respect to other things; and that many things, in which, separately looked upon, we could perceive but small artifice, have indeed much of it in such relation; (which although seeming in themselves mean and despicable, are yet very useful and necessary to considerable purposes; in subserviency to the convenience of more noble beings.) and though perhaps we cannot thoroughly penetrate the relative use and design of every thing, which hangs up before us in natures shop (by reason of our incapacity, or unskilfulness in her trade) yet we shall have reason from what we can plainly discover, to collect, that each piece there is a tool accommodate to some use. Is there not, for instance, a palpable relation between the frame, the temper, the natural inclinations, or instincts of each *animal*, and its element, or natural place and abode; wherein it can only live, finding therein its food, its harbour, its refuge? Is not to each faculty within (or to each sensitive organ) an object without prepared, exactly correspondent thereto; which were it wanting, the faculty would become vain and useless, yea sometime harmful and destructive; as reciprocally the object would import little or nothing, if such a faculty were not provided and suted thereto? as for example, what would an eye (or the visive power) signifie, if there were not light prepared to render things visible thereto; and how much less considerable, than it is, would the goodly light it self be; were all things in nature blind, and uncapable to discern thereby? what would the ear serve for, if the air were not suitably disposed (made neither too thick, nor too thin; neither too resty, nor too fleeting, but) in a due consistency, and capable of moderate undulations distinguishable thereby? the like we might with the same reason inquire concerning the other senses, and faculties vital or animal, and their respective objects, which we may observe with admirable congruity respecting each other. Have not all those goodly colours, and comely shapes, which in the leaves, the flowers, and the fruits of plants (I might add in gemms and precious stones; yea in all sorts of living creatures) we behold, an evident respect to the sight, and the sight a no less visible reference to them? those many kinds of pleasant fragrancy in herbs, flowers and spices have they not a like manifest relation to the smell, and it to them? Could all that great variety of wholsome, savoury and delicious fruits, herbs, grains, pulses, seeds and roots become so constantly produced otherwise than for the purpose of feeding, and sustaining living creatures, with pleasure and content? is there not a notorious correspondence between them, and the organs of taste, digestion and nutrition? are there not appetites prompting, yea with intolerable pain provoking each living creature to seek its proper sustenance; and doth it not find in the enjoyment hereof a pleasure and satisfaction unexpressible? Let me add: Whence comes it to pass, that ordinarily in nature nothing occurrs noisome or troublesome to any sense; but all things wholsom and comfortable, at least innocent or inoffensive? that we may wander all about without being urged to shut our eyes, to stop our ears, our mouths, our noses; but rather invited to open all the avenues of our soul, for admission of the

Εἰ χρώματα ὁ θεὸς ποιήσας, δύναμιν ᾗ θεατικὴν ὡδὶ μὴ ποιήσας, πᾶν ἂν ὠφελῶ; οὐδὲν· ἀλλ' ἀνάπαλιν, εἰ τυφλὰ μὲν δύναμιν ποιήσει, τὰ ὄντα δὲ μὴ τοιαῦτα, οἷα συμπαθεῖν τῇ δυνάμει τῇ ὁρατικῇ, καὶ ἔτι τι ἂν ὠφελῶ; οὐδὲν· εἰ δὲ καὶ ἀμφότερα ταῦτα ποιήσει, φῶς δὲ μὴ ποιήσας· οὐδ' ἔτι τι ὠφελῶ· τίς ἂν ὁ σκόπος τούτου πρὸς ἐκεῖνο, καὶ ἐκεῖνο πρὸς τοῦτο; Epict. 1. 6.

the kind entertainments nature ſets before us? doth ſhe not every where preſent ſpectacles of delight (ſomewhat of lively picture, ſomewhat of gay embroidery, ſomewhat of elegant ſymmetry) to our eyes, however ſeldom any thing appears horrid or ugly to them? where is it that we meet with noiſes ſo violent, or ſo jarring, as to offend our ears; is not there rather provided for us, wherever we go, ſome kind of harmony grateful to them; not only in fields and woods the ſweet chirping of birds; by rivers the ſoft warbling of the ſtreams; but even the rude winds whiſtle in a tune not unpleaſant; the toſſing ſeas yield a kind of ſolemn and graver melody? All the air about us is it not (not only not noiſom to our ſmell, but) very comfortable, and refreſhing; and doth not even the dirty earth yield a wholſom and medicinal ſcent? So many, ſo plain, ſo exactly congruous are the relations of things here about us each to other; which ſurely could not otherwiſe come than from one admirable wiſdom and power conſpiring thus to adapt, and connect them together; as alſo from an equal goodneſs, declared in all theſe things being ſquared ſo fitly for mutual benefit and convenience. Theſe conſiderations are applicable to all (even to the meaner ſorts of) animals; which being the only creatures capable of joy and pleaſure, or liable to grief and pain; 'twas fit, that inſenſible things ſhould be diſpoſed to ſerve their needs, and uſes; which hath been with ſo wonderful a care performed, that of ſo vaſt a number among them there is none ſo vile or contemptible, (no worm, no fly, no inſect) for whoſe maintenance, whoſe defence, whoſe ſatisfaction competent (ſhall I ſay, or abundant) proviſion hath not been made, both intrinſecal (by a frame of organs fitting them to obtain and to enjoy what is good for them, to ſhun and repell what is bad; by ſtrong appetites inciting them to ſearch after and purſue; or to beware, and decline reſpectively; by ſtrange inſtincts inabling them to diſtinguiſh between what is fit for them to procure or embrace, to remove or avoid;) and extrinſecal alſo, by a great variety of conveniences, anſwerable to their ſeveral deſires and needs, diſperſed all about, and every where, as it were, offered to them. So that the Holy *Pſalmiſt* (conſidering this, and taking upon him to be as it were their Chaplain) had reaſon to ſay this grace for them: *The eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou giveſt them their meat in due ſeaſon; thou openeſt thy hand, and ſatisfieſt the deſire of every living thing.* But eſpecially (that which as reaſon enables us, ſo due gratitude obliges us, and prompts us eſpecially to obſerve) there is an evident regard (ſo evident, that even *Pliny*, a profeſſed *Epicurean*, could not forbear acknowledging it) which all things bear to man, the Prince of creatures viſible; they being all as on purpoſe ordered to yield tribute unto him; to ſupply his wants, to gratifie his deſires; with profit and pleaſure to exerciſe his faculties; to content, as it were, even his humour and curioſity. All things about us do miniſter (or at leaſt may do ſo, if we would improve the natural inſtruments, and the opportunities afforded us) to our preſervation, eaſe or delight. The hidden bowels of the earth yield us treaſures of metals and minerals, quarries of ſtone and coal, ſo neceſſary, ſo ſerviceable to divers good uſes, that we could not commodiouſly be without them; the vileſt and moſt common ſtones we tread on (even in that we tread on them) are uſeful, and ſerve to many good purpoſes beſide: * the ſurface of the earth how is it beſpread all over, as a table well furniſhed with variety of delicate fruits, herbs and grains to nouriſh our bodies, to pleaſe our taſts, to chear our ſpirits, to cure our diſeaſes? how many fragrant and beautiful flowers offer themſelves

Pſal. 145. 15. *Ejus (hominis) causâ videtur cuncta alia genuiſſe natura* Plin. *lib. 7. c. 1. Ut omnis rerum naturæ paſtri-butum aliquod nobis conferret.* Sen. *de Benef. 4. 5. Neque enim neceſſitatibus tantummodò noſtris proviſum eſt; uſque in delicias à-mamur.* Ibid. *Ut interdum Pronæa noſtra Epicurea eſſe videtur* Cic. *de N. D. 2.* * *Vera eſt Sententia Stoicorum, qui aiunt noſtrâ causâ mundum eſſe conſtructum. Omnia enim quibus conſtat, quæque generat ex ſe mundus, ad utilitatem hominis accommodata ſunt* Lact. *de Ira 13*

ſelves for the comfort of our ſmell, and the delight of our ſight? neither can our ears complain, ſince every wood breeds a quire of natural muſicians, ready to entertain them with eaſie and unaffected harmony. The woods, I ſay, which alſo adorned with ſtately trees afford us a pleaſant view, and a refreſhing ſhade, ſhelter from weather and ſun, fuel for our fires, materials for our houſes, and our ſhipping; with divers other needful utenſils. Even the barren mountains ſend us down freſh ſtreams of water, ſo neceſſary to the ſupport of our lives, ſo profitable for the fructification of our grounds, ſo commodious for conveyance of our wares, and maintaining entercourſe among us. Yea the wide ſeas are not (altogether improfitable) waſtes; but freely yield us, without our tillage, many rich harveſts, tranſmitting our commerce and traffick, furniſhing our tables with ſtores of dainty fiſh, ſupplying the bottles of heaven with waters to refreſh the earth, being inexhauſtible ciſterns, from whence our rivers and fountains are derived; the very rude and
Pſal. 148. 8. boiſterous winds themſelves fulfill God's word (which once commanded all things to be good, and approved them to be ſo) by yielding manifold ſervices to us; in bruſhing and cleanſing the air for our health, in driving forward our ſhips (which without their friendly help could not ſtir,) in gathering together, in ſcattering, in ſpreading abroad the clouds;
Pſal. 65. 11, 12, &c. the clouds, thoſe paths of God, *which drop fatneſs* upon our fields and paſtures. As for our living ſubjects, all the inferiour ſorts of *animals*, 'tis hardly poſſible to reckon the manifold benefits we receive from them; how many ways they ſupply our needs with pleaſant food, and convenient cloathing; how they eaſe our labour, how they promote even our recreation and ſport. Thus have all things upon this earth (as is fit and ſeemly they ſhould have) by the wiſe and gracious diſpoſal of the great Creatour, a reference to the benefit of its nobleſt inhabitant, moſt worthy and moſt able to uſe them; many of them have an immediate reference to man (as neceſſary to his being, or conducible to his well being; being fitted thereto, to his hand, without his care, skill or labour) others a reference to him, more mediate indeed, yet as reaſonable to ſuppoſe; I mean ſuch things, whoſe uſefulneſs doth in part depend upon the exerciſe of our reaſon, and the inſtruments ſubſervient thereto: for what is uſeful by the help of reaſon, doth as plainly refer to the benefit of a thing naturally endowed with that faculty, as what is agreeable to ſenſe referrs to a thing merely ſenſitive: we may therefore, for inſtance, as reaſonably ſuppoſe, that iron was deſigned for our uſe, though firſt we be put to dig for it, then muſt employ many arts, and
Epiſt. 1. 16. much pains before it become fit for our uſe; as that the ſtones were therefore made, which lie open to our view; and which without any preparation we eaſily apply to the pavement of our ſtreets, or the raiſing of our fences; Alſo, the grain we ſow in our grounds, or the trees which we plant in our orchards, we have reaſon to conceive as well provided for us, as thoſe plants, which grow wildly and ſpontaneouſly; for that ſufficient means are beſtowed on us of compaſſing ſuch ends, and
---Pater ipſe colendi Haud facilem eſſe viam voluit, &c. ----Curis acuens mortalia corda. Virg. rendring thoſe things uſeful to us (a reaſon able to contrive what is neceſſary in order thereto, and a hand ready to execute) it being alſo reaſonable, that ſomething ſhould be left for the improvement of our reaſon, and employment of our induſtry, leſt our nobleſt powers ſhould languiſh and decay by ſloth, or want of fit exerciſe.

Well then, is it to a fortuitous neceſſity (or a neceſſary chance) that we owe all theſe choice accommodations and preeminences of nature? muſt we bleſs and worſhip fortune for all this? did ſhe ſo eſpecially love

us,

us, and tender our good; was she so indulgent toward us, so provident for us in so many things, in every thing; making us the scope of all her workings and motions here about us? must we change style and say; Fortune pours down blessings on our heads, fortune crowns us with loving kindness, fortune daily loads us with her benefits? Shall we not only esteem these good things her gifts, but even acknowledge our selves her offsprings, and reverence her as our mother; disclaiming so noble a parent, as wisdom omnipotent; disowning so worthy a benefactor, as sovereign goodness? O brutish degeneracy; O hellish depravedness of mind! Are we not, not only wretchedly blind and stupid, if we are not able to discern so clear beams of wisdom shining through so many perspicuous correspondences; if we cannot trace the divine power by foot-steps so express and remarkable, if we cannot read so legible characters of transcendent goodness; but extremely unworthy and ingrateful, if we are not ready to acknowledge, and with hearty thankfulness to celebrate all these excellent perfections, by which all these things have been so ordered, as to conspire and cooperate for our benefit? Methinks the very perception of so much good, the continual enjoyment of so many accommodations, the frequent satisfaction of so many senses and appetites, should put us in so good humour, that when we feel our hearts repleniſhed with food and gladness, when we so delightfully relish natures dainties, when we with pleasure view this fair scene of things, when our ears are ravished with harmonious sounds, when our spirits are exhilarated with those natural perfumes shed about our gardens, our woods, and our fields, we should not be able to forbear devoutly crying out with the *Psalmist*; *O Lord, how manifold are thy works, in wisdom hast thou made them all, the earth is full of thy riches: The earth, O Lord, is full of thy mercy and bounty*; *Lord, what is man, that thou art so mindful of him; or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him?* that, *Thou hast made him to have dominion over the works of thy hands, and hast put all things under his feet?* Under his feet; and such in a manner, according to proper and direct meaning, are all those things which we have as yet touched upon; so many arguments of the Divinity even looking downwards, as it were, (if we do not so look rather like beasts than men) we may upon this little spot of our habitation perceive: But if, employing our peculiar advantage, we lift up our eyes and minds towards heaven, there in a larger volume, and in a brighter character, we shall behold the testimonies of perfection, and majesty stupendious described: As our eyes are dazled with the radiant light coming thence, so must the vast amplitude, the stately beauty, the decent order, the steady course, the beneficial efficacy of those glorious lamps astonish our minds, fixing their attention upon them: He that shall, I say, consider with what precise regularity, and what perfect constancy those (beyond our imagination) vast bodies perform their rapid motions, what pleasure, comfort and advantage their light and heat do yield us, how their kindly influences conduce to the general preservation of all things here below (impregnating the womb of this cold and dull lump of earth with various sorts of life, with strange degrees of activity) how necessary (or how convenient at least) the certain recourses of seasons made by them are; how can he but wonder, and wondring adore that transcendency of beneficent wisdom and power, which first disposed them into, which still preserves them in such a state and order? That all of them should be so regulated, as for so many ages together (even thorough all memories of time) to persist in the same posture, to retain the same ap-

Οὐχ ἑαυτὸν ἀμάρτυρον ἀφῆκεν, ἀγαθοποιῶν, &c. Act. 14. 17.

Act. 14. 17.

Psal. 104. 24. 119. 64. 33. 5.

Psal. 8. 4. 144. 3.

 pearances,

pearances, not to alter discernibly in magnitude, in shape, in situation, in distance each from other; but to abide fixed (as it were) in their unfixedness, and steady in their restless motions; not to vary at all sensibly in the time of their revolution (so that one year was ever observed to differ in an hour, or one day in a minute from another) doth it not argue a constant will directing them, and a mighty hand upholding them? it did so (*Plutarch* tells us) to the common apprehensions of men in ancient times; who from these observations deduced the existence and notion of a God; because (saith he) **they took notice, that the sun, the moon, and the rest of the stars, taking their course about the earth, did constantly arise alike in their colours, equal in their bignesses, in the same places, and at the same times.* Reason dictated to them what the inspired *Psalmist* sings concerning the heavenly host; that God *commanded, and they were created; he hath also stablished them for ever and ever, by a decree that shall not pass.* And surely, those celestial squadrons could never be rang'd in a form so proper, and march on so regularly without the marshalling, and without the conduct of a most skilful captain. He that can seriously ascribe all this to an undisciplined, and unconducted troop of atoms rambling up and down confusedly through the field of infinite space; what might he not as easily assert, or admit? certainly, he that can think so, can think any thing; and labour were vainly spent in farther endeavour to convince him: So even Pagan Philosophers have judged; upon whom what impression this consideration hath made, we may learn from these words of one among them, *Cicero: Who* (saith he) *would call him a man, that beholding such certain motions of heaven, thus settled ranks of stars, all things there so connected and suted together, should deny there were a reason in them, or should affirm those things done by chance, which by no understanding we can reach with how great counsel they are performed?* And, *what other thing* (adds he) *can be so open and so perspicuous, to us that shall behold the heavens and contemplate things celestial, as that there is a most excellent Divinity, by which these things are governed?* Thus do * *the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work*; yea thus have we reason to acknowledge with *Nehemiah* † *Thou, even thou art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens with all their hosts; the earth and all things that are therein, the seas and all that is therein, and thou preservest them all:* Thus, every thing above and below us, before and behind, on this, on that, on every side of us yields more than a simple attestation to the existence of its glorious maker; each of them singly, several of them together giving their vote and suffrage thereto.

* ἡνιοχη

Ordo autem siderum, & in omni aternitate constantia neque naturam significat, est enim plena rationis, neque fortunam, quæ amica varietati constantiam respuit. Cic. *de Nat. D.* 2 p 68.

Οὐδέποτε ἓν ἐν χειμῶνι μακρᾷ γέγονεν ἡ ἡμέρα, ὥσπερ ἀδέκτοις ἐν θέρει μακρᾷ γέγονεν ἡ νύξ, τοσούτων παρελθόντων γενεῶν· ἀλλὰ ἐν τοσούτῳ διαστήματι ἡ μήκει. ὑδὲ ἀκαιρίαν, ἐχ ἡμιωρίου, ἢ ῥιπῇ ὀφθαλμοῦ ἡ ἑτέρᾳ τῶν ἑτέραν ἐπιλουέκτισε· Chrys. Ἀνδρ. Ϡ'.

* Αὐτὸς γὰρ ἤλιος ἡ σελήνη, ἡ τὰ λοιπὰ τῶν ἄστρων τῷ ταὐτοῦ ροῇ συνεχόμενα, ὅμοια μὲν ἀνατέλλει τοῖς χρώμασιν, ἴσα δὲ τοῖς μεγέθεσι, καὶ κατὰ τόπους, καὶ χρόνους τοὺς αὐτούς· Plut. *de plac.* 1. 6.

Psal. 147. 5, 6.

Isa. 40. 26. & 45. 12. Dan. 4. 35. Neh. 9. 6.

Quis hunc hominem dixerit, qui cùm tam certos cæli motus, tam ratos astrorum ordines, támque inter se connexa, & apta viderit, neget his ullam inesse rationem, eáque casu fieri dicat, quæ quanto consilio gerantur, nullo consilio assequi possumus? Cic. *de Nat D.* 2. pag. 90.

Quid potest esse tam apertum, támque perspicuum, cùm cœlum suspeximus, cœlestiáque contemplati sumus, quam aliquod esse numen præstantissimæ mentis, qua hæc regantur? Ibid. p. 53.

Εἰς ἓν ἔτος ἀδιάφθορος, ὡς ὁρᾶν μὲν ἐφικνοῦ, ὁρῶν δὲ διάπλατος καὶ γῆν, ὁρῶν δὲ τοσαύτην ὁρῶν εὐκρασίαν ἄστρων ἀκριβῆ, καὶ ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς ἀδιάφθορον τάξιν, νομίζειν αὐτομάτως ταῦτα γίνεσθαι, ἀλλὰ μὴ θεοσκυνεῖν τὰ ἅπαντα ταῦτα μὴ σοφίας τὸ θεοσικοῦς διαλαξάμενον; Chrys. Ἀδρ. Ϡ'.

* Psal. 19. 1.

† Neh. 9. 6. Isa. 37. 16.

Quocunque te flexeris, ibi Deum videbis occurrentem tibi, &c. Sen. *de Benef.* 4. 8.

III. Yea,

III. Yea, which was the laſt conſideration intimated, All of them joyn together in one univerſal conſort, with one harmonious voice, to proclaim one and the ſame wiſdom to have deſigned, one and the ſame power to have produced, one and the ſame goodneſs to have ſet both wiſdom and power on work in deſigning, and in producing their being; in preſerving and governing it: for this whole Syſteme of things what is it, but one goodly body (as it were) compacted of ſeveral members and organs; ſo aptly compacted together, that each confers its being, and its operation to the grace and ornament, to the ſtrength and ſtability of the whole; One ſoul (of divine providence) enlivening in a manner, and actuating it all? Survey it all over, and we ſhall have reaſon to ſay with the Philoſopher; *All the parts of the world are ſo conſtituted, that they could not be either better for uſe, nor more beautiful for ſhew.* In it we ſhall eſpy nothing in ſubſtance ſuperfluous, or defective; nothing in ſhape deformed, in poſition miſplaced, in motion exorbitant, ſo as to prejudice the beauty or welfare of the whole. We may perhaps not diſcern the uſe of each part, or the tendency of each particular effect; but of many they are ſo plain and palpable, that reaſon obliges us to ſuppoſe the like of the reſt. Even as a perſon whom we obſerve frequently to act with great conſideration and prudence, when at other times we cannot penetrate the drift of his proceedings, we muſt yet imagine that he hath ſome latent reaſon, ſome reach of policy, that we are not aware of; Or, as in an engine conſiſting of many parts, curiouſly combined, whereof we do perceive the general uſe, and apprehend how divers parts thereof conduce thereto, reaſon prompts us (although we neither ſee them all, nor can comprehend the immediate ſerviceableneſs of ſome) to think they are all in ſome way or other ſubſervient to the Artiſts deſign; ſuch an agent is God, the wiſdom of whoſe proceedings being in ſo many inſtances notorious, we ought to ſuppoſe it anſwerable in the reſt. Such an engine is this World, of which we may eaſily enough diſcern the general end, and how many of its parts do conduce thereto; and cannot therefore in reaſon but ſuppoſe the reſt in their kind alike congruous, and conducible to the ſame purpoſe: Our incapacity to diſcover all doth not argue any defect, but an exceſs of wiſdom in the deſign thereof; not too little perfection in the work, but too great an one rather, in reſpect to our capacity: however we plainly ſee the reſult of all to be the durable continuance of things, without interruption, or change in the ſame conſtant uniform ſtate; which ſhews, that in the world there is no ſeed of corruption (as it were) no inclination to diſſolution or decay; nothing that tends to the diſcompoſure, or deſtruction of the whole: Each ingredient thereof (of thoſe ſo unconceivably numerous) conſiſts within its proper limits; not encroaching immoderately upon; not devouring, or diſturbing another in its courſe; contrary qualities therein ſerving to a due temperament, oppoſite inclinations begetting a juſt poiſe, particular viciſſitudes conferring to a general ſettlement; private deaths and corruptions maintaining the publick life and health, producing

---ἐποίησεν ὡς ἀγαθὸς τὸ χρήσιμον, ὡς σοφὸς τὸ κάλλιστον, ὡς δυνατὸς τὸ μέγιστον. Baſ. *Hexaem.* λ. *a.*

Omnes mundi partes ità conſtitutæ ſunt, ut neque ad uſum meliores potuerint eſſe, nec ad ſpectem pulchriores. Cic. *de Nat. Deor.* 2. *pag* 85.

Μηδὲν ἡ φύσις ποιεῖ μάτην, μηδὲ ἀπολείπει τῶν ἀναγκαίων. Ariſt. 3. *de Anima, cap.* 10.

Ῥύσεις, καὶ ἀλλοιώσεις ἀνανεοῦσι τὸν κόσμον διὰ παντός. Anton. 6. 15. 12. 13.

Αἱ μὲν γενέσεις ἐπαναξέλλουσι τὰς φθορὰς, αἱ δὲ φθοραὶ κωφίζουσι τὰς γενέσεις· μία δ' ὁ πάντων περαινομένων σωτηρία διατελεῖ. Auct. *de Mund. cap.* 5.

Omnia perennis ſervantur; omnia de interitu reformantur, &c. Tertull. *Apol. cap.* 48.

ducing a kind of youthful vigour in the whole: So that six thousand years together hath this great *Machine* stood, always one and the same, unimpaired in its beauty, unworn in its parts, unwearied, and undisturbed in its motions. If then (as *Plutarch* says) *no fair thing is ever produced by hazard, but with art framing it*; how could this most fair comprehension of all fair things be not the lawful issue of art, but a by-blow of fortune; of fortune, the mother onely of broods monstrous and misshapen. If the nature of any cause be discoverable by its effects; if from any work we may infer the workman's ability; if in any case the results of wisdom are distinguishable from the consequences of chance, we have reason to believe, that the Architect of this magnificent and beautiful frame was one incomprehensibly wise, powerful and good Being; and to conclude with *Cicero*, *Esse præstantem, aliquam æternámque naturam, & eam suspiciendam, adorandámque hominum generi pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cœlestium cogit confiteri*; the sense of which Saying we cannot better render or express, than in Saint *Paul*'s words, Rom. 1. 20. *The invisible things of God by the making* (or rather by the make and constitution) *of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his external power and Godhead*; so that, I adjoin after him, *they are inexcusable, who* from hence *do not know God*; or knowing him do not render unto him his due glory and service.

Ὁ μέγας καὶ θαυμαστὸς καὶ μεγαλοπρεπὴς αὐτὸς κόσμος. Greg. Naz. Or. 43. —"Εκρυσον μέντοι καὶ δαπάνης πολλῆς καὶ δεσμῶν τῶν ἀῤῥήκτων τὸ πολύσαρκον καὶ τὰς οἰκείας διαφυλάττον ἕρμας καὶ μαχὴ τόπων εἰρήνης αἰτία γίνεται τῷ παντί. Chrys. Orat. 47, 48. Tom. 6

Οὐδὲν γὰρ καλῶν εἰκῇ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχε γίνεται, ἀλλὰ κατά τινα τέχνης δημιουργήσας. Plut. de plac. 1. 6.

Quòd si mundum efficere potest concursus atomorum, cur porticum, cur templum, cur domum, cur urbem non potest, quæ sunt multò minùs operosa, & multò quidem faciliora? Cic. 2. *de Natur. Deor. pag.* 89.

Κόσμος καλὸν ποίκιλμα τέκτονος σοφοῦ. Eurip.

Cic. 2. *de Nat. Deor. pag.* 89.
Αἰσοτέχνας. *Epitheton Dei.* Pind.

I Believe in God,

SERMON VII.

The Being of GOD

Proved from the FRAME of

HUMANE NATURE.

GEN. 1. 27.

So God created man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him.

THE belief of God's existence is the foundation of all Religion, if which be not well laid in our minds by convincing reasons, the superstructures standing thereon may easily be in danger of being shaken and ruined; especially being assailed by the winds of temptation

tion and oppoſition, which every where blow ſo violently in this irreligious age. No diſcourſes therefore can perhaps be more needful (or ſeaſonably uſeful) than ſuch as do produce and urge reaſons of that kind, apt to eſtabliſh that foundation. Of ſuch there be, I conceive, none better, or more ſuitable to common capacity, than thoſe, which are drawn from effects apparent to mens general obſervation and experience, the which cannot reaſonably be aſcribed to any other cauſe, than unto God, that is (according to the notion commonly anſwering to that name) to a Being incomprehenſibly wiſe, powerful and good. Of ſuch effects there be innumerably many in this ſenſible world among things natural, more ſtrictly ſo called, that is, ſubſiſting and acting without immediate uſe of underſtanding or choice; the conſtitutions and operations of which (being evidently directed according to very much reaſon, and to very good purpoſe) do evince their being framed and ordered by ſuch a Being; as I have formerly, with a competent largeneſs, endeavoured to ſhew. But beſide thoſe, there is expoſed to our obſervation, yea ſubject to our inward conſcience, another ſort of beings, acting in another manner and from other principles; having in them a ſpring of voluntary motion and activity; not, as the reſt, neceſſarily determined, or driven on, by a kind of blind violence, in one direct road to one certain end; but guiding themſelves with judgment and choice by ſeveral ways toward divers ends; briefly, endued with reaſon to know what and why, and with liberty to chuſe what and how they ſhould act; And that this ſort of beings (that is we our ſelves, all mankind) did proceed from the ſame ſource or original cauſe, as it is in way of hiſtory delivered and affirmed in our Text, ſo I ſhall now endeavour by reaſon (apt to perſwade even thoſe, who would not allow this ſacred authority) to ſhew. Indeed, if the *eternal power, and divinity of God may* (as S. *Paul* tells us) *be ſeen in all the works of God*; the ſame peculiarly and principally will appear obſervable in this maſter-piece as it were of the great Artificer; if the meaneſt creatures reflect ſomewhat of light, by which we may diſcern the divine exiſtence and perfections; in this fine and beſt poliſhed mirrour, we ſhall more clearly diſcover the ſame: no where ſo much of God will appear as in this work, which was deſignedly formed to reſemble and repreſent him. This then is the ſubject of our preſent diſcourſe, That in man well conſidered we may diſcern manifeſt footſteps of that incomprehenſibly excellent Being, impreſſed upon him; and this doubly, both in each man ſingly taken, and in men as ſtanding in conjunction or relation to each other: conſidering man's nature we ſhall have reaſon to think it to have proceeded from God, conſidering humane ſocieties we ſhall ſee cauſe to ſuppoſe them deſigned and governed by God. Rom. 1. 20.

I. Conſider we firſt any one ſingle man, or that humane nature abſtractedly, whereof each individual perſon doth partake; and whereas that doth conſiſt of two parts, one material and external, whereby man becomes a ſenſible part of nature, and hath an eminent ſtation among viſible creatures; the other, that interiour and inviſible principle of operations peculiarly called humane; as to the former we did, among other ſuch parts of nature take cognizance thereof, and even in that diſcovered plain marks of a great wiſdom that made it, of a great goodneſs taking care to maintain it. The other now we ſhall chiefly conſider, in which we may diſcern not only σημεῖα, but ὁμοιώματα of the divine exiſtence and efficiency; not only large tracks, but expreſs footſteps; not only ſuch ſigns as ſmoke is of fire, or a picture of the

the painter that drew it; but even such, as the spark is of fire, and the picture of its original.

1. And first, that man's nature did proceed from some efficient cause, it will (as of other things in nature) be reasonable to suppose. For if not so, then it must either spring up of it self, so that at some determinate beginning of time, or from all eternity, some one man, or some number of men did of themselves exist; or there hath been a succession without beginning of continual generations indeterminate (not terminated in any root, one or more of singular persons.)

Now generally that man did not at any time in any manner spring up of himself, appears, 1. from history and common tradition; which (as we shall otherwhere largely shew) deliver the contrary: being therein more credible than bare conjecture or precarious assertion, destitute of testimony or proof. 2. From the present constant manner of man's production, which is not by spontaneous emergency, but in way of successive derivation, according to a method admirably provided for by nature. 3. Because if ever man did spring up of himself, it should be reasonable that at any time, that often, that at least sometime in so long a course of times the like should happen, which yet no experience doth attest. 4. There is an evident relation between our bodies and souls; the members and organs of our bodies being wonderfully adapted to serve the operations of our souls. Now in our bodies (as we have before shewed) there appear plain arguments of a most wise Authour, that contrived and framed them; therefore in no likelihood did our souls arise of themselves, but owe their being to the same wise cause.

Also particularly, that not any men did at some beginning of time spring up of themselves is evident, because there is even in the thing it self a repugnance; and it is altogether unconceivable that any thing, which once hath not been, should ever come to be without receiving its being from another: and supposing such a rise of any thing, there could not in any case be any need of an efficient cause; since any thing might purely out of nothing come to be of it self.

Neither could any man so exist from eternity, both from the general reasons assigned, which being grounded in the nature of the thing, and including no respect to this circumstance of now and then, do equally remove this supposition (for what is in it self unapt, or unnecessary, or improbable to be now, was always alike so; the being from eternity, or in time not altering the nature of the thing) and also particularly, because there are no footsteps, or monuments of man's (not to say eternal but even) ancient standing in the world; but rather many good arguments (otherwere touched) of his late coming thereinto; which consideration did even convince *Epicurus* and his Followers, and made them acknowledge man to be a novel production. I add, seeing it is necessary to suppose some eternal and self-subsistent Being distinct from man, and from any other particular sensible being (for there is no such being, which in reason can be supposed authour of the rest; but rather all of them bear characters signifying their original from a Being more excellent than themselves) and such an one being admitted, there is no need or reason to suppose any other; (especially Man and all others appearing unapt so to subsist) therefore it is not reasonable to ascribe eternal self-subsistence to Man. This discourse I confirm with the suffrage of *Aristotle* himself; who in his *Physicks* hath these words: *In natural things that which is definite, and better, if possible, must rather exist: but it*

Ἔτι δὲ τοῖς φύσει δεῖ τὸ πεπερασμένον, καὶ τὸ βέλτιστον, ἐὰν οἷόν τε ᾖ, ὑπάρχειν μᾶλλον· ἱκανὸν δὲ καὶ εἰ ἓν, ὁ πρῶτον ἦν ἀκίνητον ἀΐδιον ἐν, ἔστι τοῖς ἄλλοις ἀρχὴ κινήσεως. *Phys.* 8. 7.

it ſuffices, that one, the firſt of things immovable, being eternal, ſhould be to others the original of motion ; (I ſubjoin and, by parity of reaſon, it is ſufficient that one and the beſt thing be eternally ſubſiſtent of it ſelf ; and the cauſe of ſubſiſtence to the reſt.)

As for the laſt ſuppoſition, that there have been indeterminate ſucceſſions of men, without beginning, it is alſo liable to moſt of the former exceptions, beſide that it is altogether unintelligible, and its having this peculiar difficulty in it, that it aſcribes determinate effects to cauſes indeterminate. And indeed it hath been to no other purpoſe introduced, than to evade the arguments ariſing from the nature of the thing, by confounding the matter with impertinent intrigues, ſuch as the terms of infinite and indeterminate muſt neceſſarily produce in man's ſhallow underſtanding. I therefore upon ſuch grounds aſſume it as a reaſonable ſuppoſition, that man's nature is no wiſe † αὐτοφυὴς, but hath proceeded from ſome cauſe. († *hath not ſprung up of it ſelf*)

2. I adjoin *ſecondly*, that it could not come from any ſenſible or material cauſe, nor from any complication of ſuch cauſes ; for that the properties, the powers, the operations of man's ſoul are wholly different from in kind, highly elevated in worth above all the properties, powers and operations of things corporeal, in what imaginable manner ſoever framed or tempered : the properties, faculties and operations of our ſouls are, or refer to ſeveral ſorts or ways of knowledge (ſenſe, fancy, memory, diſcourſe, mental intuition) of willing (that is of appetite toward and choice of good, or of diſliking and refuſing evil) of paſſion (that is of ſenſible complacency or diſpleaſure in reſpect to good and evil apprehended under ſeveral notions and circumſtances) of αὐτοκινησία, or ſelf-moving (the power and act of moving without any force extrinſecal working upon it.) The general properties of things corporeal are extenſion according to ſeveral dimenſions and figures ; aptneſs to receive motion from, or to impart motion unto each other in ſeveral degrees and proportions of velocity ; to divide, and unite ; or to be divided, and united each by other ; and the like coherent with and reſulting from thoſe : now to common ſenſe it ſeems evident, that thoſe properties, and theſe are *toto genere* different from each other ; nor have any conceivable ſimilitude unto, connexion with, dependence upon each other, as to their immediate nature. Let any part of this corporeal maſs be refined by the ſubtleſt diviſion, let it be agitated by the quickeſt motion, let it be modell'd into what ſhape or faſhion you pleaſe, how can any man imagine either knowledge, or appetite, or paſſion thence to reſult ? or that it ſhould thence acquire a power of moving it ſelf, or another adjacent body ? Even, I ſay, this inferiour locomotive faculty is too high for matter by any change it can undergo to obtain : for we (as inward experience, or conſcience of what we doe may teach us) determine our ſelves commonly to action, and move the corporeal inſtruments ſubject to our will and command, not by force of any precedent bodily impreſſion or impulſe, but either according to mere pleaſure, or in virtue of ſomewhat ſpiritual and abſtracted from matter. acting upon us, not by a phyſical energy, but by moral repreſentation, in a manner more eaſily conceived than expreſſed ; (for no man ſurely is ſo dull, that he cannot perceive a huge difference between being dragg'd by a violent hand, and drawn to action by a ſtrong reaſon ; although it may puzzle him to expreſs that difference) ſuch a propoſition of truth, ſuch an apprehenſion of events poſſible, ſuch an appearance of good or evil conſequent (things no where exiſtent without us, nor having in them any thing of corporeal

corporeal subsistence; nor therefore capable of corporeal operation) are all the engines that usually impell us to action; and these by a voluntary application of our minds (by collecting and digesting, severing and rejecting, sifting and moulding the present single representations of things, by an immediate interiour power, independent from any thing without us) we frame within our selves. And even such self-moving, or self-determining power we cannot any wise conceive to be in, or to arise from any part of this corporeal mass, however shaped or seized, however situated or agitated: much less can we well apprehend the more noble faculties to be seated in, or to spring from it; of them the grossest and the finest, the slowest and the nimblest, the roughest and the smoothest bodies are alike capable, or rather unlike, uncapable. To think a gross body may be ground and pounded into rationality, a slow body may be thumpt and driven into passion, a rough body may be filed and polished into a faculty of discerning and resenting things; that a cluster of pretty thin round atoms (as *Democritus* forsooth conceited) that a well mixt combination of elements (as *Empedocles* fansied) that a harmonious contemperation (or *crasis*) of humours (as *Galen*, dreaming it seems upon his drugs and his potions, would persuade us) that an implement made up of I know not what fine springs, and wheels, and such mechanick knacks (as some of our modern wizards have been busie in divining) should without more to doe become the subject of so rare capacities and endowments, the authour of actions so worthy, and works so wonderful; capable of wisdom and vertue, of knowledge so vast, and of desires so lofty; apt to contemplate truth, and affect good; able to recollect things past, and to foresee things future; to search so deep into the causes of things, and disclose so many mysteries of nature; to invent so many arts and sciences, to contrive such projects of policy, and atchieve such feats of prowess; briefly should become capable to design, undertake and perform all those admirable effects of humane wit and industry which we daily see and hear of; how senseless and absurd conceits are these; how can we, without great indignation and regret entertain such suppositions? No, no; 'tis both ridiculous fondness, and monstrous baseness for us to own any parentage from, or any alliance to things so mean, so very much below us. 'Tis indeed observable, that no man can well, or scarce any man hath disowned the receiving his being from God, but hath also in a manner disavowed his own being what he is; that no man denying God, hath not also withal denied himself; denied himself to be a man; renounced his reason, his liberty, and other perfections of his nature; rather than acknowledge himself so well descended, hath been ready to confess himself no more than a beast, yea much less than probably beasts are; a mere corporeal machine, a ball of fate and chance, a thing violently toss and tumbled up and down by bodies all about it. But let these degenerate men vilifie their own nature, and disparage themselves as they please, yet those noble perfections of our souls speak its extraction from a higher stock; we cannot if we consider them well, but acknowledge that,

Mentem è cœlesti demissam traximus arce;

or as *Epicharmus* said of old, that *man's reason did sprout from the divine reason*; they plainly discover their original to be from a cause it self understanding and knowing, willing freely, resenting things (if I may so speak) and moving of it self in a more excellent manner and degree.

Arist. *de An.* l. 2.

Ὁ γὲ ϑ τ' ἀνϑρωπ λόγος πέφυκ' ἀπὸ τ ϑείν λόγυ. Epic. Cl. Alex. *Ser.* 5. *pag.* 441.

And

And indeed it is very considerable to our purpose, that while we assert the existence of God, we assert no other thing to be, than such as whereof we can assign a manifest instance or example (as it were) although in degree much inferiour; for what can in any degree exist, 'tis not hard to conceive that possible to exist in any degree, how high soever; what is in kind possible, is in any perfection of degree possible; yea what we see in a lower degree somewhere to exist, doth probably otherwhere exist in higher perfection. There is therefore scarce any attribute commonly ascribed to God, the existence whereof we cannot shew possible, yea very credible, by shewing some degree (I use this word in a large and popular sense, not regarding Scholastical nicety) some participation, some semblance (or if you please, some shadow) thereof discernible in man; he being indeed a small picture, as it were, wherein God hath drawn and represented himself, giving us to read that of himself in this small volume, which in its proper character and size we could never be able to apprehend; each letter, each line of his excellency being in it self too large for our eye perfectly to view and comprehend.

3. We are (I say) not only God's works, but his children; our souls bearing in their countenance and complexion divers express features of him; especially as at first they were made, and as by improvement of our capacities they may again become. In the substance of man's soul, in its union with things corporeal, in its properties and powers we may observe divers such resemblances, declaring it in a manner to be what *Seneca* did say of it, *a little God harboured in humane body.* For as God (*inhabiting light inaccessible*) being himself invisible, and subject to no sense, discovers himself by manifold effects of wisdom and power, so doth our soul, it self immediately exposed to no sense, shew it self by many works of art and industry, wherein she imitates nature, and the works of God; although her works in fineness and greatness do indeed come infinitely short of his.

—quid mirum noscere mundum
Si possunt homines, quibus est & mundus in ipsis,
Exemplúmque Dei quisque est in imagine parva? Manil. 4.

Trismeg. χ'. Διὸ τολμητέον ὄφιν, ἢ μὴ ἄ θεωπον δίκαιον, εἶναι θεὸν ἔνδυτον· ἢ ὃ ἐρώτιον εἶναι θεὸν, ἀθάνατον ἄνθρωπον.

Deus in humano corpore hospitans.

Quem in hoc mundo locum Deus obtinet, hunc in homine animus; quod est illic materia, id in nobis corpus est. Sen. *Ep.* 65.

Deum te scito esse: siquidem Deus est, qui viget, qui sensit, qui meminit, qui providet, qui tam regit, & movet, & moderatur id corpus, cui præpositus est, quàm hunc mundum princeps ille Deus; & ut ipsum mundum ex quadam parte mortalem Deus æternus, sic fragile corpus animus sempiternus movet. Cic. *in Somn.* Scip.

As God by his presence and influence doth (as the Philosopher speaks) *contain, and keep together the whole frame of things*; so that he withdrawing them, it would fall of it self into corruption and ruine; So doth the soul by its union and secret energy upon the body connect the parts of its body, and preserve it from dissolution, which presently, they being removed, do follow.

Περιέχει πᾶσαν φύσιν. Arist. *de mundo.*

Δοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ τὸ σῶμα συνέχειν· ἐξελθόσης γὰρ διαπνεῖται καὶ σήπεται. Arist. *de An.* 1. 9.

As he, in a manner beyond our conception, without any proper extension, or composition of parts doth co-exist with, penetrateth, and passeth through all things; * So is she, in a manner also unconceivable, every where present within her bounds, and penetrates all the dimensions of her little world.

* Ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ τοῖς τῶν διανοίας κινήμασι πάντη κατ' ἐξουσίαν ἐφαπλῶται τῇ κλίσει, καὶ μέχρις ἐσχάτων ἀνήκασα, καὶ ταῖς ἀβύσσοις ἐπιβαλεύουσα, καὶ πεπλάτεται τὸ οἰκεῖον ὥρας ἐπεχομένη, &c. Gr. Nyss. *Cat.* c. 16.

As He incomprehensibly by a word of his mind, or by a mere act of will doth move the whole frame or any part of nature; so doth she, we cannot tell how, by thinking only, and by willing wield her body, and determine any member thereof to motion.

As He, not confined by the extenſion or duration of things doth at one ſimple view behold all things, not only preſent, but paſt and future; yea whenever, wherever, however poſſible; So doth ſhe making wide excurſions out of her narrow manſion in an inſtant, as it were, or with a marvellous agility tranſcend any fixed bounds of time or place; ſurveys in her thought the moſt remote regions, ſtopping no where, and paſſing over the worlds bounds into ſpaces void and imaginary; reviews ages long ſince paſt, and looks forward into thoſe long after to come; ſees things in their cauſes, and as it were beyond them, even the poſſibilities of things that never ſhall be.

Magna & generoſa res eſt humanus animus, in immenſum ſe extendit, nec ullos ſibi poni niſi communes cum Deo terminos patitur. Sen. *Ep.* 102.

Πῶς μετρῇ τόπῳ, ᾧ νοῦς ὁ χωρίζεται, ἀλλ' ἐν ταυτῷ μέσῳ πάντα ἐπέρχεται; Greg. Naz. *Or.* 26.

As He performs nothing raſhly or vainly, but always with wiſeſt deſign to the beſt end; ſo doth ſhe never ſet her ſelf on action without ſome drift, or aim at good apparent to her.

Ὁ θεὸς οὐδὲν μάτην ποιεῖ. Ariſt.

As He among all the agitations and changes of things without him abides himſelf immovable, impaſſible and immutable; ſo is ſhe, immediately at leaſt, not diſturbed, not altered, not affected by the various motions that ſurround her; they do not touch her; they cannot ſtir her; among the many tumults and tempeſts bluſtering all about her ſhe can retain a ſteady calm and reſt; (*Ariſtotle* himſelf concluded her to be unmoveable, impaſſible, unmixt and uncompounded.) So fair characters are there of the divine nature engraven upon man's ſoul; but one chief property thereof we have not as yet touched; whereof (alas!) the lineaments are more faint and leſs diſcernible; they being in themſelves originally moſt tender and delicate, and thence apt by our unhappy degeneration to ſuffer the moſt, and have thence accordingly been moſt defaced; Goodneſs I mean; whereof yet, I ſhall not doubt to ſay, many goodly reliques are extant, and may be obſerved therein. There do remain diſperſed in the ſoil of humane nature divers ſeeds of goodneſs, of benignity, of ingenuity, which being cheriſhed, excited and quickned by good culture do, to common experience, thruſt out flowers very lovely, yield fruits very pleaſant of vertue and goodneſs. We ſee that even the generality of men are prone to approve the laws and rules directing to juſtice, ſincerity and beneficence; to commend actions ſutable unto them, to honour perſons practiſing according to them; as alſo to diſtaſt, deteſt or deſpiſe ſuch men, whoſe principles or tempers incline them to the practice of injury, fraud, malice and cruelty; yea even them men generally are apt to diſlike, who are ſo addicted to themſelves, as to be backward to doe good to others. Yea no man can act according to thoſe rules of juſtice and goodneſs without ſatisfaction of mind; no man can doe againſt them without inward ſelf-condemnation and regret (as S. *Paul* did obſerve for us.) No man hardly is ſo ſavage, in whom the receiving kindneſſes doth not beget a kindly ſenſe, and an inclination (*eo nomine*, for that cauſe barely) to return the like; which inclination cannot well be aſcribed to any other principle than ſomewhat of ingenuity innate to man.

Τάξας λογικῶ ᾧ ἀλόγω πρόσωπα & ἀνθρώπου, ζῶον λογικὸν συνεστήσατο, καὶ συνέδησε μυστικῶς τε καὶ ἀῤῥήτως & χῶν τῷ νοῖ, ᾧ & νῶν τῷ πνεύματι. Greg. Naz. *Or.* 26.

Ἐν ᾧ δὲ δύναται ὑπάρχειν αὐτῇ κίνησιν. *de An.* 1. 3. ἀπαθὲς. *de An* 1. 5. 3. 5, 6, &c. ἀμιγὲς ἁπλοῦς. 3. 6, &c.

Quæ autem natio non comitatem, non benignitatem, non gratum animum, & beneficii memorem diligit? quæ ſuperbos, quæ maleficos, quæ crudeles, quæ ingratos non aſpernatur, non odit? Cic. *de Leg.* 1. *pag.* 305.

Rom. 2. 15.

Quid tam laudabile, quid tam æqualiter in omnium animos receptum, quàm referre bene meritis gratiam? Sen. *de Benef* 4. 16.

Huic uni rei non poſſumus legem, tanquam ſatis natura caviſſet. Ibid. 4. 17.

All

All men (I ſuppoſe) feel in themſelves (if at leaſt not harden'd by villainous cuſtom) a diſpoſition prompting them to commiſerate, yea (even with ſome trouble, and ſome damage to themſelves) to ſuccour and relieve them who are in want, pain, or any diſtreſs; even mere ſtrangers and ſuch from whom they can expect no return of benefit or advantage to themſelves.

Many examples occur in experience and in hiſtory of men, who from dictates of common reaſon, and natural inclinations (which in this caſe are not to be ſeparated, both ariſing from the ſame ſource of humane nature) have been very apt freely and liberally to impart unto others ſomewhat of any good thing they poſſeſſed; to ſacrifice their own eaſe, pleaſure, profit unto others benefit; to undergo great pains and hazards for publick good (the good of their family, of their friends, of their countrey, of mankind in general) and all this without any hope of recompence; except perhaps that commonly they might have ſome regard to the approbation and acceptance, to the good will and gratitude of them, whom their beneficence obliged; which in real eſteem is no great derogation to their noble performances; and argues only there is together with ſuch a laudable benignity or goodneſs of nature (to excite and enliven it) implanted a natural ambition alſo, or generoſity in man's ſoul; which being well moderated ſeems not culpable; ſince God himſelf in return to his moſt free beneficence doth expect and require ſomewhat of thanks and praiſe; ſo much as we are able to render to him.

Vicit amor patriæ, laudumque cupido.

Yea (although our adverſaries will ſcarce admit ſo much, for that not ſuppoſing any good original, they are unwilling to allow any good derivative; they are as ready to exclude all humanity as divinity; they have commonly as no opinion of God, ſo no good opinion of men; feeling little good in themſelves, they are willing to think leſs to be in others; ſo projecting to excuſe themſelves, and ſhrowd their own particular faults under the covert of a general naughtineſs) I doubt not to ſay, there have been many perſons in all ages full of very ſingle and ſincere good-will toward men, heartily deſiring the publick good, and compaſſionating the evils of mankind; ready with their beſt endeavours to procure and promote the one, to prevent and remove the other, from principles of mere ingenuity or pure nobleneſs; that with unmovable reſolution have perſiſted in courſes tending to ſuch ends, although in them they have encountred dangers, diſgraces and troubles from the ingrateful world, or rather from ſome men prevalent therein, their envy or ſpite.

Nec eſt quiſquam gentis ullius, qui ducem naturam nactus ad virtutem pervenire non poſſit. Cic. *de Leg.* 1.

Natura nos ad mentem optimam genuit, adeoque diſcere meliora volentibus promptum eſt, ut verè intuenti mirum ſit illud magis malos eſſe tam multos. Quintil. 12. 11.

In fine, the wiſeſt obſervers of man's nature have pronounced him to be a creature gentle and ſociable, inclinable to and fit for converſation, apt to keep good order, to obſerve rules of juſtice, to embrace any ſort of vertue, if well managed; if inſtructed by good diſcipline, if guided by good example, if living under the influence of wiſe laws and vertuous governours. Fierceneſs, rudeneſs, craft, malice, all perverſe and intractable, all miſchievous and vicious diſpoſitions to grow among men (like weeds in any, even the beſt ſoil) and overſpread the earth from neglect of good education; from ill conduct, ill cuſtom, ill example;

ζῶον ἥμερον.

ζῶον πολιτικόν.

Chryſoſt. *Tom* 5. *pag.* 613. Καθάπερ ἡ γῆ, ὅταν λιπερὰ ᾖ πίων ὖσα πυγχάνῃ μὴ γεωργῆται ᾖ, πολλὰ ἐπιδείκνυται κἂν ἀχανδῶν τὴν φορὰν, ἅπω ᾖ καὶ ἡ φυσις ἡ ἡμετέρα καλὴ ὖσα διὰ τ' ἀπεργαζόντα, καὶ ἀρρὶς τ' ἀ ἀρετῆς καρπὸν ἐπιτηδείως ἔχουσα, &c. *Tom* 10.

Plut. *de ſera num. vind. pag* 978. --- Εἰσὶς ὅσῳ μοῖραν ἀρετῆς ἀπ' αὐτῆ φερόμενοι πρὸς γένεσιν ψυχαὶ καθίζουσι, καὶ τὸ ἡμερον ὡς ἐοικὸς ἀυτοῖς, καὶ ὃν ἐξημερον ἐπόυκεν ἐξανδρεῖ ὃ πρὸς φύσιν τῳ καλὰν ὑπὸ τροφῆς, καὶ ὁμιλίας φαύλης φθειρόμενον, &c.

(tis the compariſon of Saint *Chryſoſtom*, and of *Plutarch.*) 'Tis favour therefore, I conceive, to their own habitual depravations of nature (or perhaps to ſome prejudicate opinions) which hath induced ſome men to make ſo diſadvantageous a portraicture of humane nature, in which nothing lightſome or handſome, no lines of candour or rectitude do appear, but all ſeems black and crooked; all is drawn over with dusky ſhades, and irregular features of baſe deſignfulneſs, and malicious cunning; of ſuſpicion, malignity, rapacity; which character were it true (in that general extent, and not proper only to ſome monſters among men) we need not farther ſeek for hell, ſince as many men, ſo many fiends appear unto us. But ſo commodious living here, ſo many offices daily performed among men of courteſie, mercy and pity; ſo many conſtant obſervances of friendſhip and amity, ſo many inſtances of fidelity and gratitude, ſo much credit always (even among *Pagans* and *Barbarians*) preſerved to juſtice and humanity, (humanity, that very name doth fairly argue for us) do ſufficiently confute thoſe defamers, and ſlanderers of mankind; do competently evidence, that all good inclinations are not quite baniſhed the world, nor quite razed out of man's ſoul; but that even herein humane nature doth ſomewhat reſemble its excellent original, the nature divine.

Thus doth man's nature in its ſubſtance, as it were, its faculties, its manner of operation reſemble God; but we may farther obſerve, that as children are indeed in complexion and feature uſually born ſomewhat like to their parents, but grow daily more like unto them; (thoſe ſmaller lineaments continually with their bulk and ſtature encreaſing and becoming more diſcernible) ſo is man improvable to more exact reſemblance of God; his ſoul hath appetites and capacities, by which well guided and ordered it ſoars and climbs continually in its affection and deſire toward divine perfection. Man hath an inſatiable curioſity and greedineſs of knowledge (*his eye is never ſatisfied with ſeeing, nor his ear filled with hearing*) he never reſts content with, but in a manner deſpiſes the notions already acquired; always ſtriving to enlarge and enrich his mind with intellectual treaſure. So doth he tend nearer to divine omniſcience.

Eccleſ. 1. 8.

And as his ſearches after truth, ſo his deſires of good are in a manner boundleſs. No preſent, no definite good can long detain his liking, or fully content him: he ſoon doth ſuck it dry, and leaves it inſipid; then longs and haunts after freſh entertainments: he ſeems poor to himſelf in the greateſt plenty, and ſtraitned in the moſt ample condition. In ſhort, he ever aſpires to ſomewhat more great and high than what he enjoys; finding in himſelf a kind of infinite (at leaſt indefinite) ambition and covetouſneſs, a reſtleſs tendency after farther degrees of joy and happineſs, ſo doth he ſhoot himſelf on toward that higheſt mark of divine felicity.

Being ſenſible of his own mortal and tranſitory condition, he yet ſeeks to live for ever in his name and memory, labours to perform memorable actions, rears laſting monuments of his art and knowledge, of his wealth and power, of his bounty and munificence, by all means ſtudying and ſtriving to commend himſelf to the regard of poſterity; thus affects he another ſort of likeneſs unto God, even a kind of immortality and eternity.

If alſo being, through divine grace, awakened out of that drowſie ſtate (which naturally in great meaſure hath ſeized upon all men) he diſcovereth

discovereth his moral or spiritual wants and imperfections; he is then apt to breath and endeavour a nearer similitude to God, even in goodness, righteousness and purity; to labour in getting continually his inclinations more rectified, and his passions better composed; in restraining, subduing, destroying inordinate self-love with the sensuality, the perverseness, the pride, the malice growing from that evil root; in promoting all vertuous desires and affections, especially reverence toward God his father, and charity toward man his brother; neither then can he be at ease or well content, till he arrive in such dispositions of mind to that nearness of perfection which his capacities do admit. And a man thus qualified in degree, thus tending in desire toward higher perfection in goodness, is indeed the most lively image that can be framed of God; being (as Saint *Paul* expresseth it) *renewed to an acknowledgment* (or better understanding of himself, of his maker, of true goodness) *according to the image of him that made him.* I might also propound to your consideration that πίλτερον φυσικὸν τὸ πρὸς τὸ κτίσαντα (as one of our Fathers doth call it) that *natural proclivity observable in man to acknowledge and worship God*; to embrace religion both in opinion and practice, and especially on all occasions of need or distress to have recourse unto him, as an argument of his relation to God. 'Tis we see common in nature for all creatures to be readily acquainted with their parents, to run after them, to expect from them supply of wants, succour in straits, refuge and defence in dangers; from hence we may easily discern to what parent any child belongs: And since there appears the like instinct and capacity innate to man (and indeed to him alone, whence some Philosophers thought good from this property to define man, a creature capable of religion) Since he is apt to entertain notions of God, to bear in his mind awe and respect toward him; since he is ready in all his straits (when other helps and hopes fail him) to lift up his heart and voice toward heaven for assistance; why may we not in like manner hence discern, and with like reason infer, that man is also in especial manner God's child and off-spring?

εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν. Colos. 3. 10.

Orig. *in* Celf.

Testimonium animæ naturaliter religiosæ. Tertull.

Animal religionis capax.

Animus---hoc habet argumentum divinitatis suæ, quòd illum divina delectant. Sen. *Nat. quæst* 1. *præf.*

I might also adjoin, that the very power of framing conceptions, although imperfect and inadequate, concerning God, is in it self a faculty so very spiritual and sublime, that it argues something divine in man's soul. * *That like is known by its like*, was an axiome among ancient Philosophers; and that *spiritual things are spiritually discerned*, is the rule of a better Master in wisdom than they; And beasts surely, because not indued with reason, have no conceptions concerning mans nature or the matters proper to him, (according to what rules, by what methods, to what purposes he doth act) so in likelihood should we not be able to apprehend and discourse about things appertaining to God, his nature, the methods and reasons of his proceedings; the notions of eternal truth, the indispensable laws of right, the natural differences of good and evil, with such like high objects of thought, except our souls had in them some sparks of divine understanding; some cognation with and communication from heaven.

* Arist. *de An.* 1. 2. γινώσκεται ὁμοίῳ ὅμοιον. 1 Cor. 2. 14. *Quis cælum possit nisi cœli munere nosse, Et reperire Deum nisi qui pars ipse deorum est?* Manil. *lib.* 2.

I shall to these only subjoin one farther consideration worth attending to, that the wisest and most considerate men in several times, only by reflecting upon their own minds, and observing in them what was most lovely and excellent, most pure and streight, have fallen upon and conspired in notions concerning God, very suitable to those which we believe taught us by revelation; although contrary to the prejudices of their education, and to popular conceits: many admirable passages to this

this purpose we may find drop from the mouth of *Socrates*, and the pen of *Plato*; in *Cicero*, in *Epictetus*, yea in the least credulous or fanciful of men, *Aristotle* himself. Whence plainly enough we may collect how near affinity there is between God and us; how legible characters of the divinity are written upon our souls; how easily we may know God, if we be not ignorant of our selves; that we need not go far to fetch arguments to prove that God is, nor to find lessons to learn what he is; since we always carry both about us, or rather within us; since our souls could indeed come from no other than such a being, whom they so resemble and represent.

I have indulged my thoughts somewhat freely in this speculation, yet I hope not altogether impertinently, for that (as I before alledged) in the chief of God's works (observable by us) we may reasonably suppose that his glory doth chiefly shine; and will therefore be most discernible to us, if we open our eyes and apply our minds thereto.

II. Thus doth humane nature, being in each singular man, shew the existence of God, as its original authour and pattern; considering also men as related and combined together in society, some glimpse of a divine power and wisdom ordering them toward it, and preserving them in it, may be perceived. As in the world natural, the parts thereof are so fitted in varieties of size, of quality, of aptitude to motion, that all may stick together (excluding chasms and vacuities) and all co-operate incessantly to the preservation of that common union and harmony which was there intended: So in the world political we may observe various propensions and aptitudes disposing men to collection and coherence and co-operation in society. They are apt to flock together not only from a kind of necessity, discovered by reason, for mutual help and defence; but from a natural love to company and conversation, with an aptness to delight therein; and from an inbred aversation to that solitude, wherein many great appetites natural to man must needs be stifled. They are also marvellously fitted to maintain intercourse not only by the principal guide thereof, reason, but by that great instrument of it, speech; whereby men impart and as it were transfuse into one another their inmost thoughts; which faculty doth evidently relate unto and plainly shews men naturally designed for society. In Order thereto men are also indued with several subordinate inclinations and qualifications (arising from different temper of body, or disposition of mind) requisite to cement society and preserve it for a competent durance in peace and order; so few being made very sagacious and provident, and thence fit to direct others, very quick and active, thence able to execute; others of a high spirit and courage, thence affecting and disposed to command; most others being dull in conceit, or heavy of temper, or of a soft spirit, and thence apt to follow, content to rest in mean state, willing to obey. All these things being so ordered, that even contrarieties of humour in men do serve to settle them in their due place and posture; to beget and preserve a peaceful union, and a decent harmony of action in society; which, supposing all men in ability and inclination more like or equal (able to doe, apt to affect the same things) could hardly be; for then all men would be competitours and struglers for the same thing, and so none would easily obtain, or peacefully enjoy it.

Now since it is plainly best for man to live thus in society many great benefits thence accruing to him, (security to his life, safe enjoying the fruits of his industry, much ease by mutual assistance, much delight in conversation; all that civil people enjoy of convenience beyond Barbarians

rians and Savages, or indeed above beasts) that men are so disposed and suted thereto is an argument of mighty wisdom and great goodness in that cause, from whence all this proceeded; and such a cause is God.

Thus from the constitution of societies we may collect a provident care over humane affairs; the same also may be reasonably deduced from the preservation of them; for although man be inclined unto and fitted for society, yet being an agent very free and loose in his action (acting contingently, and without necessary subjection to any setled law or rule, as do other things in nature) no ordinary banks will constantly retain him in due place and order; so that the course of affairs, perverted by some mens irregular wills and passions, would run into great confusion, did not a wise care also continually govern things, seasonably interposing its hand, and thereby upholding, retaining, establishing them in order, or reducing them thereinto; did not a superintendent power restrain the fierceness of tyrants, the ambition of grandees, the greediness of oppressours, the wildness and precipitancy of factious multitudes; did not God sometime *break the arm of the wicked*; or (as *Job* speaks) *pour contempt upon princes*, and *weaken the strength of the mighty*; If he, that *stilleth the noise of the seas*, did not also *repress the tumults of the people*. Indeed as in nature it is wisely provided that tigres, wolves and foxes upon the earth, that kites in the air, and sharks in the sea shall not so multiply and abound, but that many tame and gentle creatures shall abide there by them: So among men, that (among divers fierce, ravenous, crafty and mischievous men) so many poor, simple and harmless people do make a shift to live here in competent safety, liberty, ease and comfort, doth argue his special overwatching care and governance, who (as we are, in conformity to experience, taught by sacred scripture) hath an especial regard unto the poor, and unto the meek; providing for them, and protecting them.

Psal. 37. 17. Psal. 10. 15. Job 12. 21. 38. 15. Psal. 107. 40. Psal. 75. 7. Psal. 146. 7. 107. 41. 9. 9. 10. 14. 37. 18.

I might subjoin those significations of providence, which the general connexion of mankind doth afford; things being so ordered, that several Nations and Societies shall be prompted by need or by advantage mutual to maintain correspondence and commerce with each other; under common laws and compacts, that so there should become a kind of union and harmony even among the several parts, and elements, as it were, of the humane world. I might consider the benefit that arises (as in the natural world from contrary qualities and motions, so) in the humane world even from wars and contentions; how these rowze men from sloth, brush away divers vices, ferment and purge things into a better condition; but I will not strive to be so minute and subtile.

Here I shall conclude these sorts of argumentation, inferring the existence of God from the common effects obvious to our sense and experience, either in the greater world of Nature, or lesser world of Man; by which God doth continually in a still, though very audible, voice whisper this great truth into our ears. There be other sort of effects, more rare and extraordinary, which go above or against both those streams of natural and humane things, whereby God doth more loudly, as it were, and expresly proclaim his Being and Providence; the consideration of which I shall reserve to another time.

Grant, we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words, which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living, to the honour and praise of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

I Be-

I Believe in God.

SERMON VIII.

THE

Being of GOD

Proved from

Universal Consent.

PSALM 19. 3, 4.

There is no speech, nor language, where their voice is not heard: their line (or rather according to the * *LXX*, their voice) *is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.*

* who reade קילם instead of קום.

THE *Psalmist* doth in this place observe and affirm (very plainly) the Universality of Religion; that all Nations did conspire in acknowledging a Divinity, and ascribing thereto the framing and conservation of the heavens. He supposes the heavens to speak an universal Language, heard and understood by all people, therein glorifying God and declaring him their Maker.

Upon which supposition I purpose now to ground an argument to prove (that which formerly by several other kinds of discourse I have endeavoured to evince) that great fundamental truth concerning the existence of God, that is, of one incomprehensibly Excellent Being, the Maker and Governour of all things.

* *Testimonium populorum atque gentium in una hac re non dissidentium.* Lact. 1. 2.

The argument (to be short) is that (as *Lactantius* speaks) * *universal and unanimous testimony of people, and nations*, through all courses of time, *who* (otherwise differing in language, custom and conceit) *only have agreed in this one matter of Opinion.* This testimony, in it self simply taken, hath indeed (according to the rules of reason and judgments of wise men) no small force; but seems to have much greater, if we consider the source, whatever that could be, whence it was derived. As to the thing absolutely taken; *Aristotle* thus ranks the degrees of probability: What seems true to some wise men is somewhat probable; what seems to the most or to all wise men is very probable; what most men, both wise and unwise, assent unto, doth still more

more resemble truth; but what men generally consent in hath the highest probability, and approaches near to demonstrable truth; so near, that it may pass for ridiculous arrogance and self-conceitedness, or for intolerable obstinacy and perverseness to deny it. *A man* (saith the Philosopher) *may assume what seems true to the wise, if it do not contradict the common opinion of men*; no man's wisdom (he supposes) sufficient to balance the general authority of men. Indeed, when extravagant wits, and pretenders to wisdom (or to an extraordinary reach in knowledge) shall assert things evidently repugnant to sense or reason; that snow and coal have the like appearance (as did *Anaxagoras*,) that all motion is impossible (as *Zeno*,) that contradictory propositions may be consistent (as *Heraclitus*;) we may add to those instances, that all things in nature proceeded from Chance (as *Epicurus* and his followers;) what other means have we (since no principles can be more evident than such propositions as they reject) to confute them, or to decide the cause, than making appeal to the common sentiments of Mankind? which if they decline, what have we more to doe than to laugh at, or pity them? however surely, he needs to have a very strong and very clear reason to shew, who dares to withstand the common suffrage of mankind, and to challenge all the world of mistake. Now somewhat to enforce this discourse; but more to evidence the matter of fact upon which it is grounded, and withal to make good that confirmation thereof, which was intimated; I shall alledge some few testimonies of ancient Philosophers (that is of witnesses in this cause most impartial and unsuspected) selected out of innumerable others extant and obvious, serving to the same purpose: *We are wont to attribute much* (saith *Seneca*) *to what all men presume*; *'tis an argument with us of truth, that any thing seems true to all*; *as that there be Gods we hence collect, for that all men have engrafted in them an opinion concerning Gods*; *neither is there any Nation so void of laws, or good manners, that it doth not believe there are some Gods*; so doth he assert the matter of fact, and argue from it: the like doth *Cicero* in many places, sometimes in the person of his Dialogists, sometimes according to his own sense; pressing this argument as very weighty. *This* (saith he, in his *Tusculane questions*) *seems a most firm thing, which is alledged, why we should believe Gods to be, because no Nation is so fierce, no man so wild, whose mind an opinion concerning Gods, hath not imbued: Many think amiss concerning Gods, for that uses to proceed from bad custom, but all do however conceive a divine power and nature to exist—— Now in all things the consent of all nations is to be supposed a law of nature.* We shall have other occasion to cite divers places out of *Plato* and *Aristotle*, confirming the same thing; I shall now only add these pregnant words of *Maximus Tyrius*: *In such a quarrelling, and tumult, and jangling* (about other matters of opinion) *you may see this one by common accord acknowledged law and speech, that there is one God, the King and Father of all*; *and many Gods, the children of God, and ruling together with him*;

Θεὶν δ' ἂν τι τὸ δοκοῦν πᾶσι συμφοῖς, ἐὰν μὴ ἐναντίον τοῖς πολλῶν δόξαις ᾖ. Top. 1. 8.

Multum dare solemus præsumptioni omnium hominum, apud nos veritatis argumentum est aliquid omnibus videri; *tanquam deos esse sic colligimus, quòd omnibus de Diis opinio insita est*; *nec ulla gens usquam est adeò extra leges moresq*; *projecta, ut non aliquos Deos credat.* Sen. *Epist.* 117. *vid. de Benef.* 4. 4.

Firmissimum hoc afferri videtur cur Deos esse credamus, quòd nulla gens tam fera, nemo omnium tam sit immanis, cujus mentem non imbuerit Deorum opinio. Multi de Diis prava sentiunt (id enim vitioso more effici solet) omnes tamen esse vim, & naturam divinam arbitrantur. — Omni autem in re consensio omnium gentium lex naturæ putanda est. Tusc. 1. *p.* 299.

Vid. de Nat. D. 1. *pag.* 22: & 2. *pag.* 53, 57, *&c.*

Ἐν πσάτῳ ϑ πολέμῳ καὶ σάσι καὶ διαφωνίᾳ ἕνα ἴδοις ἂν ἐν πάσῃ γῇ ὁμόφωνον νόμον καὶ λόγον, ὅτι ϑεὸς εἰς πάντων βασιλεὺς καὶ πατὴρ καὶ ϑεοὶ πολλοί, ϑεῶ παῖδες, συνάρχοντες ϑεῷ, ταῦτα ϑ ὁ ἕλλην λέγει, καὶ ὁ βάρβαρος λέγει, καὶ ὁ ἠπειρώτης, καὶ ὁ θαλάτλιος, καὶ ὁ σοφὸς, καὶ ὁ ἄσοφος. Diss. 1. *p.* 5.

this the Greek says, and this the Barbarian says; the inhabiter of the Continent, and the Islander; the wise, and the unwise do say the same.

Εἰ ὃ ἐξεγένοντο ἐν τῷ ξύμπαντι αἰῶνι δίο πᾶ καὶ τρεῖς ἄθεον καὶ ταπεινὸν καὶ ἀσθενὲς γένος. ὡς ἄθυμόλεων, ὡς ταῦρος ἄκερως, ὡς ὄρνις ἄπτερος. *Id.* 16. Καί τις ἂν ἐπαινέσειε τὴν βαρβάρων σοφίαν, εἴγε μηδεὶς αὐτῶν εἰς ἀθεότητα ἐξέπεσε, μηδ' ἀμφιβάλλοιτο περὶ θεῶν, ἄλλ' γε εἰσιν, ἢ ὅπως εἰσὶν, καὶ ἄλλ' γε ἡμῶν φρονιζουσι, ἢ ἃ, *&c.* Ælian. *var.* 2. 31.

Thus it appears, by testimony abundantly sufficient (to which also all Histories ancient and modern do agree) that our conclusion hath been the Catholick and current doctrine of all times and of all places; so that who denies assent thereto, is beyond measure paradoxical, and belongs to a Sect very thin and weak; is in opinion *what a monster is in nature*, a thing extraordinary and uncouth; *as a Lion without courage, an Ox without horns, a Bird without wings* (as the Philosopher speaks) a thing which seldom happs to be, and that never without some great errour, or defect.

But if, as surely he will, our haughty adversary, shall refuse the verdict of this grand Jury, we may assert its authority, not only as competent in it self, but as more considerable in respect to the causes, whence it proceeded, or from the manner by which this general consent can be conceived to have been produced and propagated among men. That men should thus conspire in opinion must needs proceed either 1. from hence, that such an opinion was by way of natural light or instinct (as the first most evident principles of science are conceived to be, or as the most effectual propensions toward good are) implanted in Man's nature; thus *Cicero* and other Philosophers suppose it to have come: In him it is thus said; and argued: *Since not by any institution, or custom, or law, this opinion is established, and among all, without exception, a firm consent doth abide, it is necessary there should be Gods; we having implanted, or rather imbred notions concerning them; but about whatever men naturally do agree, that must needs be true; we must therefore confess there are Gods.* Thus doth he draw this opinion from original light of nature. Or, 2. it may come from a common inclination in man's soul naturally disposing every man to entertain this opinion, whenever it is propounded, as there is in our eyes a natural readiness to perceive the light, whenever it shines before us; thus others explain the rise thereof, as *Julian* particularly: *We all*, saith he, *without being taught* (without any painful or long instruction) *are perswaded, that a Divinity exists; and to regard it, and to have, we may suppose, a speedy tendency* (or recourse) *thereto; being in such manner disposed thereto in our souls, as things endewed with the faculty of seeing are to the light:* the same similitude is, as I remember, used by *Plato* to the same purpose. Or, 3. it may come hence, that some very prevalent reason (obvious to all men, even to the most rude and barbarous, and flowing from common principles or notions of truth) did beget this agreement in them: Thus *Plutarch* derives it from mens common observation of the Stars constant order and motion; So S. *Paul* also seems to imply, the knowledge of God manifest to all men from the creation of the world, and the works of God visible therein; and here (in this 19th *Psalm*) the Prophet may seem to intend the same, although it be not certain he does; for that general acknowledgment and glorifying of God as maker of the heavens, which he avouches, may be understood

Cùm enim non instituto aliquo, aut more, aut lege sit opinio constituta, manéatque ad unum omnium firma consensio, intelligi necesse est esse Deos, quoniam insitas eorum, vel potiùs innatas cognitiones habemus; de quo autem omnium natura consentit, id verum esse necesse est. Esse igitur Deos confitendum est. de N. D. 1. pag. 22. *vid.* 2. *de* N. D. 53, 57, *&c.*

Πάντας δὲ διδάκτως ἔχειν θεόν τι πεπείσμεθα, ἢ πρὸς τοῦτο ἀφορᾶν, ἐπ' αὐτό τε, οἶμαι, σπεύδειν ὅπω διαπεφυκότι τὰς ψυχὰς πρὸς αὐτὸ, ὥσπερ ὄμμασι πρὸς τὸ φῶς τὰ βλέπουσα. Jul. *ad* Heraclitum.

Plut. *de plac.* 1. 6.

Rom. 1. 19, 20.

stood as well the consequence as the cause of this religious opinion. Or, 4. it might from some common fountain of instruction (from one ancient Master, or one primitive tradition) be conveyed, as from one common head or source into many particular conduits. Thus the Authour of the Book *de Mundo* (dedicated to *Alexander*) seems to deduce it: *It is an ancient saying*, says he, *and running in the race of all men, that from God all things, and by God all things were constituted, and do consist.* The like *Aristotle* himself implies in a notable place, which we shall afterward have occasion to produce.

Ἀρχαῖος μὲν ἐν τοῖς λόγος καὶ πάτριος ἐστὶ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, ὡς ἐκ θεοῦ τὰ πάντα, καὶ διὰ θεοῦ ἡμῖν συνέστηκεν. Cap. 6.

Metaph. 12. 8.

No other way beside one of these can we (following experience or reason) imagine by which any opinion or practice should prevail generally among men, who otherwise are so apt to differ and dissent in judgment about things. And be it any one or more of these ways that this opinion became so universally instilled into mens minds, our argument will thereby gain weight and force: If we assign or acknowledge any of the two first ways, we do in effect yield the question; and grant it unreasonable to deny our conclusion: if nature forcibly drives men, or strongly draws men into this persuasion (nature, which always we find in her notions and in her instincts very sincere and faithful, not only to our selves, but to all other creatures) how vain an extravagancy will it then be to oppose it? Also, if we grant that plain reason, apparent to the generality of men, hath moved them to consent herein, do we not therefore by dissenting from it, renounce common sense, and confess our selves unreasonable: But if we say, that it did arise in the last manner, from a common instruction or primitive tradition (as indeed to my seeming from that chiefly, assisted by good reason, it most probably did arise) we shall thereby be driven to inquire, who that common Master, or the Authour of such tradition was; Of any such we find no name recorded (as we do of them, who have by plausible reasons or artifices drawn whole Nations and Sects of people to a belief of their doctrine) we find no time when, no place where, no manner how it began to grow or spread, as in other cases hath been wont to appear; what then can we otherwise reasonably deem, than that the first deliverers and teachers thereof were none other, than the first parents of mankind it self, who as they could not be ignorant of their own original, so could not but take care by ordinary education to convey the knowledge thereof to their Children; whence it must needs insensibly spread it self over all posterities of men, being sucked in with their milk, being taught them together with their first rudiments of speech? Thus doth that consideration lead us to another, very advantageous to our purpose; that mankind hath proceeded from one common stock of one man or a few men gathered together; which doth upon a double score confirm our assertion: first, as proving the generations of men had a beginning; secondly, as affording us their most weighty authority for the doctrine we assert. For, 1. Supposing mankind had a beginning upon this earth, whence could it proceed but from such a being as we assert? who, but such an one (so wise, powerful and good) could or would form these bodies of ours so full of wonderful artifice? who should infuse those divine endowments, (not only of life and sense, but) of understanding and reason? *Aristotle* discoursing about the generation of Animals, says,

De gener. Anim. 3. cap. ult.

Stoici putant homines in omnibus terris, & agris generatos tanquam fungos. Lact. 7. 4. *Vid.* Lipſ. *Phyſ. Stoic.* 3. 3.

If man (or any other perfect *animal*) *were* γενητὸς, *he muſt be neceſſarily produced, either as out of a Worm, or as from an Egg*; but is it not ridiculous to ſuppoſe him to ariſe in either of thoſe manners? did we, did ever any one in any age obſerve any ſuch production of a man? yet, why if once it could be, ſhould it not happen ſometime, yea often again, in ſome part of the earth, in ſo many thouſand years? what peculiar lucky temper of ſlime can we imagine to have been then, which not at ſometime afterward, not ſomewhere ſhould appear again? Experience ſufficiently declares, that more is required to ſo noble a production, that men no otherwiſe come into the world, than either from another man (fitted in a manner curious above our conception with many organs moſt exquiſitely ſuited to that purpoſe) or immediately from a cauſe incomprehenſibly great and wiſe. And could we without fondneſs conceive man's body poſſibly might ariſe (like Mice, as *Diodorus Siculus* tells us, out of the mudd of *Nilus*) from earth and water fermented together, and organized by the Sun's heat; yet, (as more largely we have diſcourſed at another time) we cannot however well ſuppoſe his ſoul, that principle of operations ſo excellent (ſo much different from, ſo far elevated above all material motions) to ſpring up from dirty ſtuff however baked, or boiled by heat. I ask alſo, (ſuppoſing ſtill this notion derived from the firſt men) 2. who inſtilled even this notion into them? why they ſhould conceive themſelves to come from God, if they did not find it ſo; if he that made them, did not ſenſibly diſcover himſelf to them, and ſhew them, that to him they owed their being? In ſhort, if they did teſtify and teach their poſterity, that they came from God, we can have no reaſon to disbelieve them; nor can imagine more credible witneſſes, or more reaſonable inſtructours than themſelves concerning their own original: 'tis a diſcourſe (this) which we find even in *Plato*: *We muſt* (ſaith he) *yield credence to them, who firſt avouched themſelves the off-ſpring of God, and did ſure clearly know their own progenitours; It is indeed impoſſible to diſtruſt the children of the Gods, although otherwiſe ſpeaking without plauſible, or neceſſary demonſtrations; but, following Law, we muſt believe them, as teſtifying about matters peculiarly belonging to themſelves.*

Πειστέον τοῖς εἰρημένοις ἔμπροσθεν ἐμοῦ μὲν θείων ὄντων, ὡς ἔφασαν, σαφῶς γε τῶν τοὺς αὑτῶν προγόνους εἰδόσιν· ἀδύνατον γὰρ θεῶν παισὶν ἀπιστεῖν καίπερ ἄνευ τε εἰκότων καὶ ἀναγκαίων ἀποδείξεων λέγουσιν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἰδίοις φάσκουσιν ἀπαγγέλλειν, ἑπομένους τῷ νόμῳ πιστευτέον Tim. p. 1053.

Thus do theſe two notions, that of general tradition concerning God, and that concerning Man's origine upon earth from one ſtock, mutually ſupport and defend each other. And indeed concerning the latter there be divers other arguments of the ſame kind, although perhaps hardly any ſo clear and valid, confirming it; I mean divers common opinions, ſtories and practices of an unaccountable riſe, which cannot be well deemed to have been introduced, and ſo univerſally diffuſed among men otherwiſe than from this fountain. I think it worth the while to propound ſome inſtances thereof, of each kind.

---- *quæ ſi ſingula vos fortè non movent, univerſa certè inter ſe connexa, atque conjuncta movere debebunt.* Cic. *de N. D.* 2.

Vid. Cl. Alex. *Str.* 5. *p.* 401. Even this opinion, or ſtory it ſelf concerning Mankind proceeding from one ſingle or very narrow ſtock, was commonly received, and that from this head of tradition; as alſo divers other concerning the nature and ſtate of Man. That God did form Man and breath his ſoul into him (as *Aratus* ſays, that *we are God's off-ſpring*, and as

Cicero

Cicero speaks, that *we have our souls drawn, and dropt from the divine nature*) might be shewn by innumerable testimonies to have been a general opinion; which although it have a very strong foundation in reason, yet it seems rather to have obtained by virtue of tradition.

A natura divina hausios animos & delibutos habemus. Cic. *divin.* 1.

That Man was formed after the image of God, and doth much resemble him, was also a general opinion, as *Aristotle* himself observes; and *Ovid* most expresly according to what he found set down in ancient stories.

Ἀνθρωπειδῆς θεὸς, &c. *Metaph.* 12. 8. Ὥσπερ ὁ πάντες καὶ τὰ εἴδη ἑαυτοῖς ἀφομοιοῦσι, ὅτω καὶ τὸς βίους ἀφ' θεῶν. *Polit.* 1. 1.

Finxit ad effigiem.

That Man's soul is immortal, and destined to a future state of life, in joy or pain respectively, according to his merits or demerits in this life; that there should accordingly pass severe scrutinies and judgments after death upon the actions of this life; that there were places provided of rest and pleasure for good men, of horrour and misery for bad men departed; were opinions that did commonly possess mens minds; none of them, it seems, upon the force of any arguments having a common influence upon mens minds (such as *Philosophers* did by speculation invent, being indeed too subtile for vulgar capacities to apprehend, and scarce able to persuade themselves) but rather from their education, continued through all times, and commencing from that head we speak of; as even such Philosophers themselves confess: *We must* (says *Plato*) *believe the reports of this kind*, (speaking about these matters) *being so many, and so very ancient.* And, *We suppose*, saith *Cicero*, *that souls abide after death from the consent of all Nations.* And, *I cannot*, saith he again, *assent unto those, who have lately begun to discourse, that souls do perish together with bodies, and that all things are blotted out by death; the auctority of the ancients doth more prevail with me.* And, *When* (saith *Seneca*) *we dispute concerning the eternity of souls, the consent of men either fearing, or worshipping the Inferi* (that is, the state of things after death) *hath no slight moment with us.* Even *Celsus* himself (an *Epicurean* Philosopher, and great enemy of our faith) confesses, that *divine men had delivered it, that happy souls should enjoy a happy life hereafter.*

Cl. *Ser.* 5. *P.* 442.

Πιστεύων ὁ Πλάτων φήμαις χρεῶν περὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα ὅτω πολλαῖς, καὶ σφόδρα παλαιαῖς οὔσαις. Plat. *de Leg.* 2. *Vid* Gorg *sub fin.*

Permanere animos arbitramur consensu nationum omnium. Cic. *Tusc.* 1.

Neq; enim assentior iis, qui hæc nuper disserere cœperunt cum corporibus simul animas interire, atq; omnia morte deleri; plus apud me antiquitas valet, &c. Cic. Læl.

Cùm de animarum æternitate disserimus, non leve momentum apud nos habet consensus hominum aut timentium inferos, aut colentium. Sen. *Ep.* 117.

Ἰσχύεται θείοις ἀνδράσι εὐδαίμων βίος & ψυχαῖς εὐδαίμοσι. Celsus *apud* Orig *pag.* 350.

The opinion concerning Man having sometimes been in a better state (both in regard to complexion of mind, and outward accommodations of life) but that he did by his wilful miscarriages fall thence into this wretched condition of proneness to sin, and subjection to sorrow, was an ancient doctrine (if we take *Plato*'s word) and concerning it *Cicero* hath these remarkable words: *From which errours and miseries of humane life we may* (saith he) *conclude, that sometime those ancient prophets, or interpreters of the Divine mind in the delivery of holy mysteries, who have said, that we are born to undergo punishments for the faults committed in a former life, may seem to have understood somewhat.* — ('Tis true, these Authors assign this fall to the souls of singular persons in a state of pre-existence; but it is plain enough, how easie it might be so to mistake and transform the story.) To the same head may be referr'd that current

Παλαιός τις λόγος. Phæd.

Ex quibus humanæ vitæ erroribus atque ærumnis fit, ut interdum veteres illi vates sive in sacris initisq; tradendis divinæ mentis interpretes, qui nos ob scelera suscepta in vita superiore pœnarum luendarum causâ natos esse dixerunt, aliquid vidisse videantur, &c. Cic. *fragm. pag.* 79.

Primi mortalium, quiq; ex his geniti naturam incorrupti sequebantur, &c. Sen. *Ep.* 90.

--Χείρεσσι πίθου μέγα πῶμ' ἀφελοῦσα Ἐσκέδασ', ἀνθρώποισι δ' ἐμήσατο κήδεα λυγρά. Hes. Ἔ γ.

current story concerning the Golden Age, in which men first did live so happily without care and pain; which so livelily expresses Man's condition in Paradise. As also thereto may belong that relation concerning Man's being thrown into this miserable state, because of a rapine committed against God's will, and that by the means of a Woman sent down; who, *with her hands opened the lid of a great vessel* (fraught with mischiefs) *and thence dispersed sad disasters and sorrows among men*; as *Hesiod* expresseth it, in words very applicable to the fact of our mother *Eve*, and the event following it.

In Phædr.

I do not know also whether what *Plato* says concerning Man's being at first ἀνδρόγυνος (of both sexes,) and being afterward cleaved into two, was borrowed from tradition, or devised from his own fancy; it surely well comports with the sacred History concerning Woman being taken out of Man. That there are two prime causes, or principles, one of good things, the other of bad, was the ancient doctrine among all the ancient Nations; of the *Persians* (who called one of them *Oromasdes*, the other *Arimanius*) of the *Egyptians* (who had their *Osiris* and *Typhon*) of the *Chaldeans* (who had their good and bad Planets) of the *Greeks* (who had their good and bad Dæmon, their Ζεὺς and ἅιδης) we have reported by *Plutarch* in his tract *de Iside & Oside*, by *Laertius* in his Proœme, and others (Aug. *de Civ. D.* 5. 21.) which conceits seem derived from the ancient traditions concerning *God* the authour of all Good, and *Sathan* the tempter to all Evil, and the Minister of divine vengeance (*Plutarch* expressly says the good principle was called *God*, the bad one *Dæmon.*) Indeed there were many other relations concerning matters of fact or pieces of ancient story agreeing, with the sacred writings, which did among the ancient people pass commonly, although somewhat disguised by alterations incident from time and other causes; which seem best derivable from this common fountain: Such as that concerning the Sons of God, and *Heroes* dwelling on the earth, concerning men of old time exceeding those of following times in length of life, in stature, in strength of body; whereof in ancient Poets there is so much mention; Concerning mens conspiring in rebellion against God; affecting and attempting to climb heaven: Concerning mankind being overwhelmed and destroyed by an universal deluge; and that by divine justice, because of cruelty and oppression (with other enormous vices) generally reigning:

---Quà terra patet fera regnat Erinnys,
In facinus jurâsse putes, dent ocyùs omnes
Quas meruere pati (sic stat sententia) pœnas.

All over the earth, fierce rage doth reign; you would take them to have sworn to do mischief; let them all immediately undergo the pains which they have deserved; this is my resolution: So God, in *Ovid*'s style declared the reason, why he decreed to bring that sore calamity upon mankind: I might add that prophecy, commonly known, that this World shall finally perish by a general conflagration.

Clem. *Strom.* 5. *p.* 442.

These opinions and stories chiefly concern Man; there were divers others concerning God and Religion, sprouting probably from the same root. That divine goodness was the pure motive of God's making the World, seems to have been a tradition; implyed by their saying, that *Love was the first, and the chief of the Gods:* πρώτιστον μὲν ἔρωτα θεῶν μητίσατο πάντων, said *Parmenides*; and Ἥ δ' ἔρος, ὃς πάντεσσι, μεταπρέπει

Arist. *Metaph.* 1. 4.

πεφύκεν ἀθανάτοισι, said *Hesiod.* That God made the world out of a *Chaos*, or confused heap of matter; which is so plainly expressed in *Hesiod*, in *Ovid* and in other ancient Writers. That God did make or beget inferiour insensible powers (of great understanding and ability; whom they called Gods, and the children of the sovereign God) whom God immediately did converse with, and in royal manner did govern; whom he did employ as spies and agents in providential administrations of humane affairs; who did frequently appear unto, and familiarly converse with men; who do walk up and down the earth observing mens actions; secretly assisting and comforting good men, restraining and crossing, and punishing the bad; whereof we have so many instances in *Homer*, in *Hesiod*, and in other ancient Writers; shewing as to those matters the general conceits of the old World. That God's especial presence and residence was above, in heaven; *Aristotle* expressly tells us was the belief of all men: *All men,* saith he, *have an opinion concerning Gods, and all men assign the highest place to the Gods, both Greeks and Barbarians.*

Arist. *Pol.* 1. 1.

Πάντες δὲ ἄνθρωποι περὶ θεῶν ἔχουσιν ὑπόληψιν, καὶ πάντες τὸ ἀνωτάτω τῷ θείῳ τόπον ἀποδιδόασι καὶ βάρβαροι καὶ ἕλληνες, *de Cœl.* 1. 3.

That God's providence did extend it self to all particularities of affairs; and that all things were ordered by him; he constantly exercising both benignity and justice suitably to the deserts and needs of men; encouraging and assisting; blessing and rewarding virtuous and pious men; relieving the distressed and helpless; controlling and chastising such as were outragiously unjust, or impious. That God at seasons used to declare his mind to men (his approbation or displeasure in regard to their doings) by accidents preternatural or prodigious; did presignifie future events; did impart fore-knowledge of them in several ways; by dreams, by visions, by inspirations, *&c.* To these opinions were answerable divers common practices: Invocating divine help in need; consulting God by oracle in case of ignorance, or doubt; deprecating divine vengeance; making acknowledgments to God in hymns and praises; returning oblations for benefits received, both common and special; expiating guilt, and appeasing God's wrath by purgations and by sacrifices (a practice peculiarly unlikely to proceed from any other reason than institution) fortifying testimonies and promises by oath, or appeal to divine knowledge and justice; invoking (upon condition) God's judgments upon themselves or others what is called cursing: Apointing Priests for God's service, and yielding them extraordinary respect; consecrating Temples and Altars; making vows, and dedicating gifts; celebrating Festivals; paying Tithes (that very determinate part) of the fruits of the earth, of the spoils in war, of the gains in trade, by way of acknowledgment and thankfulness to the donour and disposer of all things: In which, and the like opinions and performances (which it would be a long business particularly to insist on) mens general concurrence doth fairly argue, that their Religion did peculiarly result from one simple institution common to mankind.

That God doth know all the actions, words and inward thoughts of men. Vid. Cl. *Strom.* 5.

That there will be a future judgment, and rewards suted to the practices of men in this life. Vid. Cl. *Str.* 5. *p.* 442.

To these we might adjoin divers civil customs, wherein most Nations did, from this cause probably, conspire: For instance, Their counting by Decads, or stopping at Ten in their numerical computations; which *Aristotle* says, all men both *Barbarians* and *Greeks* did use, noting that so common an agreement could not arise from chance,

Πάντες ἄνθρωποι καὶ βάρβαροι καὶ ἕλληνες εἰς τὰ δέκα καταριθμοῦσι..... ὃ δὲ οὐκ ἀπὸ τύχης γε αὐτὸ ποιοῦσι φάινονται, καὶ ἀεὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀεὶ καὶ ἐπὶ πάντων οὐκ ἀπὸ τύχης, ἀλλὰ φυσικόν. Arist. *Probl.* 15. 3.

chance, but from nature; but it is much more plausible to assign its rise to tradition. Their having every where anciently the same number of letters, and the same names (or little varied) of them. Their dividing time into weeks (or systems of seven days) of which practice to have been general there be many plain testimonies. Their beginning the νυχθήμερον (or account of the daily revolution of the heavens) from the night, grounded probably upon the report that night did precede day, (as *Hesiod* phraseth it) that *night did beget day*. Their general abhorrence of incestuous copulations; of which there is indeed some ground in nature, but none I suppose so very clear or discernible, as might serve alone to produce such a consent; yea perhaps, if one consider it, the whole business concerning matrimony will seem drawn from the head we discourse of. Their great care of Funerals, and decently interring the dead; which *Cicero* indeed deduces as a consequence upon their belief of the Soul's immortality. In fine, The Consent of the Old World in all moral notions of moment doth (to my sense) much imply the same thing; which notions although natural reason well used might suggest to all men; yet men (it seems) were never so generally disposed to reason well, as thereby alone to discern and approve unanimously the same truths; especially truths of this nature; which many men are apt to dislike, (as repugnant to their desires) and consequently not ready to believe; which yet might easily by education be infused into their minds, and by virtue of the prejudice thereby begot (assisted by plausible reason and popular consent) be preserved and rooted in them.

Νυκτὸς δ' αὖθ' ἡμέρη τε γένοντο. Hesiod. *Theog.*

--- *dies natales, & mensium, & annorum initia sic observant, ut noctem dies subsequatur.* Cæs. *de* Gal. *l.* 6.

In Læl.

Now these (with divers more perhaps, which they, who are curiously inquisitive might observe) common persuasions (whether concerning matters of universal truth, or of particular facts) and those common usages having little or nothing of foundation apparent in Man's nature, or in the clear reason of the thing; no prevailing appetite or inclination of man's soul prompting to them; no occasion commonly incident to humane affairs, being apt to suggest them (at least divers of them; there being indeed rather an aptitude in men to disapprove and resist them, as cross to their dispositions) we cannot reasonably deduce them from any other cause than such as we have assigned, Mens being (as S. *Paul* speaks) *made of one blood*, and receiving as their nature, so their principles of opinion, and practice from the same common parents.

To confirm which discourse, and to prevent farther objections against it. We may consider, that however perhaps among some very barbarous Nations this principal tradition (together with others mentioned, attending thereon) may have been almost worn out by time and mens stupid negligence; that however also among some people, affecting semblances of singular wisdom, as among the *Greeks*, the matter thereof might fall under question; and some might doubt thereof, others contradict and deny it; yet most ancient Histories (particularly that of *Moses*, far most ancient of all, and therefore, even secluding its special and more sacred authority, of all most credible) do attest them to have been, in substance, universally received, running with a strong and clear current among the *Eastern* people (The *Chaldeans*, *Phœnicians* and *Egyptians*) who that they were the most ancient inhabiters of the Earth, from whom the rest of mankind was propagated,

propagated, the antiquity of Empires among them, the first use of Letters, the rise of Arts, the greater progress in all kinds of civil culture (which things argue a longer continuance in one place and state) beside express records of story and visible monuments of things performed among them, do sufficiently declare; whose consent therefore doth in reason, so far as serves our purpose, involve the consent of all mankind; and doth confirm those notions to have flowed from the clear spring of our first parents their instruction.

'Tis also true, I must confess, that these original traditions (concerning the Being and Providence of God) as must necessarily happen not only by the malice of Evil Spirits, but from Man's natural infirmity and proneness to change, even to the worse (as also from mens aptness to mistake, from rude ignorance, from wantonness of fancy, from craftiness in promoting designs of ambition and covetousness by introducing novelties, and from such like causes) did soon begin to be adulterated by many corrupt mixtures, did by degrees degenerate exceedingly into various shapes of superstition, falshood and futility. Yet even so was *Judaism* depraved by the *Scribes*; and *Christianity* it self hath been strangely debased by a long course of ignorant and bad times; yet who can doubt but both these were derived from one pure instruction; that of *Moses*, this of *Christ* our Lord? That it might so fare with the primitive traditions of religion, is evident; that it really did so, we have even the judgment and assertion of *Aristotle* himself, in those remarkable words of his to this purpose: *There were*, saith he, *things conveyed traditionally by the primitive and ancient men, and left in a fabulous dress to their posterity; that there are these Gods, and that divinity maintains* (or encompasses) *all nature: but other things were to these fictitiously super-induced for persuasion of the vulgar sort, and for the use of laws and publick commodity: Hence they speak of the Gods, as having a humane shape, or resembling other living creatures, and other things consequent upon, or agreeable to these sayings; from which things if we separate that only which was first delivered, that they deemed the Gods the first Beings, we may suppose what they said divinely spoken. And 'tis according to probability, all art and philosophy being, as might possibly, often invented and lost again, that even these opinions of them have as reliques been preserved until now: the opinion then of our Fathers, and that which came from the first men, is only thus far manifested to us.*

Παραδέδοται ἢ ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρχαίων καὶ παλαιῶν, ὃν μύθῳ ἀμιγῆ καταλελειμμένα τοῖς ὕστερον, ὅτι θεοί τέ εἰσιν οἵδε, καὶ περιέχει τὸ θεῖον τὴν ὅλην φύσιν. τὰ δ' ἄλλα μυθικῶς ἤδη προσῆκται πρὸς τὴν πειθὼ τοῦ πολλῶν, καὶ πρὸς τὴν εἰς τὸ νόμιμον καὶ τὸ συμφέρον χρῆσιν. ἀνθρωποειδεῖς γὰρ τούτους, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ζώων ὁμοίους ποιοῦσι, καὶ τούτοις ἕτερα ἀκόλουθα, καὶ παραπλήσια τοῖς εἰρημένοις. ὧν εἰ τις χωρίσειε μόνον τὸ πρῶτον, ὅτι θεοὺς ᾠήθησαν τὰς πρώτας οὐσίας εἶναι, θείως ἂν εἰρῆσθαι νομίσειε. καὶ κατὰ τὸ εἰκὸς πολλάκις εὑρημένης εἰς τὸ δυνατὸν ἐκάστης καὶ τέχνης, καὶ φιλοσοφίας, καὶ πάλιν φθαρεισῶν, καὶ τύπος τὰς δόξας ἐκείνων, οἷον λείψανα περισῴζεσθαι μέχρι τοῦ νῦν. τὴν μὲν ἐν πατρίοις δόξαν, καὶ τὴν παρὰ τῶν πρώτων ὅτι τοσαύτην ἡμῖν φάνεσθαι μόνον. Aristot. *Metaphys.* 12. 8.

Thus did the Philosopher, with a sagacity worthy so great a man, discern, that through that coarser ore, consisting in great part of dross and feculency (taken from the fondness, or fraud of humane invention, or from diabolical suggestion) a pure vein of truth did run, drawn from the source of Primitive tradition; from which being supposed we do infer, what he acknowledges divinely said, that there doth exist one first Being or substance, incomprehensibly excellent in all perfection. The like observations and judgments might be produced out of divers other Wise men (*Plato*, *Cicero*, and the like) who acknowledge and urge this common tradition as a good argument of the truths we maintain, as to the substance of them; yet scruple not to

diſſent from and to reprehend the vulgar errours and bad cuſtoms which had crept in and became annexed to them. But let thus much ſuffice for this whole argument; being the laſt of thoſe I intend to uſe for the proof of that fundamental Point, which is the root of all Religion and piety.

I have produced ſeveral arguments to that purpoſe (or rather ſeveral kinds of arguments, each containing many ſubordinate ones) moſt proper (I conceive) and apt to have a general efficacy upon mens minds, in begetting and confirming a belief thereof. Each of them have indeed, to my ſeeming, even ſingly taken a force irreſiſtible; and the greateſt in its kind, that any ſuch concluſion, not immediately apparent to ſenſe, is capable of. The exiſtence of any one cauſe in natural Philoſophy, is not there demonſtrable by effects in any proportion ſo many or various, ſo conſpicuous or certain. No queſtion can be determined by an authority ſo ample and comprehenſive, ſo expreſs and peremptory. No doctrine can to its confirmation alledge ſo general, ſo conſtant, ſo uniform a tradition. No matter of fact can be aſſured by teſtimonies ſo many in number, ſo various in kind, ſo weighty in quality, as thoſe, upon which this concluſion doth ſtand. And if we joyn together all theſe, in themſelves ſo conſiderable and powerful forces, how can we be able to reſiſt them? how can we dare to doubt of that, which they conſpire to infer? When, I ſay, to the univerſal harmony of Nature the common voice of Nations doth yield its conſent; when with the ordinary courſe of things, ſo many extraordinary accidents do concur in vote; when that which many reaſons prove, continual tradition alſo teaches; what can the reſult be, but firm perſuaſion in every wiſe and honeſt heart of the propoſition ſo confirmed? Except we can ſuppoſe, that, by a fatal conſpiracy, all the appearances in nature, and all the generations of men; the higheſt reaſon, and the greateſt authority imaginable have combined to deceive us.

In the precedent Diſcourſes I have endeavoured to prove the exiſtence of God, by arguments, which do indeed more immediately evince thoſe three principal attributes, Wiſdom, Power and Goodneſs incomprehenſible, but which alſo conſequentially declare all other the attributes commonly eſteemed ingredients of that notion, which anſwers to the name of God; (abſolutely put, and without any adjunct limiting and diminiſhing it;) all thoſe attributes, which *Ariſtotle*'s definition, *The eternal moſt exellent living thing*; or that of *Tertullian*, *the ſupreme great thing*; do include or imply; namely, his *Unity* firſt; then his *Eternity* and indefectibility; his immenſe *omnipreſence*, his *ſpirituality*; his *juſtice* and *veracity*; his *Sovereign Majeſty* and authority; with the like connected to thoſe (for I cannot proſecute all the divine perfections, according to that multiplicity of diſtinction, which our manner of conceit and expreſſion is wont to aſſign.)

Φαμὲν ὃ τὸν θεὸν τὸ ζῶον ἄριστον ἄϊδιον εἶναι. Ariſt. *Metaph* 12. 7.

Summum magnum, & forma, & ratione, & vi, & poteſtate. Tert. *adv. Marc.* 1. 3.

Ἡ μακαρία φύσις· ἡ ἄφθονος· ἀγαθότης· τὸ ἀμιγὲς πᾶσι τοῖς λόγοις μετειληφέναι· τὸ πολυπόθητον κάλλος· ἡ ἀρχὴ τῶν ὄντων· ἡ πηγὴ τῆς ζωῆς· τὸ νοερὸν φῶς· ἡ ἀπρόσιτος σοφία. Baſ. *hexaem.* λογ. α.

The uniformity, concord and perfect harmony which appears in the conſtitution and conſervation of things; their conſpiring to one end, their continuing in the ſame order and courſe do plainly declare the *Unity* of God; Even as the laſting peace of a Commonwealth (compoſed of perſons different in affections and humour) argues one law, that regulates and contains them; as the orderly march

march of an Army shews it managed by one conduct; as the uniformity of a house, or of a Town declares it contrived by one Architect.

And hereto also the common suffrage of mankind doth in a manner agree: for, however that they worshipped a multitude of inferiour Deities, yet that there was one Supreme God, Authour and Governour of the rest, and of all things beside; transcending in power and wisdom, and all kind of perfection, was evidently the common opinon; whom therefore we see the *Poets* (the best interpreters of the popular opinions) do style the *Father of Gods and Men*; *the King of the Gods*; *the most High, most great, most excellent*, &c. *The greater popularity* (as *Tertullian* speaks) *of mankind, even when Idolatry obscured the sense of divine providence, did however appropriate the Name of God especially to one*; *in their usual expressions*; *being wont to say, if God grant*; *and what pleases God, and I commend it to God.* And if the Vulgar had in some measure this conceit, the wiser sort appear to have had more clear and full apprehensions and persuasions concerning it; *Plato* refers the making of the World to one whom he calls *(the father and maker of the Universe.)* *Aristotle*, when he hath occasion to speak of God, doth usually speak in the singular; so do other Philosophers, as the *Stoicks*, in their famous precept, *Deum sequi* (to *follow God*, that is, to acquiesce in, or submit to divine providence) sometime they do expressly signifie this to be their opinion: *There are many popular Gods*, said *Antisthenes*, *but one Natural one*; *Being really One* (saith the Authour *deMundo*) *he hath many names*; *according to the several affections he discovers, and the operations he exerts*: with whom *Seneca* thus agrees: *So often as you please, you may diversly name the Authour of things: there may be so many appellations of him, as there be gifts or offices and operations*; *him our people fancy to be father Bacchus, and Hercules, and Mercury*; *call him also Nature, Fate, Fortune*; *all these are but names of the same God, variously using his power*: if they ever speak of Gods plurally, they are to be understood to speak with the like opinion of them, as we of Angels, that is, of invisible, intelligent powers, created by the supreme God, dependent of him, subject to him; *Marsil. Ficinus* his caution concerning *Plato* being applicable to the rest: —— *sed nè turbet quæso Deorum numerus, quem non turbat numerus angelorum. Nihil enim plus apud Platonem tot possunt Dii, quam apud nos tot angeli, totque beati.* So much for God's *Unity*.

Τριτος, μεγιστος, κρατιστος.

Major popularitas generis humani.... etiam tantâ idololatriâ dominationem obumbrante, seorsum tamen illum, quasi proprio nomine Deum perhibent; & Deum Deorum; & si Deus dederit; & quod Deo placet; & Deo commendo. Tertull. *adv.* Marc. 1. 10.

In Tim.

Cic. 1. *de N.D.* Arist. *deMund.* cap. 7.

Quoties voles, tibi licet aliter hunc auctorem rerum nostrarum compellare: tot appellationes ejus esse possunt, quot munera; Hunc & Liberum patrem, & Herculem, ac Mercurium nostri putant; sic hunc Naturam voca, fatum, fortunam; Omnia ejusdem Dei nomina sunt varie utentis sua potestate. Sen *de Benef.* 4. 7.

See that most remarkable saying of *Sophocles* (*apud* Grot. *in Excerpt p.* 149.) εις τοις αληθειαν, εις εστιν θεος, &c. Marsil. Fic. *in arg. lib.* 10. *de Leg.*

As to his *Eternity*; If God made all things, he could not receive being from another; and, He who made this World, what reason can there be to suppose him to be from another? Nor can any thing receive a being from it self, or from mere nothing spring up into being; therefore the Maker of the World must be Eternal. Something of necessity must be eternal, otherwise nothing could have been at all; other things shew themselves to have proceeded from the wisdom, power and goodness of One; whence that One is Eternal; and so all Nations have consented that God is.

That he is immortal and immutable doth alſo follow plainly: for he not depending for his being or any thing thereto belonging upon any other thing, neither can he depend for his continuance or conſervation; having power ſuperiour to all things, as having conferred on them whatever of power they have, nothing can oppoſe him, or make any prevalent impreſſion upon him, ſo as to deſtroy or alter any thing in him.

Alſo, from his making, his upholding, his governing all things is conſequent, that he was ever and is every where: where his power is, there his hand is; for every action with effect requires a conjunction of the agent and patient; nothing can act upon what is diſtant. That with his preſence and power he doth penetrate all things, operating inſenſibly and imperceptibly, doth argue the ſpirituality of his being; and that he doth not conſiſt of ſuch matter (ſo extended, ſo diviſible) as thoſe things do, which we by ſenſe perceive.

His over-reaching wiſdom implies him uncapable of being deceived; and his over-bearing power ſignifies that he doth not need to deceive; and his tranſcendent goodneſs proves him unwilling to deceive; the like we may ſay of doing wrong; whence are conſequent his perfect veracity and juſtice.

Laſtly, The Excellency of his nature, the Eminency of his wiſdom and power; the abundance of his goodneſs; as alſo, His having given being, then preſerving it to all things, do infer his rightful title to ſupreme dominion; and accordingly, that all love, all obedience; all praiſe and veneration are due to him; according to the devout acknowledgment of thoſe bleſſed Elders: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive the glory and honour and power,* (or authority) *becauſe thou haſt made all things; and for thy will they are and were* created.

Apoc. 4. 11.

I

I Believe in God,

SERMON IX.

THE

Being of GOD

Proved from

Supernatural Effects.

JOH. 5. 17.

But Jesus answered them: my Father hitherto worketh, and I work.

WHEN at first by the divine power this visible Systeme of things was consummated and settled in that course wherein it now stands, it is said that *God rested from all his work which he had made*; the plain meaning of which saying is, that God had so framed all the parts of nature, and several kinds of things, and disposed them into such an order, and inserted into them such principles of action, that thereafter (without more than an ordinary conversation or concourse from him) things generally should continue in their being, station and course, without any great change for ever; that is for so long as God had determined, or till their due period was run through: (*He established them, as the Psalmist speaks, for ever and ever; he made a decree, that shall not pass: His word was setled in the heavens, and his faithfulness unto all generations; they continue this day according to his ordinances: He made a covenant with day and night, and appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth.*) Thus God rested and ceased from his work of Creation. But it is not said, nor intended, that God did absolutely give over or forbear working; that he withdrew his care, and tied up (as it were) his own hands by a resolution not to intermeddle more with any thing, but to enjoy a kind of *Epicurean* ease and ἀπραξία. No: his wisdom hath so ordered things, that there should be need and reason of his acting continually; that there should be frequent occasion of variously displaying his glorious attributes; of exercising his power, of demonstrating his goodness. Indeed as

Gen. 2. 2.

conservation

Ἔστιν δ' ἐν καταπαυκέναι τὸ τὴν τάξιν τῶν γενομένων εἰς πάντα χρόνον ἀπροβάτως φυλάττεσθαι τετάχθαι, καὶ τὰ παλαιὰς ἀταξίας ἕκαστον τῶν κτισμάτων καταπαυκέναι. Clem. Alex. *St.* 6. (*pag.* 492 3.)

Psal. 148. 6.
Ps. 119. 89, &c.
Jer. 5. 22.
Jer 33. 25.
31. 36.

Ἀγαθὸς γὰρ ὢν εἰ παύσεται πώποτε ἀγαθοεργῶν, καὶ τοῦ θεὸς εἶναι παύσεται. Clem. Alex. *ibid.*

Pſal. 119. 91. Pſal. 148. 8. Iſa. 40. 26. Pſal. 104. 9. 19. as to Beings merely natural and unintelligent there were no need of his doing more; for they are all thoroughly *his* obedient *ſervants*, and exactly fulfil his word; never ſtragling from the ſtation in which he placed them; never tranſgreſſing the rule that he preſcribed them: but he hath alſo made other Beings, by nature uncapable of ſuch uniformity and ſettlement; very free, and therefore very mutable; to the well governing of whom therefore a continual intention and activity is requiſite. For the uſe and benefit of which Beings as a great part of nature was deſigned and made by God, ſo it was not unmeet, that for their ſake he ſhould ſometime alter the courſe of nature, and croſs or check the ſtream of things. The fuller and clearer illuſtration of his glory, the ſhewing that all things do not paſs on in a fatal track; the confirming that he made Nature, becauſe he can command and control it; the demonſtration of his eſpecial care over and love toward men, in ſuſpending or thwarting his own eſtabliſhed laws and decrees (as it were) for their ſake; the exciting men the more to mind God, and impreſſing on them a reſpect toward him; the begetting faith in him, and hope in his providence, are fair accounts, for which God ſometimes ſhould perform (even in a manner notorious and remarkable to us) actions extraordinary. And that God doth ſo, we learn in the words I read from the mouth of truth it ſelf; whoſe affirmation (for perſuading the incredulous) I intend to ſecond with particular inſtances, atteſted to by reaſonable proof; ſutable to the nature of the matter; and this with deſign to infer from ſuch operations (as effects aſſignable to no other cauſe) the exiſtence of God; having endeavoured formerly to deduce the ſame from the common ordinary works, appearing in both worlds, natural and humane. And as we before diſtinguiſhed the ordinary works or actions, ſo here we ſhall diſtinguiſh the extraordinary ones, into two ſorts; into thoſe which are above or againſt the courſe (or power) of nature; and thoſe, which ſurmount or croſs the ſtream of humane affairs; ſuch, as being evidenced and granted to have been really performed, either all men will believe, or the wiſeſt men will readily confeſs the being of ſuch a Cauſe as we aſſert.

Joh. 9. 3. Exod. 7. 5. Deut. 4. 35. Dan. 4. 25.

I. Let us firſt conſider the firſt kind: And of theſe we may generally affirm, that no man can deny many ſuch to have been performed, without giving the lye to the moſt authentick records of hiſtory that are or have been extant; without extremely diſparaging the credit of mankind, without impeaching all Nations and all Ages not only of extreme weakneſs (in credulous aſſent unto, regarding and relying upon ſuch appearances; which not only the vulgar ſort, but even Princes and Stateſmen, learned men and Philoſophers every-where have done) but of notorious baſeneſs and diſhoneſty, in deviſing and reporting them; without indeed derogating utterly from all teſtimony that can be rendred to any matter of fact, and rendring it wholly inſignificant; for that if we may disbelieve theſe reports, there is no reaſon we ſhould believe any thing that is told us.

Noſtrum quidem, inquit (Socrates) *humanum eſt conſilium, ſed de rebus & obſcuris & incertis ad Apollinem cenſeo referendum, ad quem etiam* Athenienſes *publicè de majoribus rebus ſemper retulerunt*, &c. Cic. *de divin. p.* 206.

To this kind we may refer the preſignification and prediction of future events, eſpecially thoſe which are contingent, and depend upon man's free choice; to the doing of which nothing is more evident in it ſelf, nor more acknowledged by all, than than a power or wiſdom ſupernatural is required; concerning which we have the (not-deſpicable) conſent of all times, continued down from the remoteſt antiquity, that frequently they have been made: *There is*, faith *Cicero*,

Cicero, an ancient opinion, drawn even from the heroical times (that is from the utmoſt bounds of time ſpoken of) *that there is among men a certain divination, which the Greeks call prophecy* (or inſpiration) *that is a preſenſion, and knowledge of future things.* And of this kind even prophane ſtory doth afford many inſtances; there indeed having ſcarce happened any conſiderable revolution in ſtate, or action in war, whereof we do not find mentioned in hiſtory ſome preſignification or prediction; whereof though many were indeed dark and ambiguous, or captious and fallacious, yet ſome were very clear and expreſs (according as God was in his wiſdom pleaſed to uſe the miniſtery of thoſe Spirits, which immediately conveyed them, in directing men for their good, or miſguiding them for their deſerved puniſhment) ſuch as were, for inſtance, that concerning *Cyrus* his conquering the *Lydians*; that concerning the battel at *Salamis*, that concerning the battel of *Leuctres*; and divers others which occur in ſtories compoſed by wiſe men of the wiſeſt Nations; even * the life of one man, (good *Socrates*) deſcribed by excellent perſons his moſt intimate acquaintance (*Xenophon* and *Plato*) affords divers; and *Cicero* acquaints us, that *Chryſippus* did collect (and 'tis great pity his collection hath periſhed) an innumerable ſtore of them, all confirmed by good authority and teſtimony. I cannot ſtand to relate many of them particularly, or diſcuſs the validity of relations concerning ſuch inſtances; I ſhall only ſay, that diſcourſe in *Tully*, concerning the oracle at *Delphos*, which may be extended to the reſt of that ſort, doth not ſeem contemptible: *I defend* (ſaith he) *this one thing; that never would that oracle have been ſo renowned, nor ſo ſtuff'd with the gifts of all Nations and Kings, if every age had not experienced the truth of thoſe oracles*; for 'tis hard, that a mere impoſture ſhould, to the expence and damage of ſo many perſons, ſo long continue in credit. I will adjoin but one obſervation to this purpoſe, that even among thoſe *Pagans*, who regarded theſe things, it was known and acknowledged, that ſuch portending, or predicting future things, although immediately conveyed by inferiour powers, did originally proceed from the one Supreme God; ſo the wiſe Poet implies, when he makes the prophetick *Fury* ſay, that ſhe received her perdiction from *Apollo*, and *Apollo* from the *Almighty Father.*

Vetus opinio eſt jam uſque ab heroicis ducta temporibus, eáque & populi Romani, & omnium hominum firmata conſenſu, verſari quandam inter homines divinationem; quam Græci μαντικὴν appellant, id eſt præſenſionem & ſcientiam rerum futurarum. De Div.

Gentem quidem nullam video neque tam humanam atque doctam, neque tam immanem, tamque barbaram, quæ non ſignificari futura, & à quibuſdam intelgi, prædicique poſſe cenſeat. Idem.

Ἀλλ' ὅταν ὑμῶν Θ-, &c. Herod. 1.
Ὦ δεῖνα Σάλαμις, &c. Herod. 7.
Λεύκτρα δέ μοι σκιδνάτα μέλει, &c. Pauſan. 9. *pag.* 563.
Collegit innumerabilia oracula Chryſippus, *nec ullum ſine locuplete auctore, atque teſte.* De Div. 172.
* *Vid* Cic *de Divin pag* 206. *de Nat. Deor.* 2. *pag.* 54.

pag. 172.
Defendo unum hoc, nunquam illud oraculum Delphis *tam celebre, & tam clarum fuiſſet, neque tantis donis refertum omnium populorum atque regum, niſi omnis ætas oraculorum illorum veritatem eſſet experta,* &c.

> *Accipite ergò animis, atque hæc mea figite dicta,*
> *Quæ* Phœbo *Pater omnipotens, mihi* Phœbus Apollo
> *Prædixit, vobis Furiarum ego maxima pando;*

Æneid. 3.

where *Servius* notes, that *even* Apollo (he who among their Deities was in chief eſteem for rendring oracles) *is ſaid to derive his knowledge from* Jove, *or the* Sovereign God.

Notandum Apollinem *quæ alicui à* Jove *cognoſcere.*

It ſeemed not amiſs to touch thoſe inſtances of this kind, which prophane Story yields, but the Holy Scriptures afford moſt evident and eminent ones; ſome of them extant in Books written and in uſe long before the events foretold: as that of *Abraham*'s concerning his poſterity ſojourning, and being afflicted in *Egypt* four hundred years; of the Prophet

Gen. 15. 13. 1 King. 13. 2. Isa. 44. & 45. Jer. 25. 12. 29. 10. Dan. 9. 2. *Vid.* Chryſ. *cont.* Jud. 2. *Tom.* 6 *p.* 328 Dan 8. 21, &c. † Luc. 19. 43. Matt. 24. 2.

phet concerning *Joſias* (ſome hundred years before his birth) that ſuch a Prince ſhould be, and what he ſhould doe; of *Iſaias* concerning *Cyrus by name*, his conqueſts, his reſtoring the *Jews* from exile, his re-edifying *Jeruſalem*; of *Jeremiah* concerning the captivity, and its duration for ſeventy years; of *Daniel* concerning the grand revolutions of Empire in the world (wherein the atchievements of *Alexander*, and his Succeſſours are ſo plainly deſcribed, that *Porphyrius* could not but acknowledge the conſonancy of them to the events) of our *Saviour* concerning the ſiege and deſtruction of † *Jeruſalem*; the truth of which reports, although we ſhould allow thoſe Writings which contain them, an authority no greater than humane, there were no reaſon to queſtion; ſince moſt of thoſe Writings were extant a good time before the events ſpecified. Now if but one of theſe innumerable inſtances were true, if ever one event hath been preſignified or predicted (and 'twere a hard caſe, that among ſo many not one ſhould prove ſo) it ſufficiently evinces what we intend.

* Joh. 3. 2.

But to our purpoſe eſpecially do appertain the works uſually ſtyled *miraculous*, which exceed or contravene the ordinary courſe or power of nature; * which therefore all men will readily confeſs performable only by an agent in power or knowledge exceeding their comprehenſion (ſuch as are, for example, the fire being with-held from burning, and the waters from flowing; the ſick being (without medicinal applications) cured of long chronical diſtempers; limbs being (in the like manner) reſtored to perſons maimed, and ſenſes to them who, from their birth (or otherwiſe for a long time) had been deprived of their uſe; reſtoring the dead to life (a thing which *Pliny* mentions as impoſſible in his conceit to God himſelf) and the like; of theſe, although all Nations have had ſo many performed among them, as ſufficed to breed every where a conſtant opinion, that a divine power did frequently interpoſe, ſo as to control and overbear the force of nature (which opinion could not in likelihood ſo generally and conſtantly prevail without any ground at all.) Yet the Holy Scriptures do moſt fully and clearly teſtify concerning them to have been in great number performed (for the confirmation of that divine truth and will of God, which they declare him pleaſed to reveal; for guiding men into, or ſetling them in right opinions of good practices; for diſabuſing and withdrawing them from ways of errour and vice; for the encouragement and relief of good, or the reſtraint, diſcouragement and chaſtiſement of evil men; which in reaſon are the moſt proper cauſes, why by ſuch a Being, as we ſuppoſe (ſo wiſe, ſo good) ſuch works ſhould be effected the teſtimonies concerning which there can be no good reaſon aſſigned of refuſing, but very great to admit them, as we hope at another time ſatisfactorily to declare. Indeed God's patefaction of himſelf, his mind, his will (in many kinds and manners particularly to the Fathers of old, and afterward generally to all the world by his Son; on purpoſe ſent from heaven to publiſh and accompliſh his deſigns of mercy and favour to all mankind) accompanied with ſo many prodigious works of power, and ſo many glorious circumſtances of providence conſpicuous to all the world, and withal ſo accommodated as to beget firſt of all this aſſurance in us, that a divine power doth exiſt and preſide over all affairs both natural and humane, is an argument which in all honeſt and well diſpoſed minds (not poſſeſſed with falſe prejudices, nor depraved by vicious inclinations) cannot but obtain effect, the fuller urging and confirming of which I ſhall refer to another ſeaſon, when it will ſerve a more general purpoſe,

Nè Deum quidem poſſe omnia. Nàmque nec ſibi poteſt conſciſcere mortem, nec mortales æternitate donare, aut revocare defunctos. Nat. Hiſt. 2. 7.

Φήμη δ' ἔτις πάμπαν ἀπώλυται, ἥντινα πολλοὶ Λαοὶ ὁμιλέωσι.

purpose, even the confirming not only this part, but even the whole of our Religion in gross: I shall only now briefly say concerning them, that considering the works themselves, they were in number so many and various, in kind so great and high; as to the manner of performance so naked and open; (being done in the face, and exposed to the senses of all men) that there could be no reason to suspect any jugling or humane artifice used about them; considering the witnesses that asserted them, they were persons who by their writings, by their behaviour, by the effect of their endeavours approved themselves very intelligent; in their intentions very honest and free from any sinister design, in their conversations very innocent and vertuous, in their attestation very consistent and constant; so that there could be desired no witnesses of any fact better qualified, or more credible than they; considering the design of those works, there could be none more noble and excellent, more worthy of God, more beneficial to man; it being chiefly the confirmation of a doctrine, incomparably the most reasonable and most useful that ever appeared among men; productive of the best fruits, apt (being entertained heartily) to make men highly good and truly happy; to promote the honour of God and the interests of goodness; to secure as much as can be both the publick and private welfare of mankind. Considering which things, we can have no good reason to distrust the performance of such works, by authentick records, by constant tradition attested to us.

I may adjoin to the former sorts of extraordinary actions, some other sorts, the consideration of which (although not so directly and immediately) may serve our main design; those (which the general opinion of mankind hath approved, and manifold testimony hath declared frequently to happen) which concern *apparitions* from another world (as it were) of Beings unusual; concerning spirits haunting persons and places; (these discerned by all senses, and by divers kinds of effects) of which the old world (the ancient Poets and Historians) did speak so much, and of which all Ages have afforded several attestations very direct and plain, and having all advantages imaginable to beget credence. Concerning visions made unto persons of especial eminency and influence (to Priests and Prophets) concerning presignifications of future events by dreams; concerning the power of enchantments, implying the co-operation of invisible powers; concerning all sorts of entercourse and confederacy (formal or virtual) with bad spirits; all which things he that shall affirm to be mere fiction and delusion, must thereby with exceeding immodesty and rudeness charge the world with extreme both vanity and malignity; many (if not all) worthy Historians of much inconsiderateness or fraud; most Lawgivers of great sillíness and rashness, most Judicatories of high stupidity or cruelty, a vast number of witnesses of the greatest malice or madness; all which have concurred to assert these matters of fact.

'Tis true, no question, but there have been many vain pretences, many false reports, many unjust accusations, and some undue decisions concerning these matters; that the vulgar sort is apt enough to be abused about them; that even intelligent and considerate men may at a distance in regard to some of them be imposed upon; But, as there would be no false gems obtruded, if there were no true ones found in nature; as no counterfeit coin would appear, were there no true one current; so neither can we well suppose that a confidence in some to feign, or a readiness in most to believe stories of this kind could arise, or should subsist with-

out some real ground, or without such things having in gross somewhat of truth and reality. However that the wiser, and more refined sort of men; highest in parts and improvements both from study and experience (indeed the flower of every Commonwealth; Statesmen, Lawgivers, Judges and Priests) upon so many occasions of great importance, after most deliberate scanning such pretences and reports, should so often suffer themselves to be deluded, to the extreme injury of particular persons concerned, to the common abusing of mankind, to the hazard of their own reputation in point of wisdom and honesty, seems no-wise reasonable to conceive. In likelihood rather the whole kind of all these things, were it altogether vain and groundless would upon so frequent and so mature discussions have appeared to be so, and would consequently long since have been disowned, exploded, and thrust out of the world. For, as upon this occasion 'tis said in *Tully*, *Time wipeth out groundless conceits, but confirms that which is founded in nature, and real.*

Opinionum commenta dies delet, naturæ judicia confirmat. De Nat. D. 2. pag. 54.

Now if the truth and reality of these things (all, or any of them) inferring the existence of powers invisible; at least inferiour ones, though much superiour to us in all sort of ability, be admitted, it will at least (as removing the chief obstacles of incredulity) confer much to the belief of that supreme Divinity, which our discourse strives to maintain.

I must acknowledge that both these arguments drawn from testimonies concerning matters of fact (and indeed all other arguments) were invalid and insignificant, could any demonstration or any argument weighty enough be brought to shew the impossibility of such a thing to exist, as we infer to exist from them. But, as it is a very easie thing (so whoever is vers'd in speculation and reasoning about things cannot but find) to prove many things possible to be, which do not actually exist; so it is hard to prove the impossiblity of a things being; Yea there is plainly no other mean of doing this, than the manifesting an evident repugnance between being it self, and some property assigned to that thing; or between several properties attributed thereto; as if we should suppose a square circle, or a round square to exist. But, in our case no man can shew such a repugnance; between being and wisdom, power or goodness there is no inconsistence surely; nor can any man evince one to be between being and co-existing with matter, or penetrating body; between being and insensibility; between being and any other property which we ascribe to God; nor is there any clashing between those properties themselves; it is therefore impossible to shew that God cannot exist; and therefore it is unreasonable to disbelieve the testimonies (so many, so pregnant) that declare him to exist.

'Tis not enough to say peremptorily, 'tis nonsense; or that you cannot understand how it should be; such proceedings are intolerably both insolent and vain.

Ἀμύητοι γάρ εἰσιν, οἱ οὐδὲν ἄλλο οἷοί τε ὦσιν, ἢ ἃ ἂν ἅπτωνται ἀπειρῶς τῶν χερῶν λαβέσθαι. Plat. *Theæt.*

——affigit humi divinæ particulam auræ.

Men indeed, who affix themselves to things which their sense offers, may be indisposed to abstract their minds from such things, may be unapt to frame conceptions about any other sort of things; but to think there can be no other things than such as we see and feel, that nothing, endued with other properties than such as these objected to our sense have, can exist, implies a great dulness of apprehension, a greater shortness of reason and judgment; 'tis much like the simplicity of a rustick, who because he never was above three miles from home, cannot imagine the world to reach ten miles farther; and will look upon all that is told him concerning things more distant, to be false and forged to abuse him.

I add,

I add, that these mens incredulity is hence more inexcusable, because the possibility of such a being its existence, the compatibility and concurrence of such properties in one thing, is (as we otherwhere have largely shewed) by a very plain instance declared, even by that Being within every man, which in a degree partakes of all those properties.

I shall leave this head of discourse, with this one remark; that they are much mistaken, who place a kind of wisdom in being very incredulous, and unwilling to assent to any testimony, how full and clear soever: For this indeed is not wisdom, but the worst kind of folly. 'Tis folly, because it causes ignorance and mistake, with all the consequents of these; and 'tis very bad, as being accompanied with disingenuity, obstinacy, rudeness, uncharitableness, and the like bad dispositions; from which credulity it self, the other extreme sort of folly is exempt. Compare we, I say, these two sorts of fools, the credulous fool, who yields his assent hastily upon any slight ground; and the suspicious fool, who never will be stirr'd by any the strongest reason or cleerest testimony; we shall find the latter in most respects the worst of the two; that his folly arises from worse causes, hath worse adjuncts, produceth worse effects. Credulity may spring from an airy complexion, or from a modest opinion of ones self; suspiciousness hath its birth from an earthy temper of body, or from self-conceit in the mind; that carries with it being civil and affable, and apt to correct an errour; with this a man is intractable, unwilling to hear, stiff and incorrigible in his ignorance, or mistake; that begets speed and alacrity in action: this renders a man heavy and dumpish, slow and tedious in his resolutions and in his proceedings; both include want of judgment; but this pretending to more thereof, becomes thereby more dangerous. Forward rashness, which is the same with that, may sometimes, like an acute disease, undoe a man sooner; but stupid dotage, little differing from this, is (like a chronical distemper) commonly more mischievous and always more hard to cure. In fine, were men in their other affairs, or in ordinary converse so diffident to plain testimony, as some do seem to be in these matters concerning Religion, they would soon feel great inconveniences to proceed thence; their business would stick, their conversation would be distastful; they would be much more offensive, and no less ridiculous than the most credulous fool in the World. While men therefore so perversly distrustful affect to seem wise, they affect really to be fools; and practise according to the worst sort of folly.

Thus have I, although very cursorily, considered the first kind of works extraordinary that appear in the world; I proceed briefly to touch the other sort, observable in the transaction of humane affairs; for even in these there do happen things in a sort miraculous, or prodigious; according to reasonable estimation surpassing the common efficacy of humane causes; by which God in a language more expres (as it were) and in a lowder tone declares his presence and providence here; so that they must be very deaf and stupid, who do not from them learn lessons of piety and reverence toward God; who do not in them hear heaven thundring forth that proclamation to us all: *Discite justitiam moniti.* For instance,

1. We may observe, when any where things are come to such a pass, that iniquity and outrage do extremely prevail, so that the most of mens lives become intolerably grievous, that in such cases often the state of things, how seemingly stable and robust soever, in a manner sudden and strange, by means to appearance small and weak, to be overturned, and

reduced to a more tolerable form; no ſtruglings of might, no fetches of policy, no circumſpection or induſtry of man availing to uphold it, an inviſible hand checking all ſuch force, and croſſing all ſuch devices.

Dan. 2. 45. *A ſtone cut out of the mountains without hands* (that is, a ſlender inſtrument coming forth out of ſome remote and ſecret place, without any conſiderable influence of humane endeavour) *breaking in pieces the iron, and the braſs, the clay, the ſilver and the gold*; there being raiſed up inſtantly a *Moſes*, or a *Maccabæus*; an *Ehud*, or a *Gideon*; a *Dion*, or a *Timoleon* by a ſingle ſtroak, or a ſudden impreſſion to deliver oppreſſed Nations from ſlavery.

2. How many examples do experience and hiſtory afford us of juſtice and vengeance, in ways for their kind and for their circumſtances very remarkable, executed in the face of the world upon perſons (ſuch as *Corah* and his fellows, *Sennacherib*, *Herod*, *Brennus*) notoriouſly wicked and miſchievous, who have out-braved heaven by their impiety, or horribly abuſed mankind by their injuſtice?

3. Yea we may take notice, that even few of thoſe men, whoſe actions have been illuſtrious for greatneſs void of goodneſs; who have climed to height of power and ſtate, by the ruines and ſlaughters of

Dan. 4. 17. mankind, that, I ſay, few of ſuch perſons have departed off the ſtage in peace or honour. That *Alexander* was ſnapt in the flower of his age and glory; that *Cæſar* was no ſooner arrived to the top of his fortune, than to the bottom of his life; neither having time allowed them to enjoy (ſcarce to taſte) thoſe fruits which they ſo eagerly ſought and toiled for; both perhaps (one without any peradventure) being ſpeeded away by violent and treacherous hands. Not to mention *Pompey* or *Hannibal*, or other ſuch like men of exorbitant ambition, whoſe fortunes were ſo ſtrangely changed, and whoſe ends were ſo diſmal.

4. We may however obſerve, that few great Tyrants and Oppreſſours, few perſons inſolently profane or ſacrilegious, have eſcaped the viſible ſtroke of divine vengeance; a ſtroke inflicted in ways not only violent, but ſhameful; and that uſually by means moſt unexpected, by the hands of their own Guards, their own Servants, their own Favourites, the very inſtruments of their miſchief, and

Alexand. Phereus, *ab uxore occiſus. Vid.* Plut. *in* Pelopida, *ad fin.* theſe ſtirred up by ſlight cauſes, by ſome little diſgrace or diſguſt received by them from their Maſter. What a long black *Legend* of *Caligula's*, *Nero's*, *Domitian's*, *Commodus's*, *Heliogabalus's*, *Maximinus's*

* *Of ſuch as* Sejanus, Ruffinus, Eutropius, &c. Stilico, &c. * may any man's obſervation even out of profane hiſtories eaſily compoſe, of whom the divine juſtice in ſuch ways hath rid the world?

Pſal. 83. 17, 18.

5. I might alſo mention the judgments of God upon Perſons, and Families raiſed to wealth and ſplendour of eſtate by oppreſſion, fraud, ſacrilege, rapine, or ſuch bad means; whoſe eſtates without any viſible ordinary means do moulder and decay; a ſecret moth devouring them; a thing which falls under common obſervation.

6. The ſame providence hath more clearly diſcovered it ſelf in the ſtrange detections of murthers, and other enormous miſchiefs committed in darkneſs, and revealed by a light unaccountably darted from heaven. Of which kind not only Books, but common experience doth furniſh with ſtories and inſtances very remarkable both for number and weight.

7. The like ſtrange diſcoveries of Plots contrived ſecretly againſt the publick peace, and againſt the lives of Princes frequently offer them-

themſelves in ſtory, and the like experience ſuggeſts concerning private men; *a bird of the air carrying the voice* of the wicked traitour to the ears of him who is deſigned againſt; *the ſtones of the wall crying out* treaſon and murther. Yea generally, according to the *Pſalmiſts* obſervation, when men have *encouraged themſelves in an evil matter, and have communed about laying ſnares privily,---- ſaying who ſhall ſee them,--- God doth ſhoot at them with an arrow, ſuddenly they are wounded.* So that all men have reaſon (as he adds they will do) *to fear, and to declare the work of God*; if they *wiſely conſider his doing*: and himſelf had reaſon to pronounce in another place: *The Lord is known by the judgment that he executeth; the wicked is ſnared in the work of his own hands.*

Eccl. 10. 20. Heb. 2. 10. Pſal. 64. 5, 7. Pſal. 9. 16.

8. I might adjoin the remarkable providences which alſo occur, concerning the recompences and encouragements of vertue; in the protecting good men from imminent dangers, delivering them from grievous ſtraits, ſupplying them in extreme needs, proſpering them in their undertakings, raiſing them (as *Joſeph*, *David*, *Daniel*, &c.) by wonderful means to wealth and dignity; for their own encouragement, or for publick benefit; concerning which occurrences the *Pſalmiſt* had reaſon to ſay, *whoſo is wiſe will obſerve theſe things; and they ſhall underſtand the loving kindneſs of the Lord.*

Pſal. 37. 25. *I have been young and now am old, yet have I not ſeen the righteous forſaken.*---

Pſal. 107. 43.

Theſe conſiderations (with divers others of the ſame kind) grounded on providence, I muſt confeſs have not ſingly taken the greateſt force and evidence to infer our purpoſe, nor can they with the ſame aſſurance and peremptorineſs be urged to every adverſary or disbeliever, as ſome other arguments may; thoſe (which we have formerly inſiſted on) drawn from nature. For in nature, all cauſes there being themſelves deſtitute of immediate reaſon or choice, and ſubject to no chance or contingency (properly ſo called) we may indeed confidently aſcribe all effects, in which any reaſon or counſel doth appear (whether ordinary or extraordinary) to divine efficacy; there being no other cauſe, to which we can reaſonably impute them; but in humane affairs, ſeeing man is an underſtanding and free agent, and few effects happen without ſome act of his intervening, there can hardly occur any paſſage (how rare and ſtrange ſoever) which our incredulous Adverſaries (with ſome kind of colour or plauſible ſhift) will not be ready to attribute unto ſome reach of man's wit, or to ſome *capricio* of his humour, or to ſome unaccountable caſualty, incident to matters of this kind (as we ſee the *Philiſtines* were apt to impute the plague of *Emerods* to chance; the *Iſraelites* did preſently charge that terrible judgment on *Corah* and his complices upon *Moſes* and *Aaron*.) And commonly divine and humane influences upon theſe effects (even as in nature the influences of heaven, and of inferiour particular cauſes) are ſo complicated and interwoven together, that it is not ſo eaſie to diſtinguiſh the one from the other, either in whole or in part, to ſeparate the bounds of providence ordinary and extraordinary, to diſcern what God performs by uſual inſtruments, what by his immediate hand. As alſo the actions of the wiſeſt men are often grounded upon reaſons remote from, and impenetrable by vulgar conceit; ſo are the reaſons of God's proceedings with men various and often myſterious; above the reach of our capacity with diſtinction to apprehend them (as who for inſtance can oftentimes readily diſtinguiſh between God's merciful patience toward bad men; and his gracious recom-

Vid. Claud. *in* Ruffin. *lib.* 1. *init. elegantèr hac de re diſſerentem.*

Sen. *de Provid init.*

1 Sam. 6 9. Numb. 16. 41.

recompencing the good; between God's just vengeance on the one sort, and his fatherly correction of the other; between his reclaiming one from vice either (as particular circumstances require) by adverse or prosperous events, and his trying or exercising the others vertue by the like proceedings? who can distinguish between what is performed or permitted upon general, or upon particular accounts; in respect to the publick, or in regard to private men; in relation to present times, or to posterity; upon absolute and immediate accounts, or in order to some farther, more remote designs? who I say can pretend skill enough to define what, or how much is best to be done in these cases; when it is fit to allow men to proceed in the use of their freedom, when to interrupt them? who, but he that exactly knows the limits of just and fit, the qualities and tempers of men, the state and circumstances of every thing?

I add, that God's governance of things hath no complete issue here, that this is not the only, nor the chief place of dispensing rewards and punishments, that things are but doing here and not done; in a progress and tendency toward somewhat beyond, not in a state of final resolution or perfection; wherefore as we cannot fully judge of an artificial work by its first draughts, nor of a Poem by some scenes, but must stay till all is finished and acted through, so we cannot so clearly discern the entire wisdom and justice of divine dispensations here; not till that day, when (as Saint *Paul* tells us) God's δικαιοκρισία *(his righteous judgment) shall be made apparent.* Whence discourse grounded upon present events may not prove so convincing or satisfactory, except unto the children of wisdom, who by a sharper sense can discover even the smaller lines and more occult tracts of God's hand; who with an especial attention and sagacity do (as the Prophet expresseth it) *regard the works of the Lord, and consider the operations of his hands.* However the frequent occurrences in humane affairs of passages (such as we mentioned) so rare and remarkable, if they do not (singly and solitarily taken) thoroughly serve to demonstrate the *Hypothesis* of divine Providence, yet at least they do much favour and strengthen it, being very congruous thereto. Suppoſing such a Providence, 'tis most probable (I may say necessary) that such events would happen; whence there can be no absurdity in ascribing them thereto, but much of reason in doing it. They are *digni vindice nodi*, difficulties not otherwise easily resolved, and therefore God may be most fitly introduced, as the most probable cause of them; if strict discourse cannot compel us, yet ingenuity will incline us and wisdom will oblige us to doe so: *They that are wise will consider these things, and they shall understand the loving kindness* (I add, and also both the wisdom and power) *of the Lord. A brutish man knoweth not, neither doth a fool understand this* (saith the *Psalmist*, concerning the proceedings of providence.)

Rom. 2. 5. Psal. 10. 5. Psal. 28. 5. Isa. 5. 12. Psal. 107. 43. Psal. 64. 5, 7. Psal. 92. 6.

But however general providence doth work in convincing some, particular providence will at least produce that effect in many: For I dare appeal to most men (to those especially, who have ever had any fear of God, or sense of goodness in them) if sometime or other, in their lives, they have not in their pressing needs and straits (especially upon their addresses to God for help) found help and comfort conveyed unto them by an insensible hand; if they have not sometimes in a manner unaccountable escaped imminent dangers; if they have not in the performance of their duty and devotion toward God experienced a comfort more than ordinary; if they cannot to some events of their life aptly apply

apply those observations of the *Psalmist*. *This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and delivered him out of his troubles: The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them: O taste and see that the Lord is good: O taste and see*; he appeals to experience; he supposes the divine goodness may be seen, and felt; that surely will be a most efficacious argument of God's existence and providence. And so it is indeed to all good men (for whose comfort and confirmation it is chiefly mentioned) though it is not likely to have much influence upon them, who have alienated themselves from God, and driven him *out of their thoughts*; except they should (beyond what can be expected from them) be so civil and candid, as to believe the testimony of others, who assert this great truth unto them from their own inward conscience and experience.

Psal. 34. 6, 7, 8. 145. 18, 19.

(1 Joh. 5. 10.)

Psal. 10. 4.

But let thus much serve, at present, for the shewing that *God doth* (as our Lord tells us) *hitherto work*; and consequently that (as we thence meant to infer) that God doth exist.

The Father,

SERMON X.

I believe in GOD THE FATHER.

EPHES. IV. 6.

One God and Father of all.

I Have formerly discoursed concerning the nature of that Belief which we here profess: I did also endeavour by several Arguments to evince the truth and credibility of the first Article of our Creed (which is indeed the foundation of all the rest, and of all Religion) *That there is one God*. I proceed to the following parts.

THE FATHER. The Appellation of God not improperly taken (as when it is attributed to creatures, upon some resemblance in nature or office which they bear to the supreme God) but relating to him

him who only, truly and properly is ſtyled God, is ſometimes put abſolutely, ſometime hath a relative appoſition going along with it. Being abſolutely or ſingly put it ſometimes refers by way of eminency particularly to the Firſt Perſon in the bleſſed and glorious Trinity; as when Chriſt is called the *Son of God*; when God is put in diſtinction from the other Perſons (when for inſtance it is ſaid, *That they may know thee the only true God and whom thou haſt ſent Jeſus Chriſt. Bleſſed be God and the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt. The Word was with God. To ſerve the living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven:* and in that form of Bleſſing, *The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghoſt be with you all*) but commonly it is to be underſtood for God eſſentially conſidered (according to the Divine Eſſence common to all Three Perſons) to whom in that reſpect all the Divine Attributes agree, and from whom all divine operations (*abſolutè & ad extra*) do jointly proceed. And to this ſenſe or notion we have hitherto ſuppoſed that the name of God might be here applied. For, that there is one God, having ſuch eſſential attributes is the firſt principle and foundation of all Religion, which we muſt therefore ſuppoſe if not directly expreſſed yet at leaſt ſufficiently implied in the *Creed*.

And ſuppoſing the word in part doth imply this ſenſe, the attribute or title of Father doth upon many accounts truly and properly belong to God; (God abſolute and eſſential) in relation to all things generally, and to ſome things particularly; eſpecially, which is the moſt fruitful conſideration, in reſpect to our ſelves.

Let us firſt conſider the accounts upon which, then the terms (or objects) in relation to which God is ſo called; then let us apply the conſideration to practice.

One God and Father of all.

Every attribute, every title, every relation of God doth ground an obligation, doth afford an inducement to good practice; but none other doth ground higher obligation, or yieldeth ſtronger inducement to all kinds of obedience, than doth this of *Father*, which here, and frequently otherwhere in Holy Scripture is aſcribed to God: unto which purpoſe, of exciting us to good practice (to all good practice generally, and particularly to ſome kinds thereof) I do now intend to apply the conſideration thereof; but *firſt* let us conſider in what reſpects, or upon what grounds this title is attributed to God; then let us reflect ſomewhat upon the term, in reſpect to which God is ſtyled *Father of all*, that is, in a larger ſenſe of all things, in a ſtricter ſenſe of all perſons, in the moſt reſtrained ſenſe of all us Chriſtians.

The title of *Father* is upon ſeveral accounts commonly given to things; one is cauſality; for the efficient cauſe, or authour of any thing is called its father; any work is ſaid to be the child, or off-ſpring of him that maketh, or inventeth it: *Hath the rain a father* (or, who is father of the rain, as the LXX render it) *or who hath begotten the drops of the dew?* ſaith God in *Job*: another ground thereof is ſuſtenance, or preſervation; ſo *Job* ſaith of himſelf, that *he was a father to the poor and fatherleſs*; becauſe he yielded them protection and relief: ſo *Roma patrem patriæ Ciceronem liberâ dixit. Rome* called *Cicero* father, becauſe he preſerved it from the attempts of wicked conſpirators againſt its liberty and ſafety: education alſo and inſtruction entitle to this name; whence

Job 38. 28.

Job 29. 16. 31. 18.

whence Saint *Paul* calleth *Timothy* and *Philemon*, the *Corinthians* and *Galatians*, whom he had inſtructed in the Chriſtian Faith, his *children*: laſtly governance; attended with beneficient affection and care, doth found this appellation; whence Princes are uſually ſtyled the *Fathers of their country*, being ſuppoſed to deſire, and to provide for the publick good; ſo we have the *Fathers of tribes*, that is the principal perſons of them, who did preſide over them: I do omit antiquity, and age, for which we know that perſons are vulgarly called Fathers. 1 Tim. 1. 2. Philem. 10. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Gal. 4. 19. Joſh. 19. 51. 21. 1.

Upon all theſe accounts it is plain that the title of Univerſal Father may truly be aſcribed unto God; eſpecially in reſpect to our ſelves, who may be conſidered as equivalent to all other objects, as comprehending in us ſomewhat common to them all: God in ſome of thoſe reſpects is the Father of all things, or of us as Beings; God is more eſpecially the Father of intelligent Beings, and of us as ſuch: God is the Father of all men, of all good men, and peculiarly of Chriſtians; which reſpects all of them do, or ſhould concur in us: Let us ſurvey thoſe particulars ſomewhat diſtinctly, then apply them as obligations and inducements to good practice.

1. God is the Father of all things: or of us as creatures; as the efficient cauſe and creatour of them all: *He made the world*, (as S. *Paul* telleth the *Athenians*) *and all things therein*; *he commanded* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *and they were created*; *The world and the fulneſs thereof* (that is all wherewith it is repleniſhed, and which it contains) *he hath founded them*; *All theſe things* (ſaith God in the Prophet) *hath mine hand made*: and ποιητὴν, καὶ πατέρα τόδε τῦ παντὸς, *the maker and father of this Univerſe*, even *Plato* ſtyleth God. God is alſo the Father of all things, becauſe he preſerveth and ſuſtaineth them by his power; *He* (ſaith the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews*) *beareth up all things by the word of his power*; *He* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *hath eſtabliſhed them for ever and ever*; *he made a decree which ſhall not paſs*, by virtue of which they ſubſiſt: alſo becauſe he by a continual care doth provide for them; *they all* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *wait upon him, that he may give them their meat in due ſeaſon*; *what he giveth them, they gather*; *he openeth his hand, they are filled with good*: He alſo governeth, and containeth them in good order; for, *his kingdom ruleth over all*; and, *whatſoever the Lord pleaſeth, that doeth he in heaven and earth*: all this he doeth with goodneſs and affection; for, *his tender mercies are over all his works*: whence even among *Pagans* the word *Pater* abſolutely put did ſignifie the *Supreme God*, they underſtanding thereby the Authour, Preſerver and Governour of all things; and *Pater omnipotens* is the *periphraſis*, whereby the wiſeſt *Poet* doth uſually expreſs God. Act. 17. 24. 14. 15. Pſal. 145. 15. 146. 6. 89. 11. 33. 6. Iſa. 66. 1. 40. 26. Plat. *in* Tim. *pag.* 1047. Heb. 1. 3. Pſal. 145. 15. Pſal. 104. 27. 145. 15. Iſa. 40. 26. Pſal. 115. 3. 103. 19. 135. 6. 147. 15. Pſal. 145. 9. -----*ô Pater, & Rex* Jupiter--- Hor. Ser. 2. 1. -----*Pater ipſe colendi Haud facilem eſſe viam voluit.* Georg.

2. More eſpecially God is the Father of intellectual Beings; he is ſtyled * *the father of ſpirits*; particularly the Angels in way of excellency are called the ſons of God: † *There was a day when the ſons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord*: and, *When the morning ſtars ſang together, and all the ſons of God ſhouted for joy*; in which place of *Job* the LXX have ἄγγελοι μου, my Angels; (although perhaps there all God's creatures may be underſtood rejoycing and exulting, as it were, in their being, newly by the goodneſs of their maker conferr'd on them) again, *Who* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *in heaven can be compared unto the Lord? who among the ſons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord?* the ſons of the mighty, it is in the *Hebrew*, *the ſons of God*, and ſo the LXX render it; and what precedeth, *who in heaven*, doth make it, as it ſeems, beſt interpretable of the Angels? Of ſuch Beings God is more eſpecially the Zεῦ πάτερ ἡμέτερος χειρίδιε, ὑπατε κρειόντων. * Heb. 12. 9. Numb. 16. 22. Job 1. 6. † Job 38. 7. Pſal. 89. 6. 29. 1.

Father, becauſe he did produce them in a more excellent manner; for other things he made as it were by his hand, theſe he breathed out of his mouth; as it is ſaid of *Adam*, when God infuſed his ſoul into his body; that *God breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life*; becauſe they more nearly reſemble God in their nature and properties (in ſpirituality, and independence upon matter; in life, and ſelf-moving; in immortality, and perpetuity of being; in underſtanding, and wiſdom; in will, and goodneſs, or in a capacity at leaſt of ſuch perfections) becauſe alſo he ruleth them in a nobler way; a way, not of blind and conſtrained obedience, but of wiſe and free choice, according to laws of juſtice, by obligations of ingenuity; becauſe he likewiſe beareth a more dear affection unto them, and a peculiar care over them: in reſpect to theſe Beings indeed the relation of Father is more proper, becauſe they only can be ſenſible thereof, and capable to render the duties of piety, gratitude and willing obedience ſutable thereto; *Rational Beings* (ſaith an Ethnick *Philoſopher*) *are the ſons of God, becauſe they only are naturally fit to converſe with God, being conjoyned to him by participation of Reaſon:* And thus indeed even the Pagan *Theologers* commonly, from primitive general Tradition we may ſuppoſe, did conceive the Supreme God to be the Father of the gods, (intending not ſuch gods as were of man's deviſing, creatures deifi'd by the flattery or fondneſs of the vulgar, but of higher rank, anſwering to our *Angels*, whom they ſuppoſed as to approach in excellency of nature neareſt to God, ſo to have derived their being from him, and to attend conſtantly upon him, partaking of his glory, and obſerving his pleaſure) whence *Divum pater*, *Father of the Gods*, is a common *periphraſis*, or title of God among them; and particularly in the *Timæus* of *Plato* there is an Oration, which he repreſenteth God making unto thoſe creatures, preſently upon their creation, beginning thus; *O ye chief Gods, of whom I am the framer and father*---- concerning which gods that which he can ſay, he pretendeth to deduce from ancient original Tradition: But to come nearer to our more particular concernment.

Gen. 2.

Ὅτι κοινωνεῖν μόνον τοῦ πάντα τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ συνατεροφὴς καὶ ὁ λόγον ἐπιπλεγμένα. Arr. *Epict.* 1. 9.

Pſal. 103. 20.

Θεοὶ θεῶν, ὧν ἐγὼ δημιουργὸς, πατήρ τε.----

3. God is the Father, in a more eſpecial manner, of mankind: *Have we not* (ſaith the Prophet) *one Father, hath not one God created us?* and *Adam* is called *the ſon of God*, the genealogy of all men terminating in him; and, we are *all God's off-ſpring*, ſaith S. *Paul:* we are ſo, for that *his hands made and faſhioned our bodies*; and for that he *formed our ſpirit within us*, as the Prophet ſpeaketh. He made us *after his own image*, ſo as ſignally to repreſent and reſemble himſelf, in properties of nature, and in eminence of condition; in this great Family of viſible creatures he hath aſſigned unto us the principal ſtation, ſo that other creatures there are but as ſervants waiting on us, we are as children, depending only on him; he hath ſhewed an eſpecial tenderneſs of affection and good will toward us, in providing for us all manner of needful ſuſtenance and comfortable accommodation; continually watching over us for our good, and *holding us up* (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaketh) *from our mothers womb*; beſtowing on us good education (inſtructing us by the light of nature, or dictates of natural reaſon and conſcience, by civil converſation, by the precepts of wiſe men, and examples of vertuous perſons, by providential encouragements to good, and determents from evil; together with the ſecret whiſpers, advices and motions of his grace) bearing with exceſſive patience our infirmities, miſcarriages and offences; uſing ſeaſonable

Mal. 2. 10.
Luc. 3. 38.
Act. 17. 29.
Job 10. 8.
Pſal. 139. 15, 16.
Zech. 12. 1.
Pſal. 33. 15.
Gen. 1. 27.
Pſal. 71. 6.

sonable and moderate chastisements to reclaim us from bad courses to those, which our duty, and our advantage do require: In short all God's dealings and demeanour toward mankind do argue in him a paternal regard thereto: whence even the blind *Heathens* discerned and acknowledged this general relation of God to men; and, *Gentis humanæ pater, atque custos (O Father, and keeper of mankind)* was an invocation suitable to their notion concerning him: from him they deduced our original; to him they ascribed the formation of our bodies, so full of wonderful artifice; from him they affirm our souls to be extracted; from his goodness and care they supposed all the conveniencies of life which we enjoy to be deriv'd; they conceived him to bear a kind affection unto man, and to have a constant care over him; as by many express testimonies might be shewed, and from their practices evidently may be inferred.

Hor. *Carm.* 1. 12.

Epict. 1. 3, 9

Omnes si ad primam originem revocentur, à Diis sunt. Sen. *Ep.* 44.

A natura divina hausos animos, & delibutos habemus. Cic. *de Div.* 1.

Charior est ille homo, quam sibi.

4. Farther yet more especially God is the Father of all good men; such a relation being yet built upon higher grounds and respects; for as *good* they have another original from him; virtue springeth in their hearts from a heavenly seed; that emendation and perfection of nature is produced by his grace, enlightning and quickning them: they are images of him, resembling him in judgment and disposition of mind, in will and purpose, in action and behaviour; the which resemblances do argue them to be the sons of God, and indeed do constitute them such; for, *Love your enemies* (saith our Lord) *bless those that curse you, doe good to those that hate you,— that you may be the sons of your father in heaven*; and, *Love your enemies, and doe good; and lend expecting nothing thence, and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the sons of the most high*; imitation of God in goodness and beneficence doth we see found a filial relation unto God: To such God answerably doth bear a paternal kindness and compassion; for, *Like as a father pitieth his children, so* (saith the *Psalmist*) *the Lord pitieth them that fear him.* He in all respects dealeth with them as with his children; ὡς υἱοῖς προσφέρεται, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh: He teacheth, and guideth them with wholsome advice upon all occasions; for, *What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall he teach in the way that he shall chuse*; and, *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord*; He gently removeth and correcteth them; *Whom* (saith the Wise-man) *God loveth, he correcteth, even as a father the son, in whom he delighteth:* He maintaineth them with all needful sustenance and accommodation without their care or trouble; for, *Take no care*, saith our *Saviour, saying, what shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be cloathed,— for your heavenly father knoweth that ye have need of all these things*; he so knoweth and considereth it, as to provide, that *there shall not be* (as the *Psalmist* affirmeth) *any want unto them that fear him:* He protecteth them from all danger, supporteth them in all distress, and rescueth them from all mischief; for, *His eyes are upon the righteous—— to deliver his soul from death, and to keep him alive in famine; he keepeth all his bones so that none of them is broken—— though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand*; *Many are his afflictions, but the Lord delivereth him out of all:* Such paternal affections doth God bear, such paternal acts doth he exercise toward good men; the which even *Pagan* Wise-men did apprehend; of whom one thus expresseth himself; *God* (saith he) *hath a fatherly mind toward good men, and strongly loveth them— between them and God there is a friendship, which vertue doth conciliate; a*

Matt. 5. 45.

Luc. 6. 36.

Bonus vir sine Deo nemo est. Sen. *Epist.* 41.

1 Pet. 1. 23.

Pſal. 103. 13.

Heb. 12. 7.

Pſal. 25. 12. 37. 23.

Prov. 3. 12

Matt. 6. 31. 7. 11.

Pſal. 34. 9, 10. 37. 11.

Pſal. 33. 18. 19. 34. 19. 20. 37. 24.

Patrium habet Deus adversus bonos viros animum, & illos fortiter amat, &c. Sen. *de provid.* 1, 2.

friendship do I say, yea a kindred, and similitude; for that a good man is God's disciple and imitatour, and his true off-spring, whom that magnificent father, no softly excatter of vertue, doth after the manner of severe parents, educate hardly.

5. We may farther observe, that God in his proceedings with men, whereby he particularly designeth to contain them within bounds of duty, and thereby to lead them unto happiness, delighteth to represent himself under this obliging and endearing relation: thus he did in regard to his ancient people upon all occasions express himself: *who are Israelites, whose is the adoption,* (saith S. *Paul*, reckoning this as the first of those privileges, which appertain to the *Jews*: It was the commission to *Moses*: *Thou shalt say unto Pharaoh; thus saith the Lord, Israel is my Son, even my first born; and I say unto thee, let my Son go, that he may serve me;* *Moses* also foreseeing how that people would misbehave themselves, doth thus in God's name expostulate with them: *Do you thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise? is not he thy father, that bought thee? hath he not made thee, and established thee? of the rock that begat thee, thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God, that formed thee.* *David* also thus addresseth himself to God in their behalf; *Blessed be thou, Lord God of Israel, our Father, for ever, and ever; thine O Lord is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the Majesty:* and, *Doubtless,* (saith *Esay*) *thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou O Lord, art our father, our redeemer, thy name is from everlasting:* and, *I am* (saith God in *Jeremy*) *a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born; Is Ephraim my dear son, is he a pleasant child?* he is; the LXX render it, in way of assertion, not of interrogation.

Rom. 9. 4. Exod. 4. 22. Deut. 32. 6. 2 Chr. 29. 10. Isa. 63. 16. 44. 2, 24. 46. 3. Jer. 31. 9, 20.

6. But in the Christian dispensation God more signally representeth himself in this quality and notion. God herein treateth us not so much, as our Lord and Master, with imperious rigour and awfulness, as our Father, with most gracious condescension, and allurements of kindness: *Our Lord* (the only Son of God in a sense infinitely most peculiar and high) *was not* (saith the Apostle) *ashamed to call us brethren; Go* (said our Lord, for instance of that gracious condescension) *to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and to your father; both my God, and your God:* And such are the advantages peculiar to Christians, grounding this relation toward them, that S. *Paul* comparing our state in regard to God with that of the *Jews*, doth thus infer: *So that thou,* (O Christian) *art not now a servant, but a son:* So it is asserted, and accordingly (which is worth our while distinctly to observe) all the performances of God toward us, and in our behalf are of such a nature, and are set out in such terms as do ground and import this relation: for

Heb. 2. 11. Joh. 20. 17. Gal. 4. 7.

1. The reception of a believer into the participation of the privileges and advantages which Christianity tendreth, is termed υἱοθεσία, the making him a Son; the adopting him into God's family, the conferring upon him the title and quality of God's child; together with the internal disposition of mind, and the liberty of access and intercourse, which do suite that relation: *Whosoever* (saith S. *John*) *did receive him, to them he gave the power* (or privilege) *to become the sons of God, even to them, who believed in his name:* and, *Ye are all* (saith S. *Paul*) *the sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus;* that is, by sincerely embracing Christianity. And, *Behold* (saith S. *John* again) *what manner of love the father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God.* And, *Ye have not received the spirit of servitude unto fear, but ye have received the spirit of adoption,*

Gal. 4. 5. Ep. 1. 5. 2. 19. Rom. 8. 15. Joh. 1. 12. Gal. 3. 26. 1 Joh. 3. 1. (Eph. 3. 15.)

by

by which we cry, Abba father; that is, by which in our prayers with humble affection we freely, confidently and readily according to our Saviour's institution do say, *Our father.* Rom. 8. 15. Gal. 4. 6.

2. That renovation of our nature, and qualifying our minds as the Gospel prescribeth and requireth, is called regeneration, a new creation, a new birth, the begetting a new man within us: *If a man be not born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God*, that is he cannot be a good Christian: *whoever is begot of God doth not sin*; that is, good Christians do not live in a course of disobedience: *We are* ἄντε ποίημα, *God's work*, or production, *being created in Christ Jesus to good works: Ye have been taught--- to put on the new man, that is created according to the image of God in righteousness, and true holiness*; in such terms is the effect of the Christian dispensation upon our hearts and lives described; and that with the greatest reason; for no act of God toward us can be more fatherly, than working in us by his grace the principles of Christian life, and the practices springing from it; nothing doth nearer advance us to a similitude with God, and a *participation of the divine nature*; nothing doth conciliate from God a more tender affection to us, or worketh in us a more dutiful affection toward him, answerable to this relation, than doth a hearty compliance with the grace of the Gospel. Joh. 3. 3. 1 Joh. 3. 9. Eph. 2. 10. Eph. 4. 21, 24. Col. 3. 10. 2 Pet. 1. 4.

3. The resurrection of good Christians after death to a better state of life; their entring into immortal bliss and glory, is worthily styled παλιγγενεσία, a being generated and born again; whereby they receive from God another more excellent life and state of being, more like and conformable to God: for, *we know* (saith S. *John*) *that if he shall appear* (or, that when he shall appear, as some Copies reade it) *we shall be like him*; and, *As* (saith S. *Paul*) *we have born the image of the earthly* (*Adam*,) *we shall also bear the image of the heavenly: We shall* (saith he) *be metamorphosed*, or transfigured *into the same image*: and, *They* (saith our Saviour) *which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection of the dead--- are the sons of God, being the sons of the resurrection*: that state of bliss is therefore styled a portion or inheritance, allotted to sons, and consequent upon such a relation: *If sons*, saith S. *Paul*, *then heirs*; *heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ, receiving the reward, and promise of an eternal inheritance: Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ* (saith S. *Peter*) *who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away reserved in heaven for us.* 1 Joh. 3. 2. 2 Cor. 15. 49. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Phil. 3. 21. Matt. 19. 28. Luc. 20. 35. Gal. 4. 7. Rom. 8. 17. Col. 3. 24. Heb. 9. 15. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

4. I might adjoin, that Christian men do become the sons of God by the intervention of our Saviour, assuming our nature, and conforming himself to the likeness of men; whereby he becomes *the first-born of many brethren*: *God* (saith S. *Paul*) *sent forth his son, born of a woman, that we might receive the privilege of being made sons*: and, *Children* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *partake of flesh and blood*; whence (as he meaneth to infer) our Lord being the Son of God, we upon conjunction of nature with him, and as his brethren, become also such; he farther intimateth, that upon this score we do surpass Angels themselves; for that *He took not on him the nature of angels, but took on him the seed of Abraham*; they were not, as we, dignified with a fraternal relation to the Son of God. Phil. 2. 7. Rom. 8. 3, 29. Gal. 4. 4, 5. Heb. 2. 11, 14, 16.

In so many several respects is God our Father; we are his children as being his creatures, made, preserved and maintained by him; as we are intellectual creatures, being placed in degree and quality of nature so near

near him; as we by vertue and goodness (produced in us by his grace) do any wise approach him, resemble him, and partake of his special favour; as we are Christians, adopted into his heavenly family, renewed by his holy grace, and destinated to a participation of his eternal glory.

Now the consideration of these grounds (each one of them, and all of them together) upon which this relation of God unto us is founded, hath manifold good uses; It is apt to inform and admonish us concerning many necessary duties resulting from it; and to enforce upon us the practice of them.

1. It in general may teach, and should mind us what reverence, honour and observance is due from us unto God, in equity and justice, according to ingenuity and gratitude: *If* (saith God in the Prophet) *I be a father, where is my honour?* Our believing, and acknowledging this relation is vain, if we do not yield the respects, and perform the duties answerable thereto. And if indeed we are obliged to love, to respect, to observe those, who have been the instruments of God in producing, in nourishing, in breeding us, how much more are we bound to yield the same to him, who principally did, who continually doth bestow upon us our being together with all the supports, the conveniences, the comforts thereof; from whose free bounty we derive not only the benefits of this transitory life, but the inestimable privileges and blessings relating to the future incomparably better state? If we neglect our duty so grounded, may not God justly expostulate with us, as he did of old with those children of his: *Do ye thus requite the Lord, O foolish people, and unwise: Is he not thy father, who bought thee?* (or rather, who got thee, ὃς ἐκτήσατό σε, saith the *Greek*; and both that and the *Hebrew* do agree in expression of that thing with our common manner of speech) *hath not he made thee, and established thee?* it is, as is there intimated, a part of extreme folly no less than of injustice and ingratitude to disregard and disobey him, to whom by such bands of duty and obligation we are allied: Indeed the excellency of God's nature doth justly require honour and reverence to him; his sovereign power may also reasonably extort obedience from us, but his paternal benevolence and beneficence are the most obliging grounds, the most kindly inducements to the practice of all piety toward him; we are foolishly unworthy in not being good on the other accounts, in not being so for these reasons we are monstrously base.

Mal. 1. 6.

Deut. 32. 6, 18.

2. This consideration may instruct and admonish us what we should be, and how we should behave our selves; for that if we be God's children, it becometh us, and we are obliged in our disposition and demeanour to resemble, to imitate him: it is natural, and proper for children to resemble their parents in their complexion and countenance; to imitate them in their actions and carriage: *If ye* (argueth our Lord) *were Abraham's children, ye would doe the works of Abraham*; ye would imitate him in readily believing and obeying God: and, *Ye* (saith he again) *are of your father the Devil, because ye perform the lusts of your father*; because in his envious, treacherous, murtherous disposition and practice ye resemble him: So if we be God's children, we must, according to S. *Paul*'s exhortation, *imitate God, as dear children*; we must in all imitable perfections strive to be like him; so doth the Scripture frequently (both in general, and as to particular cases or matters) apply and inculcate this point; God is holy, and pure, so therefore ought we to be; *As obedient children* (saith S. *Peter*) *not fashioning your selves according to the former lusts in your ignorance, but as he which hath called*

Joh. 8. 39, 44.

Eph. 5. 1.

1 Pet. 1. 14.

you

you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of converſation: and, *That* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *ye may be blameleſs, and harmleſs, the ſons of God without rebuke* (or irreprehenſible ſons of God) *in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe nation:* and, *Beloved, now are we ſons of God,* ſaith S. *John* ſubjoining—— *And every one that hath this hope* (a hope grounded upon, or ſpringing from ſuch a relation) *purifieth himſelf, as God is pure:* God is perfectly juſt, and righteous, thence we likewiſe ſhould labour to be ſuch; for, *Every one* (ſaith S. *John*) *that doeth righteouſneſs is righteous as he is righteous:* God is perfect in all goodneſs; ſo muſt we endeavour to be, as our Saviour enjoineth us: *Be ye* (ſaith he) *therefore perfect as your Father is perfect:* God is bountiful, gracious and merciful unto all, we thence ſhould learn to be ſo alſo; *I ſay unto you* (they are our Saviour's leſſons to us) *love your enemies, bleſs thoſe that curſe you, doe good to thoſe that hate you, and pray for thoſe who deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you; that ye may be the children of your father, which is in heaven; for he maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil, and on the good; and ſendeth rain on the juſt, and on the unjuſt:* and again; *Love your enemies, doe good, and lend hoping for nothing again; and your reward ſhall be great, and ye ſhall be the children of the higheſt; for he is kind to the unthankful, and to the evil; be ye therefore merciful, as your father alſo is merciful:* So are we admoniſhed by the holy Writers of our engagements to be good on this account: and reaſon indeed ſheweth this relation to be inconſiſtent with our being otherwiſe; for ſimilitude only can preſerve cognation; things very unlike become formally different in kind and nature thereby; diverſity of manners ſignifie a difference in bloud: if therefore we be cloſely affixed to material things, or pronely addicted to brutiſh pleaſures, how can we be the children of him, that is purely ſpiritual, altogether intellectual? if we be fierce, hard-hearted, unmerciful or uncharitable, how can we claim kindred with him, who is all love, and benignity, all munificence and mercy? there can be no affinity in relation, where there is ſuch a diſſimilitude in nature: God alſo cannot deal with us as children, cannot affect or like us, if we do not reſemble him; he can only love good men, and the moſt certain κανόνιον (the moſt perfect rule, the moſt evident mark) by which we can diſcern or diſtinguiſh what goodneſs is, is conformity to God's nature, diſcovered by his actions; for that cannot otherwiſe than be very good, wiſe and reaſonable, comely and commendable, convenient and beneficial to us, wherein we reſemble God; God's example cannot miſguide us, his law and his practice ever conſent, his will and nature cannot diſagree; nothing therefore can more pleaſe him than what is like him; as even *Plato* could obſerve: *What practice* (ſaith he) *is acceptable and ſutable to God? One; even that, which the Old ſaying implies, Like is ever a friend to like.* Nothing likewiſe is more certainly bad, or more diſpleaſing to God, than that which rendreth us in our complexion of mind, or in our behaviour unlike to God: we by being ſuch, or doing ſo, muſt neceſſarily fall from this high dignity, muſt *ipſo facto* forfeit this excellent privilege of being thus related to God; we thereby becomes exiles, and aliens from his name and family; we prove rebels and foes inſtead of ſons, and friends unto him.

Phil. 2. 15. 1 Joh. 3. 2, 3. 1 Joh. 3. 7. Matt. 5. 48. Matt. 5. 44. Luc. 6. 35.

Τὸ ὅμοιον ὁμοίῳ φύσει συγγενὲς ἐστι. Plat. Protag.

Τίς πρᾶξις φίλη, καὶ ἀκόλουθος Θεῷ; ἣ ἅπερ ἔχουσα ἀρχαῖον λόγον, ὅτι τῷ ὁμοίῳ τὸ ὅμοιον φίλον ἂν εἴη. Plato de Leg. 4.

3. This conſideration may raiſe us to a juſt regard, eſteem and valuation of our ſelves, may conſequently inſpire noble thoughts, and breed generous inclinations in us; may withdraw us from mean, baſe and unworthy deſigns or practices; may excite and encourage us to hand-

handsome, brave, worthy resolutions and undertakings, suitable to the dignity of our nature, the nobleness of our descent, the eminency of so high a relation, of so near an alliance to God: Even natural light dictateth this use of the notion, and Heathen Philosophers do apply it: *If any one* (saith *Epictetus*) *could be affected with this opinion, that we are all originally descended from God, and that God is both the father of men and gods, he would not, I suppose, conceive any thing ignoble or mean concerning himself; If* Cæsar *should adopt thee, none could endure thy superciliousness; and if thou knowest that thou art God's son, shall it not elevate thy mind?* So that great Philosopher discourseth: and S. *Austin* relateth this discourse of *Varro*, the most learned *Roman* of his time: *It is*, said he, *useful for Cities, that valiant men, should (although it be false) believe themselves born of the gods, that their minds thence bearing a confidence of their divine extraction, may more boldly undertake great enterprises, pursue them more earnestly, and hence accomplish them more happily, from the security this conceit produceth:* Shall we then, who in so many respects are so highly born, and of so illustrious an extraction (we that are allied to God by our intelligent nature, that are by the heavenly seed of Christian regeneration more deeply implanted into his stock) so far debase our selves, as to affect and pursue trivial, abject, dishonourable things? are we not ashamed of so vile a degeneracy? can we dare so to disparage our high relations? God our heavenly father, Christ our elder brother; the holy Angels, and blessed Saints, our kindred in nature, our brethren in grace? shall we not be fraid for such unworthiness to be degraded, to be rejected, to be disinherited by our holy Father; who is jealous of his honour, who cannot brook to have his bloud so stained and defiled, or that such blots and disgraces should stick to his lineage; that his image impressed on us should be so deformed and disfigured; that such disorders and mis-behaviours should be committed in his Family? if we do not behave our selves as children, he hath declared that he will disavow and cast us off from being so; *Every plant* (our Saviour telleth us) *that beareth not good fruit, he loppeth it from his stock, and casteth it away.*

Arr. *diss.* 1. 3.

Aug. *de Civ. D.* 3. 4.

Joh. 15. 2, 6.

4. This consideration is an especial motive to humility, apt to depress vain conceit and confidence in our selves: for, if we are God's children, so as to have received our beings, all our powers and abilities, all our goods and wealth, both internal and external, both natural and spiritual, from his free disposal, so as to be continually preserved and maintained by his providence, to depend for all our subsistence upon his care and bounty; what reason can we have to assume or ascribe any thing to our selves? how vain is it to rely upon any strength or wisdom, any possession or endowment we have, or seem to have? how extremely fond are we if we be raised in our conceit, or are ambitious of reputation upon the score of any such things? for, *Who* (as the *Apostle* invincibly discourseth) *made thee to differ? what hast thou that thou didst not receive? and if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* To him alone, who is the Authour and Donour of all good things, to the fountain of all power, all joy, all blessings, to *the father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift descendeth*; all praise and glory is due.

1 Cor. 4. 7.

Jam. 1. 17. Joh. 3. 27. 1 Chron. 29. 14, 15.

5. This consideration sheweth us the reason we have to submit intirely to the providence of God, with contentedness and acquiescence in every condition: for seeing we are *God's possessions* (θεοῦ κτήματα, as *Plato* calleth us) he having made us whatever we are, according to all

Plat. *in Phæd.*

accounts

accounts and capacities, whether as men by his common providence, or as Christians by his especial grace; he surely hath the best right and title that can be upon us; he may justly dispose of us, and use us as he thinks good; we may well thence be obliged, according to the Apostolical precept, *to glorifie God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's*; if we repine at, or complain of God's dealing with us; may he not justly return to us that answer in the Gospel, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* Shall we not suffer God to order his own family according to his discretion and pleasure; to assign what station, to allow what portion he pleaseth to his own children, without our offence or displeasure? shall we pretend to know better than he what is fit to be done; shall we claim a right to dispense his goods, or desire to be carvers for our selves; if it be unjust and unreasonable to doe thus, then in all reason we ought to be content in every state that he disposeth us into, and to undergo patiently whatever he imposeth on us; yea we have reason to be more than content with every thing incident, not only as justly proceeding from him, but as presumable to be good and convenient for us? for is it not fit that we should think that God will order things for the best good of his own children? can we conceive that he willingly will hurt, or will not rather help them; that he will design them any mischief, yea that he will easily suffer it? *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may* (God telleth us) *forget, yet he will not forget us*; sooner indeed may the most tender parents become unnaturally regardless, spiteful and cruel toward their children, than the immutable God (who in his nature is unexpressibly benign and compassionate) shall neglect the good of his off-spring: good reason therefore have we to be satisfied with all that befalleth us.

1 Cor. 6. 20. Matt. 20. 15. Isa. 49. 15.

6. Particularly this consideration obligeth us to be penitent and chearful in the sorest afflictions, as deeming them to come from a paternal hand, inflicted with great affection and compassion, designed for and tending to our good: *Thou shalt* (saith God to the *Israelites*) *consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord thy God chasteneth thee*: and, *We* (saith the *Apostle*) *have had fathers of our flesh, which corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits, and live? for they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness*: the punishments inflicted on us by men may perhaps proceed from passion, but God assuredly never inflicts any thing grievous on us but out of pure good will: and what sweeter consolation can there be, than to know, that the most cross and distastful accidents befalling us, do (according to the intention of him that bringeth them on us, and manageth them) conduce to our profit, and shall in the event, if we do patiently receive them, and by our untowardness do not hinder their effect, prove wholsome and advantageous to us.

Deut. 8. 5. Heb. 12. 9, 10.

7. This consideration doth also shew the reason we have to obey those precepts, which injoin us to rely upon God's providence; *to cast all our burthen and care upon God*; *to be solicitous*, and anxious about nothing, which concerneth our sustenance: for children commonly (especially such as have able and kind parents) do live altogether void of care concerning their maintenance, being assured that their parents will concern themselves to provide whatever is necessary or convenient for them; and how much more have we reason to live free of solicitude in such respects, who have a Father so infinitely sufficient to supply all

Matt. 6. 25. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Psal. 37. 5. 55. 23.

our wants, and so tenderly affected toward us; so ever present with us, and always vigilant over us; who cannot but see and know our needs; and can most easily satisfie them, and is no less willing and ready, if we trust in him, to doe it? *Do not* (saith our Lord) *take care, saying, what*
Matt. 6. 31, 32. *shall we eat, or what shall we drink, or wherewithal shall we be cloathed— for your heavenly father knoweth, that ye have need of all these things*; the
Epict. Arr. 1. 9. like reason did even natural light suggest to a Philosopher: *If*, saith he, *kindred with* Cæsar, *or with any other great man in* Rome, *is sufficient to make a man live securely, without contempt, and without fear, will not the having God our maker, and father, and guardian free us from griefs and fears?* 'tis extreme infidelity concerning either the providence of God, or his power, or his goodness (that is, the practical disbelief of this point, or in our hearts disavowing God to be our Father,) which causeth all that carking and distraction of mind, that fear of wants, that grief for losses and disappointments which do commonly possess men, together with those covetous desires and unjust practices, with which the world aboundeth; he can hardly be guilty of them, who believeth and considereth, that God doth thus stand related and affected toward him.

8. This consideration doth more generally in all regards serve to breed and cherish our faith, to raise our hope, to quicken our devotion: for whom shall we confide in, if not in such a Father? from whom can we expect good, if not from him, who hath already given us so much, even all that we have? to whom can we have recourse freely and chearfully, upon any occasion, if not to him, who so kindly inviteth and calleth us to him, in so endearing terms, with so obliging an appellation? If we in any need, corporal or spiritual, request succour or supply from him, can we suspect that such a Father (so infinitely wise, so able, so
Matt. 7. 9, 10, 11. Luc. 11. 13. good) will refuse us, or can fail us? No; *What man is there of us, that if his son ask him bread, will give him a stone, or if he ask a fish will give him a serpent? If we then who are evil know how to give good gifts to our children, how much more shall your father in heaven give good things to them that ask him?* so doth our Saviour with most convincing force of reason move us to the duty of prayer, with faith and confidence of good success: S. *Luke* hath it, *How much more shall your heavenly father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?* implying, that upon account of this relation we may in all our spiritual needs (if we do need light and direction in our doubts, or strength against temptations, or comfort in our distresses) be assured of finding requisite assistance and relief. We should therefore upon all exigencies address our selves to God, not with the fear of slaves, nor with the suspicion of strangers, but with dispositions of heart sutable to children, with a reverent love, and humble confidence, and chearful hope.

9. Lastly, considering this point will direct and prompt us how to behave our selves towards all God's creatures, according to their respective natures and capacities: If God be the Father of all things, they are all thence in some sort our brethren, and so may claim from us a fraternal affection and demeanour answerable thereto: shall we, then scorn, abuse, trample or tyrannize over any of them? doth it become us to doe so? will our common Father like it? or endure it: If we are all branches sprouting from one stock, or streams issuing from the same source of divine beneficence and fecundity; if we are members of one body, of one commonwealth, of one family, we are then surely obliged to an universal benevolence; to be kind and compassionate, to be helpful and beneficial unto all, so far as our capacity reacheth; we are to endeavour, as

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we can, to preserve the order, and promote the welfare of the world, and of all things in it: Even upon this score the meaneſt of God's creatures is not to be deſpiſed, the vileſt worm is not to be miſuſed by us; ſince even it is the work of his hands, and the ſubject of his care, yea the object of his kindneſs, *Who* (as the *Pſalmiſt* telleth us) *is good unto all, and whoſe tender mercies are over all his works:* But eſpecially toward thoſe Beings, who according to a more peculiar and excellent ſenſe are entitled the ſons of our father, and to whom we are more nearly allied by our better part (that divine breath, which both they and we drew from God) toward all intellectual Beings, we do learn hence our reſpective duties: of love and reſpect toward thoſe our elder brethren, the *Angels* (thoſe of them, which have not degenerated from their nature, and apoſtatized from their duty) of charity and good will toward each other; which if we do not maintain, we may conſider that we thereby are firſt undutiful and unkind to God our common father, and then even to our ſelves: we do hate and harm both God's relations and our own (God's children, and our brethren) by hating or harming any man whatever; eſpecially any good man, any Chriſtian brother; who by other more peculiar bands is ſtraitly tied to us; who upon ſo many better and higher accounts ſtandeth related unto God, and to our ſelves: *Ariſtotle* ſaith, that all men, upon grounds of natural cognation and ſimilitude are naturally friends to one another; much more are all good men ſo by participation of a more excellent nature, and by a nobler reſemblance; whence 'tis S. *Paul*'s precept to Chriſtians, that they ſhould τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι, that they ſhould *bear a natural affection each to other in brotherly love*; Chriſtians are in a more peculiar and eminent manner ſtyled brethren; and that charity, which in reſpect to others is called *philanthropy* (or humanity) in regard to them is named *philadelphy* (or brotherly affection) hence to perform all fraternal offices toward every Chriſtian, to wiſh heartily and earneſtly to promote his good; to compaſſionate, and (as we are able) to relieve his evils, to bear his infirmities, and to comport with unkindneſſes from him, and the like duties are incumbent on us, as peculiar to our profeſſion.

P. 145, 9. 16.

Συγγενὲς πᾶν τὸ λογικόν. Ant. 3. 4. Συγγενὴς, ὑγὶ αἵματι & σπέρματι τε αὐτοῦ, ἀλλὰ νῷ, καὶ θείας ἀπορροίας μέτοχος. Ant. 2. 1.

Si ab uno Deo inſpirati omnes, & animati ſumus, quid aliud quàm fratres ſumus, & quidem conjunctiores quòd animis, quàm qui corporibus: ergò pro belluis immanibus habendi ſunt, qui hominibus nocent. Lactant. 10. 6.

Ἀνδρεάποδον, ὃς ἀνέξῃ τὸν ἀδελφόν σου, ὃς ἔχει Διὸς κῆρυγμα. Epict. Arr. 1. 13.

Οἰκεῖον ἅπας ἄνθρωπος ἀνθρώπῳ καὶ φίλον. Ariſt. *Eth.* 8. 1.

Rom. 12. 10.

Theſe are the principal uſes which the conſideration of this point ſuggeſteth. Now God Almighty, the great Father of all things, and eſpecially our gracious Father in *Chriſt Jeſus*, grant that by his holy grace we may perform all filial duty toward him (rendring unto him all love and reverence, all praiſe and thanks, all worſhip and obedience, together with all faith and hope in him) that we may behave our ſelves in all things as becometh this relation, that we may reſemble him in all goodneſs, that we may perſiſt here continually in his favour, and obtain hereafter the bleſſed inheritance from him; this he of infinite mercy vouchſafe unto us, through *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord; to whom for ever be all glory and praiſe. *Amen.*

Even to God the Father, *the Creatour, Preſerver and Governour of all things, the Authour and Donour of all good; to God the* Son, *the Redeemer of all the world, and foundation of all ſpiritual bleſſings; to God the* Holy Ghoſt, *the fountain of all true goodneſs, joy and comfort, be for ever and ever all glory and praiſe.* Amen.

The Father Almighty.

SERMON XI.

REVEL. XI. 17.

O Lord God Almighty.

EVERY attribute of God is a proper and useful object of our consideration; as being apt to mind us of our duty, and to excite us to the practice thereof; to beget in us those dispositions of mind (that love and reverence toward God, that faith and hope in him) which we ought to have; and to draw from us real performances of obedience to him; each of them doth ground obligations to piety, and yieldeth arguments to the practice thereof; to which purposes, that considering this divine attribute, *Almighty* (mentioned in our text) doth much avail, and that it therefore well deserveth to be pressed upon us, will appear more distinctly from the application we shall make thereof; at present we may perceive how considerable it is, by observing in gross; 1. that it is frequently in holy Scripture singled forth, as most proper to God; as most fully expressive of his glorious excellency and Majesty; particularly the most illuminate Ministers of God's praise; the *Seraphins* in *Esay*, the four Wights (or living creatures) in this Book; and the twenty four Elders in this place, do therefore use it. 2. It is that attribute, which is alone most expressly set down in our *Creed*, as especially necessary to be believed and considered: We say therein; I believe in God the Father Almighty. 3. It is that with which we daily address our devotions unto God; In our prayers we say, *Almighty, and most merciful Father*; in our praises we cry, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*, or (which is the same) *Lord God of Sabaoth*. It seems therefore fit and useful, that we should well understand the proper and full meaning thereof, together with the obligations grounded thereon, and the inducements it affordeth to good practice; that so when we hear it used in Scripture, when we profess to believe it, when we apply it to God in our devotions, we may so reflect thereupon, as to be admonished of our duty, and moved to the performance thereof. First therefore I will endeavour somewhat to explain it; then shall make a practical application thereof.

Es. 6. 3. Revel. 4. 8.

The title, Epithet, or attribute παντοκράτωρ, which we (finding no other word more properly and fully to express it) do render *Almighty*, or omnipotent, is frequently in a manner peculiar and characteristical ascribed to God: The use thereof in the *New Testament* is, by citation or imitation, transferred from the *Greek* of the *Old*, where it serveth to express those two famous and usual names of God, *Sabaoth* and *Shaddai*; especially it answereth to the former; for the latter

ter is only rendred thereby in some places of the Book of *Job*: but the former, *Sabaoth* (when interpreted, and not left in its own sound) is constantly rendred παντοκράτωρ. I call *Sabaoth* a name of God: for that it is so, it is in several places expresly affirmed; as in *Jeremy*: *Their redeemer is strong, Jehovah Sabaoth is his name*; and in *Esay*: *For they call themselves of the holy City, and stay themselves upon the God of Israel; the Lord of Hosts is his name*: and in *Amos*: *He that formeth the mountains, and createth the wind, and declareth unto man, whatis his thought— Jehovah Elohei Sabaoth is his name* (from a sort of *Jove*, called Ζεὺς Ζαβάθιος, mentioned in some *Pagan* Writers was, as some *Criticks* suppose, deduced) Now as all the Names and appellations of God are significant and denote some perfection, or some prerogative belonging to him (as *Jehovah* signifieth his self-subsistence, independency, immutability and eternity; *Elohim* his omnipotence; *Shaddai* his all-sufficiency; *Adonai* his supreme dominion and authority) so doth this name, or Title *Sabaoth* primitively seem to import God's universal conduct and managery of all creatures: for all things in the World, as being ranged in a goodly and convenient order (like an army marching in array, or marshalled to battel) are called armies, or *Sabaoth*. Thus (after the history of the Creation it is said) *The heavens and earth were finished, and all the host of them* (πᾶς κόσμος αὐτῶν, all the furniture, or all the *Battalion* of them) and, *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made* (saith the *Psalmist*) *and all the host of them*: and, *Bless the Lord all ye his hosts, ye Ministers of his, that doe his pleasure*; that is, all creatures, which are subject to his command, and subservient to his will; and, *Lift up* (saith *Esay*) *your eyes on high; and behold who hath created these things, that bringeth out their host by number, he calleth them all by names, by the greatness of his might, for that he is strong in power, not one faileth*; where God is represented to us as the General of an Army, drawing forth and ordering his creatures, as a General summoneth to a rendezvous, mustereth and embattaileth his troops: hence this title of *Sabaoth*, which is rendred παντοκράτωρ, doth seem derived.

Ὅλοι ἀνέρες, οἷς Σαβαὼθ νέον ἐδλὸν ἔδωκεν. *Sibyll. lib.* 1. Jer. 30. 54. Isa. 48. 2. Amos. 4. 13. Cicero, Aristoph. &c. Seld. *de Diis S. cap.* 3. Gen. 2. 1. Psal. 33. 6. Psal. 103. 21. Isa. 40. 26.

But we need not deal so strictly, as to limit the sense of this word, according to its original rise, or its use in translation; but since it hath been authenticated by its use in the holy fountains of truth, the New Testament, and is there used so, as to signifie or imply the sum of divine perfections and pre-eminences; being (as it seems) selected especially for that purpose, we may presume to take it in its common latitude, for ὁ πάντων κρατῶν, or ὁ πάντων κρατῆς ἔχων, according to which extent, it may have various importances, somewhat different; it may accordingly denote, 1. right, or authority over all beings, *Omni-potestas*; and 2. a power, or ability to doe all things, *Omni-potentia*. 3. the actual exercise of such authority, and such power in ruling and disposing all things; *Omni-potentatus*. 4. the possession of all things; or the containing and holding all things in his hand; *Omnitenentia* ('tis S. *Austine*'s word.) 5. The preservation or upholding of all things in their being and state: for the word κρατεῖν, according to its propriety and ordinary use, may infer, and ground all these significations; and according to them all, God is truly παντοκράτωρ: let us survey the particulars, and shew how God, especially in holy Scripture, is represented in respect to them:

1. God is παντοκράτωρ, as having a just right and authority over all things; he naturally is the sovereign Lord and Emperour of the world; for

for whatever imaginable reason or ground there is of authority doth in respect to all things agree unto God. *Aristotle* in his *Politicks*, discourseth thus: Government doth aim at, and tend to the mutual benefit of the governour and governed; he therefore, who is most able and best disposed to provide for, and procure the common benefit, is according to natural reason and justice (secluding other considerations of laws and compacts, of former constitutions, of present possession, and the like) to be the Governour; or he deserves, and, is fit to be so, and (no other reason hindring) becometh such (*That*, saith the *Philosopher*, *which naturally is apt, or able to provide, doth naturally rule, and naturally lordeth*) whence the soul hath a right to govern the body; and men naturally do rule over beasts; and were there any such persons, as did without any question very eminently exceed others in wisdom and goodness, to them according to natural congruity the government of others would appertain; the common advantage so requiring: and if such excellency of nature be a foundation of authority, then God, who in wisdom and goodness doth incomparably surpass all things, hath assuredly the right to govern all: So a *Pagan* Authour could discourse; *There is* (saith *Cicero*) *nothing better than God; therefore it is necessary the World should be ruled by him:* he is the *Only wise* (as S. *Paul* telleth us) and thence most able; he is *only good* (as our *Saviour* teacheth us) and thence most apt to manage all things for the general welfare and benefit of the world. If also eminency of power doth qualifie for dominion (as it surely doth; for that which cannot be withstood must in reason be submitted to; it is vain to question that authority, which by force altogether irresistible can assert and maintain it self) God hath the only right, nothing in the world being able to contest his Title; for, *Who in the heaven can be compared unto the Lord, who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? O Lord God of Hosts, who is a strong Lord like unto thee?* says the holy *Psalmist* contemplating this divine attribute: all things are weak and feeble in comparison; are altogether in his hand, and under his feet; are throughly at his discretion and disposal: *The Lord* (saith the Prophet) *is the true God, and the Everlasting King, at his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation*; and, *How terrible* (saith the *Psalmist*) *art thou in thy works? through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee—— He ruleth by his power for ever, his eyes behold the nations, let not the rebellious exalt themselves.*

1 Tim. 6. 6.

Τὸ δυνάμενον φύσει προορᾶν, ἄρχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει.

Nihil est præstantius Deo; ab eo igitur necesse est mundum regi. Cic. *de N. D.* 2.

Rom. 16. 27. Luk. 18. 19.

Psal. 89. 6, 8.

Jer. 10. 10.

Psal. 66. 3, 7.

If also to have made all things, and to preserve them, doth create a right of governing (as it must needs do so; for what can we justly challenge a dominion over, if not over our own works, over that which we continually keep and nourish; over that which altogether depends upon us, and which subsists at our pleasure?) then well may the *Apocalyptical* Elders thus acknowledge: *Worthy art thou O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power*, that is, to possess the royal Majesty and sovereign dominion over the world) *for thou hast made all things, and for thy will they are, and were created.* Well might *every creature, that is in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth, and those things which are in the sea, and all things in them cry out, there; To him that sitteth upon the throne (and to the Lamb) be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, * and the dominion for ever, and ever.*

Apoc. 4. 11.

Apoc. 5. 13.

* τὸ κράτος.

Well

Well might King *Hezekiah* say, *O Lord of hosts--- thou art the God; thou alone of all the Kingdoms of the earth, thou hast made heaven and earth*; and the *Levites* in *Nehemiah*; *Thou, even thou art the Lord alone; thou hast made heaven, and earth; the heaven of heavens with all their hosts; the earth, and all things that are therein; the sea, and all that is therein; and thou preservest them all, and all the host of heaven worshippeth thee:* Thus is God παντοκράτωρ; as he is upon all imaginable accounts, and according to all reasonable grounds of right, the rightful Sovereign of all things: --- as he is, ---- *Divúmque hominúmque potestas*, as the wisest *Poet* doth acknowledge and style him. Isa. 37. 16. Neh. 9. 6. Virg. Æn. 10.

2. He is also such in regard to his infinite power, as that word may signifie Omnipotent. Natural light affordeth pregnant arguments of the greatness of his power, displayed in the constitution and conservation of the World; his disposing so stupendiously vast, so unconceivably various creatures into so comely and stable a posture, whence *his eternal power and divinity are discerned* (as S. *Paul* telleth us) for he that could effect so much, his power must needs be far greater than we can imagine, or comprehend; to natural light, I say, it is incomprehensibly great, and exceedeth all definite limits; but holy Scripture more clearly and fully declareth the extent of his power; asserting, that it is not only in respect to our weak conceit, and narrow capacity, but in it self truly infinite, reaching the utmost possibility of things: It teacheth us, that whatever is not contrary to his nature, or to his essential perfections (to his goodness, fidelity, holiness, wisdom) which it doth not mis-become him to doe; or which is not repugnant to the nature of things to be done (that is, which doth not imply a contradiction, and thereby is impossible, and becomes no object of power) for such things *he cannot doe, because he is Omnipotent*, as S. *Austin* acutely says; he is able with perfect ease and facility to atchieve it: There is among things good and possible nothing so difficult, but he can perform it, nothing so strong and stubborn but he can subdue it: *Is any thing too hard for the Lord?* said God to *Abraham*, when *Sarah* doubted, or wondred concerning the promise, that she in so extreme an age should become fruitful. *Behold* (said the Prophet *Jeremy* in his prayer) *thou hast made the heaven, and the earth by thy great, and thy stretched out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee*; ἐκ ἀδυνατήσει Θεῷ πᾶν ῥῆμα· *nothing* (that can be said, or conceived, or performed) *shall be impossible to God*, if he pleaseth to design, or undertake it, said the Angel to the blessed Virgin, when he delivered so strange a message to her concerning an event so wonderful and super-natural, as our Saviour's conception of her: that a rich man should be induced entirely to comply with God's will, and willingly to part with all, our Saviour affirmed exceedingly difficult (hardly any thing could be supposed more difficult, harder it was, than *for a Camel to pass through the eye of a Needle*) but to satisfie his Disciples scruple thence arising, he subjoyns: *With men* (or according to the common sense of men) *this is impossible, but to God all things are possible. In thine hand* (said King *Jehoshaphat*) *there is power, and might, so that none is able to withstand thee*; and King *Nebuchadnezzar* having felt an experiment of his power and being returned to a right understanding, confesseth thus: *He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou? The Lord of hosts* (saith the Prophet) *hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn*

Rom. 1. 20.

Deus propterea quædam non potest, quia omnipotens est. Aug. de Civ. D. 5. 10.

Gen. 18. 14.

Jer. 32. 17, 27.

Luke 1. 37.

Matt. 19. 26.

2 Chr. 20. 6.

Dan. 4. 35.

Isa. 14. 27.

turn it back? To ſtop the Sun in his carreer, to make the Sea ſtand upon an heap, to draw ſtreams of water from a rock, to reſtrain fire from burning, to reſtore the blind and lame, to raiſe the dead, to ſuſpend, thwart, invert the courſe of nature; with all ſuch things, which we ſo wonder at, and term miracles, are comparatively but ſlender, and, as it were, perfunctory inſtances of his power; for with the greateſt eaſe, by the leaſt exertion of his power; by a thought, a look, a touch, a word, the greateſt things are performed: *He looketh on the earth, and it trembleth; he toucheth the hills, and they ſmoke. He overturneth the mountains in his anger, and ſhaketh the earth out of her place: The pillars of heaven tremble, and are aſtoniſhed at his reproof:* theſe ſeem great and ſtrange effects of power; yet in reſpect to what he can doe, and hath done, they are ſmall; for he at firſt made the whole world with a word; ſo the hiſtory of the Creation expreſſeth it, and ſo the *Pſalmiſt* telleth us: *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hoſt of them by the breath of his mouth*; --- and by a word he doth preſerve it, *upholding* (as the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* ſpeaketh) *all things by the word of his power*, or by his powerful word; and by a word he can deſtroy and annihilate all things; yea more eaſily, in a manner, he can doe it, even by his mere ſilence, or by withdrawing that ſalutary breath, by virtue of which all things ſubſiſt: *Thou hideſt thy face* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *they are troubled; thou withholdeſt thy breath, they dye and return to their duſt.* For we may conſider, that in this reſpect alſo God is all-powerful, as being the ſource from which all power is derived, by which all power is ſuſtained, upon which all power doth depend: He not only can do all things incluſively, but excluſively, or ſo that nothing can be done without him: that of our Saviour, *Without me ye can doe nothing*, is not only true in Spiritual, but in all other matters: *He* (as S. *Paul* preached at *Athens*) *giveth life* (or being, with all vital faculties) *and breath* (that is, all natural powers) *and all things unto all: In him* (or rather, by him) *we live and move, and have our being*; that is, whatever we are, whatever we have, whatever we can doe, doth proceed from him, doth depend upon him: Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, as All-powerful.

Pſal. 104. 32. Pſal. 18. 8. Job 9. 5. 26. 11. Pſal. 33. 6, 9. Heb. 1. 3. Pſal. 104. 28. Job 34. 14, 20. Joh. 15. 5. Act. 17. 24, 28.

3. God is alſo ſo, by reaſon that he doth actually exerciſe all dominion, and doth exert his power continually, according to his good pleaſure; he not only hath a juſt title to govern all things, and a perfect ability to ſway in all matters, but he conſtantly uſed them: *The Lord hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his Kingdom ruleth over all. God is the King of all the Earth; God reigneth over the heathen* (or the nations) *God ſitteth upon the throne of his holineſs: The Lord is high above all nations, and his glory above the heavens: Who is like unto the Lord our God, who humbleth himſelf to behold the things, that are in heaven, and earth?* It is indeed, as the *holy Man* ſaith, a great condeſcenſion in God, that he will vouchſafe to have the inſpection and adminiſtration of things ſo much inferiour to him, yet for the common good of his creatures he is pleaſed to doe it: *Thine* (ſaith King *David*) *O Lord, is the Kingdom, and thou art exalted as head above all; both riches and honour come of thee, and thou reigneſt over all; in thine hand is power and might*, &c. He is indeed the only Governour, abſolutely, originally and independently ſo; ὁ μόνος δυνάστης, *the only Potentate*, as S. *Paul* calleth him; All authority and power are imparted by him, and ſubordinate to him; from his diſpoſal and direction all Potentates do receive them; in his name and behalf, by virtue of his commiſſion

Pſal. 103. 19. Pſal. 47. 7, 8. Pſal. 103. 4. 1 Chron. 29. 11, 12. 1 Tim. 6. 15.

miſſion and command, as his deligates and Miniſters, for his honour, intereſt and ſervice they adminiſter any juſt dominion, or power: It was *Nebuchadnezzar*'s doom to be driven from men, until he did underſtand and embrace this truth, ſo neceſſary for all Governours to know and conſider, that, *The moſt High ruleth in the Kingdom of men,* Dan. 4. 25. 2. *and giveth it to whomſoever he will*; that, *His Kingdom is an everlaſting* 21. 7. 27. *Kingdom, and all dominions ſhall ſerve and obey him. Promotion cometh neither from the Eaſt, nor from the Weſt, nor from the South, but God is* Pſal. 75. 6, 7. *the Judge, he putteth down one, and ſetteth up another. There is no power* Rom. 13. 1. *but from God; the powers that are, are appointed by God. The judgment* Joh. 19. 11. *is God's* (as *Moſes* ſaid in his charge to the Judges of *Iſrael*,) being exerciſed by his order, and in his behalf: Thus is God παντοκράτωρ, *as* Apoc. 19. 16. *the only abſolute* Sovereign Lord, the authour and fountain of all juſt Deut. 10. 17. Pſal. 136. 3. authority, *the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*, as the Scripture often doth ſtyle him.

4. God is alſo παντοκράτωρ, as the true proprietary and juſt poſſeſſour of all things. *Bleſſed be Abraham* (ſaid King *Melchiſedeck*) *of the* Gen. 14. 19. *moſt high God, Poſſeſſour of heaven and earth*; and, *Behold* (ſaid *Moſes* Deut. 10. 14. to his people) *the heaven, and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's, thy God; the earth alſo with all that is therein*; and, *The earth* (ſaith the Pſal. 24. 1. 50. *Pſalmiſt*) *is the Lord's, and the fulneſs thereof; the world, and they that* 12 89. 11. 95. 5. *dwell therein, for he hath founded it upon the Seas, and prepared it upon the floods*; and, *The heavens*, ſaith he again, *are thine, the earth alſo is thine; as for the world, and the fulneſs thereof* (that is, all which the world contains, all with which it is furniſhed and repleniſhed) *thou haſt founded them*; and, *The Sea is his, and he made it, and his hands formed the dry land:* all things they ſay are the goods and poſſeſſions of God; proving it from hence, that he made them, and thereby acquired a propriety in them; for there is no more evident and perfect ground of propriety than this: the products of our invention and care, the fruits of our endeavour and induſtry, even we do think that reaſonably we may call our own, and juſtly claim the enjoyment of: how much more he, that by an original, uncommunicated, independent wiſdom and power, hath contrived and produced all things? from thence ſurely do reſult ſuch a title to them all, that the entire and abſolute diſpoſal of them doth appertain to him; ſo that he may ap- Iſa. 45. 9. 64. 8. ply them, as the potter doth the veſſels which he maketh (it is the Jer. 18. 6. Scripture compariſon) to what uſe he thinketh good; that he may Rom. 9. 21. freely place and beſtow them where he pleaſeth; that he may take them away, or transfer them, when he ſeeth fit: they can never be ſo alienated from him, that the enjoyment of them doth not wholly depend on him, and that at pleaſure (his wiſdom and goodneſs permitting, his truth and word being ſolved) he may not reſume them to himſelf.

5. God is alſo παντοκράτωρ, as containing and comprehending all things by his immenſe preſence and infinite capacity: it is a name which the *Jewiſh* Doctors commonly apply to God, *hamakom*, the place, be- המקום cauſe all things do ſubſiſt in him; he being (as S. *Hierome* ſpeaks) *infuſed through all things, and circumfuſed about all things; ſo as to penetrate them within and to contain them without*; ſo as to be *within all things not included, and without all things not excluded:* and, *We do not* (ſaith *Minutius Felix*) *only live in the eye, but in the boſome of God.* The whole world, how vaſt ſoever it ſeemeth to

In omnibus infuſus, & circumfuſus, ut cuncta penetret interior, & contineat exterior. Hier. *ad* Marcell. 5.

Intra omnia nec incluſus, extra omnia nec excluſus.

Non ſolùm in oculis Dei, ſed in ſinu vivimus. Minut. F.

Solus eſt omnia; opus ſuum & extrà, & intrà tenet. Sen. *Præf. Nat.* Q.

our narrow conceit, is but as a drop, or as an atome of dust in his hand: Isa. 40. 15. 48. 13. 40. 12. *Behold* (saith the *Prophet* elegantly and truly) *the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold he taketh up the Isles as a very little thing; all nations are before him as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity:* and, *I* Jer. 23. 24. *fill heaven and earth,* saith God in *Jeremy*: and King *Solomon* in his 1 King. 8. 27. Ps. 139. 7. &c. prayer saith more; *Behold the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee:* and, *Whither* (saith the *Psalmist*) *shall I go from thy Spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence; if I ascend up into heaven thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me.*

6. Lastly, God is παντοκράτωρ in regard that he sustains and preserves all things. *When* (saith Saint *Gregory Nyssen*) *we hear the word* παντοκράτωρ, *we understand this, that God containeth all things in being: Thou,* (say the *Levites* in *Nehemiah,*) *even thou art God alone, thou hast made heaven and earth, the heaven of heavens with all their hosts, the earth and all things that are therein, and thou preservest them all, and the host of heaven worshippeth thee.*

Colos. 1. 17. Heb. 1. 3. Ὅταν τῆς παντοκράτορος φωνῆς ἀκούσω, τοῦτο νοῶ, τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ εἶναι συνέχειν. Greg. Nyss. Neh. 9. 6.

In all these respects and senses doth the title παντοκράτωρ (which we for want of a word more adequate and expressive, do render *Almighty*) belong to God: The *Greek* word in the latitude of its signification, according to its *etymology*, comprehendeth all these senses, and the design in its use, as we before touched, warranteth the taking it in the largest acception; but however it certainly respecteth the former senses, denoting the absolute Universal Sovereignty, and the immense irresistible power of God: the belief and consideration of which particulars is of Great importance, and may have a very useful influence upon our practice: for,

I. If God be the Just Sovereign of all things, having a right to govern the World, and actually exercising it; then

1. We see our condition and state here in this world. We live not in an anarchy, or in perfect liberty; we are not our own Masters, or have a right to guide our actions according to our own will, or after our own fancy; but are under government; a government most absolute and arbitrary; the laws whereof we may not dispute, the proceedings whereof we cannot resist. Whence

Τεσσὼς μὲν ἀρχῶ, κ' οὐκ ἀνασσόμενος κρατεῖ. Æsch.

2. We understand our duty, that as subjects and vassals, we are obliged to render all awful reverence, worship and obedience to God; humbly to adore the Majesty, readily to perform the commands, and patiently to submit to the will of our great Sovereign: to conform all our actions to that heavenly law, under which we are born and live in the world. *We do not* (even *Plutarch* could tell us) *come hither into life to make laws, but to obey those which are appointed by God, who ordereth all things; to observe the decrees of destiny and providence.*

Οὐ γὰρ νομοθετήσοντες παρεσμὲν εἰς τὸν βίον, ἀλλὰ πειθόμενοι τοῖς διατεταγμένοις ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ τὰ ὅλα περιλαμβάνοντος θεῶν, καὶ τοῖς τῆ εἱμαρμένης, καὶ προνοίας δόγμασι. Plut. Consol. ad Apol.

3. Hence we may discern the heinousness of every sin, or transgression of God's law; it receiving great aggravation hence. It hence appeareth not only a matter of simple folly, or private inconvenience, (contrary to our reason) but of publick mischief and general ill consequence; being committed against the crown and dignity of God Almighty; against the peace and order of the world; which subsist by the observation of his laws. Every sin is an act of high rebellion, a breach

breach of our natural allegiance, *a lifting up our ſelves* (as is ſaid of *Belſhazzar*) *againſt* our Sovereign; an infringing that right, and violating that honour of his, which he by his place and office is concerned to maintain and vindicate. Num. 15. 30. Dan. 5. 20.

4. We may hence learn what reaſon we have to be content in every condition, and to undergo patiently every event befalling us: for that our ſtation is allotted to us by an unqueſtionable right, and all things are diſpenſed to us by a common law, from which nothing can be exempted; for that things come not by a blind neceſſity or chance, but are diſpoſed and managed by Sovereign reaſon and wiſdom. *We muſt* (ſaith an *Ethnick* Philoſopher) *not be diſpleaſed at any of theſe things; for we are come into that world, where we muſt live by theſe laws:* and, *A good man muſt needs be granted to be highly pious toward God; he therefore will ſuſtain all accidents with equanimity; as knowing them to happen unto him by a divine law, by which all things proceed.* It were indeed intolerable arrogance and forwardneſs in us to deſire an exemption from that common law, to which all things are ſubject; to wiſh our ſelves out of that order, in which the all-guiding providence hath ſet us; to be diſſatisfied with any thing, which by the ſupreme wiſdom is aſſigned to us: It becometh us to ſay with old *Eli*; *It is the Lord, let him doe what ſeemeth him good*; to ſay upon all occaſions with *David*: *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, becauſe thou didſt it*; upon this conſideration we ſhould not only be ſatisfied with, and acquieſce in, but praiſe and adore all occurrences of providence, how unkindly ſoever, and diſtaſteful they appear to us; ſuppoſing a juſt and reaſonable cauſe to lie under them, although indiſcernible to us. Yea farther,

Nihil horum indignandum eſt; in eum intravimus mundum, in quo hæ legibus vivitur. Sen. *Epiſt.* 91.

Virum bonum concedas neceſſe eſt ſummæ pietatis erga Deos eſſe; itaq; quicquid illi acciderit, æquo animo ſuſtinebit, ſcit enim id accidiſſe lege divinâ, quâ univerſa proceduntˑ Sen. *Ep.* 76.

1 Sam. 3. 18. Pſal. 39. 9.

Παντὰ θαυμάζειν, πάντα ἐπαινεῖν, πάντα ἀνεξικάκως ἀποδέχεθαι τὰ ἢ προνοίας ἔργα, κὰν φαίνηται πολλοῖς ἄδικα, διὰ τὸ ἀγνώσον εἶναι, ἢ ἀκάθηκον τῇ θεῷ τὴν πρόνοιαν. Damaſc. *de* O. F. 2. 29.

5. It is a matter of great conſolation to reflect, that we and all the world are under ſuch a government; 'tis a common felicity, 'tis our particular happineſs that we are ſo; for 'tis no unjuſt uſurper, 'tis no mercileſs tyrant, 'tis no fond, no weak, no careleſs perſon that we are in ſubjection to, but a moſt juſt, moſt mild, moſt gracious, moſt wiſe, moſt powerful, moſt vigilant Lord; who will deal moſt equally, and moſt benignly with us; who ſincerely and earneſtly tenders our welfare; who is watchful and careful for our good; who is able to provide for all our needs, and to protect us from all miſchief; all whoſe laws do only aim at our benefit; all whoſe proceedings toward us are full of equity, goodneſs and truth; who will not only favourably accept, but moſt bountifully recompence our obedience; whom to ſerve and obey is a privilege, far better and more deſirable for us, than to be free, than to be wholly at our own diſpoſal, and under our own guidance; the very nature and the end of his government being only to preſerve us, and to reſcue us from the errours, the ſlaveries, the vexations and miſeries we are apt to incur; by virtue of whoſe univerſal dominion we are ſecured, that no malice of devil, no injuſtice of men, no ſort of enemy whatever (excepting our own wilful diſobedience to his laws, and directions) ſhall be able to doe us harm; for all them he governs, and he curbs no leſs than our ſelves. Of this our King it is truly ſaid, that *Juſtice and judgment are the eſtabliſhment of his throne; mercy and truth go before his face*; that, *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his doings:* Deut. 10. 12. Pſal. 89. 14. Pſal. 145. 17. Apoc. 15. 3.

Pſal. 45. 6. Matt. 11. 30. Pſal. 27. 1. 46. 1. 56. 4. *doings:* that, *The ſceptre of his kingdom is a right ſceptre*; that, *His yoke is eaſie, and his burthen light.* In confidence of his protection we may ſay with the *Pſalmiſt*; *the Lord is my light and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear*; *the Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid? God is our refuge and ſtrength—— therefore will I not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midſt of the ſea. In God have I put my truſt, I will not fear what fleſh can doe unto me.* Well therefore may we, may the whole world in conſideration of our being under ſo good a governour be excited to joy and jubilation with the *Pſalmiſt*; *O clap your hands all ye people, ſhout unto God with the voice of triumph*; *for the Lord moſt high is terrible, he is a great King over all the earth. Say among the nations, that the Lord reigneth*; *the world alſo ſhall be eſtabliſhed, that it ſhall not be moved, he ſhall judge the people righteouſly, let the heavens rejoyce, and let the earth be glad,* &c. *Let the Flouds clap their hands, let the hills be joyful together before the Lord, for he cometh to judge the earth*; *with righteouſneſs ſhall he judge the world, and the people with equity:* Or with thoſe in the *Revelation: Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*; *let us be glad, and rejoyce, and give honour unto him.* All the world hath exceeding reaſon not only to be content, but to rejoyce and triumph in being ſubject to ſuch a Governour, ſo able, ſo willing to maintain peace, good order, and equity therein: ſo that we alſo are obliged to bleſs and thank God, that he condeſcends ſo far, and vouchſafes to undertake the tuition and overſight of the world; obeying the *Pſalmiſt*'s exhortation; *The Lord* (ſaith he) *hath prepared his throne in heaven, and his kingdom ruleth over all:* therefore, *Bleſs the Lord ye his angels— Bleſs the Lord all his hoſts— Bleſs the Lord all his works in all places of his dominion*; imitating herein thoſe *Elders* in the *Revelation*; who ſay, *We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and waſt, and art to come*; *becauſe thou haſt taken unto thee thy great power, and haſt reigned.* They who imagine the world is not governed at all, but that with unlooſed reins it runneth on at random, are very fooliſh; but more ſuch are they, who wiſh it to be ſo, and in their deſires depoſe God from his throne; for they do wiſh for anarchy and confuſion in their Country, inſtead of the moſt excellent eſtabliſhment and order, maintained by the wiſeſt and ableſt government. That good *Emperour* was better adviſed, and better affected, who ſaid, *What good were it for me to live in a world void of a Deity, and Providence?* and, *Why ſhould I deſire to continue in ſuch a caſual jumble, and rout* of things? The world, he well ſuppoſed, divine governance being excluded, would be a ſtrange diſorderly and uncomfortable place to abide in. And old *Socrates*, in the *Phædon*, diſcourſing about his departure hence, comforts himſelf in that, as he hoped, he was going thither, where the God's did preſide with a nearer inſpection, and a more apparent influence: theſe were worthy deſires, and noble hopes proceeding from natural reaſon, and moral vertue in ſuch perſons; but much more reaſon, and much greater obligation have we to be ſatisfied with, and to comfort our ſelves in the aſſurance, that all things, even at preſent, here are moderated by a ſuperintendency far more equal, and more propitious, than they could imagine or hope. Theſe, and ſuch like practical uſes the belief and conſideration of God's ſovereign authority and dominion do afford: the belief and conſideration of God's immenſe and uncontrollable power is alſo of very great importance, and influence upon practice.

Apoc. 11.

Τί μοι ζῆν ἐν κόσμῳ κενῷ θεῶν, ἢ προνοίας κενῷ; Anſ. 2. Sect. 11.

Τί γὰρ ἐπιθυμῶ οἰκεῖν συγκεῖσθαι, καὶ φυσμῷ πίστῳ ἐνδιατρίβειν; Idem. 6. Sect. 10.

1. It

1. It serveth to beget in us a due awe, and dread of God: considering God's other attributes may breed in us a high esteem, and hearty love of God, but the consideration of his power is that which naturally and reasonably produceth a great fear of him: he is most amiable for his goodness, and in regard to his wisdom greatly venerable, but his power, arming the rest, renders him exceedingly terrible. *Hear ye this* (it is said in the Prophet *Jeremy*) *O foolish people, and without understanding; fear ye not me, saith the Lord, will ye not tremble at my presence, which hath placed the sand for the bounds of the sea,* &c? and, *Forasmuch as there is none like unto thee, O Lord, thou art great, and thy name is great in might, who would not fear thee, O thou King of nations?* and, *I will shew you* (saith our Saviour) *whom ye should fear; Fear him, who after he hath killed* (or who beside killing) *hath power to cast into hell; I say unto you fear him:* great reason he had so earnestly to inculcate that admonition, the case being so apparent, and so important. Jer. 5. 21, 22. Jer. 10. 6, 7. Luke 12. 5. Μετὰ τὸ ἀποκτεῖναι.

2. This point doth consequently in high measure dissuade and deter us from sin, implying the extreme folly in committing it, and the inevitable mischief following it. The consideration of God's other attributes infer it to be great baseness and stupidity to oppose or displease God, but the consideration of this demonstrateth it to be infinite madness to doe so. For to wrong, dishonour and displease him, that is so good and beneficent to us is great disingenuity and unworthiness: to swerve from his advice and direction, who is only and perfectly wise is highly vain and unreasonable; but for so feeble, and impotent things, as we are, to contest with, and withstand, to provoke and offend omnipotency (that which with infinite ease can defeat and subdue us, can depress us into misery, can crush us into nothing) is most palpably the top of insolent wildness. It is *Moses* his argument, whereby he presseth obedience to his Law: *Circumcise therefore, saith he, the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked, for the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, and a mighty, and a terrible.* 'Tis no less an evidently convincing, than a vehemently affecting increpation, that of S. *Paul: Do we provoke the Lord to jealousie, are we stronger than he?* and, God himself in *Job* useth the like scheme of speech: *Hast thou an arm like God, and canst thou thunder with a voice like him?* if thou art as strong, if thou hast such an arm, then mayst thou perhaps dare to contend with him, and adventure to provoke him; but if thou no-wise art his match, if thou art infinitely short of him in strength, how vain and rash a thing is it for thee to defy him thus, to enter with him into the lists, to strive and grapple with him? to doe, as the sinner in *Job* is expressed doing: *He stretcheth out his hand against God, and strengtheneth himself against the Almighty.* All presumptuous sinning is described and represented in Scripture as a comparing, and in effect preferring our power and force in regard to the power of God; or as a tempting God, and challenging him to battel; or as an actual coping, contention and fighting with him; sinners as such are styled the adversaries of God, and rebels against him; such as rise up, and lift up themselves, and raise their hand against him; which doth either imply in them a more than Gigantick pride and arrogance in over-valuing their own power, and under-valuing the power of God (which doth also involve infidelity, and disbelief of God's omnipotence; for he who believeth that, cannot take himself for God's match, or dare to struggle with him) or it argueth a most strange inconsiderateness and vanity in presuming at so infinite a disadvantage, without any ground of confidence, without any hope of success, Deut. 10. 17. 1 Cor. 10. 22. Job 40. 9. Job 15. 25.

ſucceſs, to oppoſe God's will and power. Οὐ δ' ἰωχὸς, ὃς ἀθανάτοισι μάχοιτο: *He is not long-lived, who fighteth with the immortals*, old *Homer* could tell us; the ſame which the Prophet ſays; *Woe unto him that ſtriveth with his maker.* Nothing indeed can be more reaſonable, than that advice of the *Preacher*: *Contend not with him that is mightier than thou*; which in this caſe in effect is the ſame with this; Do not by ſinning offend or provoke God.

Isa. 49.9.10.5.

3. Whence likewiſe the conſideration of this point may diſpoſe us to weigh our counſels, and thereupon not to adventure upon any unwarrantable reſolution or deſign; there being ſo apparent reaſon to deſpair of ſucceſs, an inſuperable power, being always ready to obſtruct and croſs us in the carriage of ſuch deſigns, with whatever cunning laid, or backed with whatever might; for hence thoſe ſayings in Scripture are manifeſtly verified: **There is no wiſdom, nor underſtanding, nor counſel againſt the Lord*: and, *no weapon that is formed againſt thee ſhall proſper*; and, **He is wiſe in heart, and mighty in ſtrength, who hath hardned himſelf againſt him, and proſpered?*

Prov. 21. 30.
Isa. 45. 23.
Isa. 54. 17.
Job 4. 9.
Job 9. 4.
Num. 14. 41.
Pſal. 66. 3, 7.

4. It alſo likewiſe ſerveth to depreſs in us all confidence in our ſelves, and in all other things, as to any ſecurity in them, or ſuccour from them: for all things in the world, though they conſpire and combine together all their forces, will be altogether unable to ſupport us, to aſſiſt us, to defend us againſt the divine power, or indeed without it; they being all, otherwiſe than as maintained by him, infinitely feeble and frail: *Though hand join in hand* (that is, notwithſtanding the conjunction of all powers whatever) *the wicked ſhall not be unpuniſhed*, ſaith the *Wiſeman*: and, *I kill* (ſaith God) *and I make alive, I wound, and I heal*; *neither is there any thing that can deliver out of my hand*: and, *No King is ſaved by the multitude of an hoſt*; *a mighty man is not delivered by much ſtrength*; *a horſe is a vain thing for ſafety.*

Prov. 11. 21.
16. 5.
Deut. 32. 39.
Job 10. 7.
1 Sam. 2. 6.
Pſal. 33. 16.
146. 3.
Isa. 36. 6.

5. It therefore alſo may be of a ſpecial efficacy to quell and mortifie in us the vices of pride, haughtineſs, arrogance, ſelf-will, ſtubbornneſs and contumacy; ſince contemplating the power of God we cannot but perceive our ſelves to be very pitiful, impotent and inſignificant things: who without permiſſion cannot effect any thing; who cannot expect in any caſe to have our will; who have continually curbs in our mouths, and manacles on our hands; ſo that we cannot ſay or doe any thing, cannot ſo much as ſtir, or endeavour any thing, without check or controll; being under a predominant force, *which always reſiſteth the proud*: under the power of him, who hath ſaid, the *lofty looks of man ſhall be humbled, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be bowed down*; whoſe character and peculiar work it is to *behold every one that is proud, and to abaſe him*; *to cauſe the arrogancy of the proud to ceaſe, and to lay low the haughtineſs of the terrible*; *to break the high arm*, and *to bring down the high looks*; and to *ſtain the pride of all glory.* Whence there is all the reaſon in the world, that we ſhould obey S. *Peter*'s injunction; to *Humble our ſelves under the mighty hand of God.*

Prov. 3. 34.
Isa. 2. 11. 13. 11.
24. 21. 10. 2.
Job 40. 11, 12.
38. 15.
Pſal. 18. 27.
Isa. 23. 9.
1 Pet. 5. 6.

6. The conſideration of God's omnipotence ſerveth to breed and nouriſh faith in God, as to the certain performance of his word and promiſes: for let the accompliſhment of them be to appearance never ſo difficult or improbable, yet he is able to perform them, and will therefore doe it. *The ſtrength of Iſrael* (as *Samuel* ſaid) *will not lie, nor repent*: and, *Hath he ſaid it, and ſhall he not doe it*; *or hath he ſpoken it, and ſhall he not make good?* ſaid *Balaam*, inſpiredly: and, *The Lord of hoſts* (ſaith *Eſay*) *hath purpoſed it, and who ſhall diſannul it? his hand is*

1 Sam. 15. 29.
Numb. 23. 19

ſtretched

ſtretched out, and who ſhall turn it back? and, *My counſel ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my pleaſure; I have ſpoken it, I will alſo bring it to paſs; I have purpoſed, I will alſo doe it:* and, *My word that goeth out of my mouth, it ſhall not return unto me void, but it ſhall accompliſh that which I pleaſe; it ſhall proſper unto the thing whereunto I ſent it:* and, *The counſel of the Lord* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *ſtandeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations: Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world ſtand in awe of him; for he ſpake, and it was done; he commanded, and it ſtood faſt:* and, *Heaven and earth ſhall paſs away, but my words ſhall not paſs away.* So doth God aſſert his immutable fidelity, and conſidering his indefectible power doth aſſure us, that we may rely upon his word; and the doing ſo is very grateful, and acceptable to God; for it was that vertue, for which *Abram* is ſo highly commended, and ſo richly rewarded: *He did not* (ſaith S. *Paul* of him) *ſtagger at the promiſe of God through unbelief, but was ſtrong in faith, giving glory to God; being fully perſwaded, that what God had promiſed, he was able to perform:* To doe otherwiſe is very diſpleaſing and offenſive to God; for we do thereby either doubt of his veracity, ſo (as S. *John* ſaith) *making him a liar*; or we disbelieve his power, and make him impotent in our conceit; which to doe is high injury to God, and deteſtable ſacrilege. Hence alſo,

Iſa. 46. 11. Iſa. 55. 11. Pſal. 33. 11, 8. Iſa. 40. 8. Mat. 13. 31. Job 23. 13. Prov. 19. 21. Jer. 4. 28. Rom. 4. 20, 21. 1 Joh. 5. 10.

7. Particularly this conſideration may produce and cheriſh our faith in the ſufficiency of God's providence, and may induce us entirely to rely upon it. For if God be omnipotent, then is he eaſily able to ſupply us in all our needs, to relieve us in all our ſtraits, to protect us from all danger and miſchief; and being able he will not fail to doe it, ſince his goodneſs alſo diſpoſeth him thereto, and his word engageth him; he having declared himſelf to be the patron, protectour and benefactour of the needy; he having promiſed to help, relieve and comfort thoſe who ſeek and cry unto him. Diſtruſt in God's providence is always grounded either in the disbelief of God's goodneſs, or of his power; either ſuppoſing him to be unwilling, or unable to doe us good; and that is commonly grounded on the latter, the *Iſraelites* conſtant behaviour in the wilderneſs (repreſenting the ordinary converſation of men in this world) doth inform us; who conceived their needs greater, than that God was able to ſupply them; their enemies ſtronger, than that by God's aſſiſtance they could withſtand, or ſubdue them; the obſtacles to their proceedings ſuch, that God himſelf could not carry them through them; for, as the *Pſalmiſt* repreſenteth their behaviour and diſcourſe; *They ſpake againſt God, ſaying, Can God furniſh a table in the wilderneſs? Behold he ſmote the rock, that the waters guſhed out, and the ſtreams overflowed; can he give bread alſo, can he provide fleſh for his people?* and, that from their conceiting God unable to convey them through all dangers and difficulties, to render them victorious over the tall men, and the fenced Cities of *Canaan*, they, notwithſtanding God's preſence with them, and ready aid, deſponded in heart, and murmured, and provoked God; and in conſequence of ſuch miſ-behaviour forfeited obtaining the reſt propounded to them, many paſſages in the ſtory do ſhew us. We in practice do commonly follow them, notwithſtanding the many experiments of God's wonderful power and goodneſs, frequently ſuſpecting that God cannot ſupply our neceſſities, or ſatisfie our deſires; whence we are either over-born with anxiety, and become diſconſolate, or have recourſe for ſuccour and relief to other aids, deſerting God, as the *Prophet* intimates, when he (withal declaring the offence

Pſal. 145, 146, 147, &c. Pſal 78. 19, 20. Deut. 1. 28. Numb. 14. 9. Heb. 3. 18.

God

God taketh at such miscarriages, with the guilt and mischief we there-
Jer. 17. 5, 6. by incur) pronounceth thus: *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord; for he shall be like the heath in the desart, and shall not see when good cometh,* &c. Whence our *Saviour* took it ill of his Disciples, and rebuked them, when even in the most imminent and affrighting dangers they gave place to
Matt. 8. 26. fear or doubt; as when in a great tempest, *the ship being even covered with waves, they being afraid, cried out, Lord save us, we perish*; he said unto them, τί δειλοί ἐστε, ὀλιγόπιστοι; *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* And when S. *Peter*, walking upon waves, and beginning to sink,
Matt. 14. 30, 31. his heart mis-giving, in like manner cried out, *Lord save me*; our Lord also reproves him with an Ὀλιγόπιστε τί ἐδίστασας; *O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?* whence we both learn, that it is our want or weakness of faith, which make us in our greatest needs ready to sink; and that it is not excusable for us in the extremity of danger to doubt of God's protection and succour. Farther

8. This consideration affordeth comfort and encouragement unto us, in the undertaking and prosecution of honest and prudent enterprises, giving us to hope confidently for success, how difficult or dangerous soever it appear unto us; all difficulties and improbabilities vanishing before that omnipotency which abetteth and backeth such endeavours; the which is by faith imparted, and appropriated unto us; so that we
× Phil. 4. 13. (with S. *Paul*) are *able to doe all things by God strengthening us.* Nothing is so high or difficult (if just and reasonable) which a resolute faith in the divine power cannot easily surmount and atchieve: A word, seconded therewith, can transplant trees, and transfer mountains any whither: *If ye* (saith our Lord) *have faith as a grain of mu-*
× 17. Matt. 17. 20. Luke 10. 19. 17. 6. Mar. 11. 23. 16. 8. *stard-seed, ye shall say to this mountain be thou removed hence to yonder place, and it shall be removed: Ye may say to this sycamine tree be thou plucked up by the roots, and be thou planted in the sea, and it shall obey you*; καὶ οὐδὲν ἀδυνατήσει ὑμῖν, *and there is nothing* (adds our *Saviour*)
Mar. 9. 23. *which shall be impossible unto you*; for, as he saith again, *All things are possible to him that believeth*; that is, unto him who relieth upon the divine power; for that the Faith he speaks of referreth thither, appeareth by several like passages in the Gospel; as for instance in that, where-
Matt. 9. 28. to the blind men imploring his relief, our Lord puts this question: *Do ye believe that I can doe this?* and they answering, *Yes, Lord*; he thereupon replies, *according to your faith be it done unto you.* In contemplation of this power, we may, if our duty, or good reason, do call us forth, how small or weak soever in our selves, how destitute soever of defensive arms, or offensive weapons, naked and unarmed,
1 Sam. 17. 45. *with a sling and a stone*, go out against the biggest and best armed *Philistine*, nothing doubtful of victory; it will be enough, if we can say with *David: I come unto thee in the name of the Lord of hosts*; that is, confiding in his powerful help, as my invincible weapon and defence. But so much for this particular.

III. That notion of the word Almighty, which implieth God's being universal proprietary, and possessour of all things hath likewise many good uses; we shall only name them, without enlarging upon them: We thence learn

1. That we our selves are not our own, and therefore ought to submit our selves with content, and patience to God's disposal; for that
Matt. 20 15. 1 Cor. 6. 20. (as it is in the *Gospel*) God may *do what he pleaseth with his own.* Whence also we are bound (as S. *Paul* enjoineth us) *to glorifie God with our bodies and spirits, which are God's.* 2. That

2. That also therefore we ought to be content with that portion of accommodations here which God alloweth us; for that since every thing is his, we can claim nothing to our selves; all we have doth proceed from mere liberality and bounty.

3. The same reason obligeth us to be satisfied, whenever providence withdraweth what it did afford us the enjoyment of; for God doth never so communicate any thing, as to devest himself of the paramount title and propriety therein; all things have an immutable relation to him as Lord, and cannot be alienated from him; whence he may justly, when he pleaseth recal or resume them into his hand. Job 1. 21.

4. Yea hence we are obliged to be heartily thankful for all we ever have or enjoy; for that nothing is upon any account ours, or can be due to us from him; all proceeding from pure kindness and goodness.

5. We are hence obliged carefully to manage and employ all which is put into our hands; for his interest and service; as honest tenants, and faithful stewards, making just returns and improvements; not embezelling, nor abusing any of his goods committed to us.

6. Lastly, we may learn hence to be humble and sober; not to be conceited, or elevated in mind, or apt to glory, in regard to any thing we have; since we have nothing that we can justly esteem, or properly call our own.

IV. That sense, according to which the word doth signifie God's containing all things by his immense presence, is also of most excellent use and influence upon our practice. We thereby may learn with what care and circumspection, with what reverence and modesty, with what innocence and integrity we ought always, and in all places, to manage our conversation and behaviour; since we continually do think, and speak, and act in the immediate presence, and under the inspection of God; whose *eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings*; who *searcheth and trieth our hearts*; *and possesseth our reins*; who *encompasseth our path*, and *is acquainted with all our ways*; to whose *eyes all things are naked and dissected*; according to the significant, and emphatical expressions of Scripture. Did we stand in the sight of our King, we should not dare to behave our selves rudely and indecently; were a vertuous person conscious of our doings, we should be ashamed to doe any base or filthy thing; the oversight of a grave or a wise person would restrain us from practising vanities, and impertinencies; how much more should the glorious Majesty of the most wise and holy God, being ever present to all our thoughts, words and actions, if duely considered and reflected upon, keep us within awe and compass? how can we, if we remember that we abide always in a temple sanctified by God's presence, not contain our selves in a careful and devout posture of soul?

Job 34. 21. Jer. 17. 10. Psal. 139. 3, 13, &c. Heb. 4. 13. Psal. 90. 8. Prov. 20. 27.

Πῶς ἂν ἡ πόρνη ἱερὸς τοῦ ὄντος, ἐν ᾧ τὴν ὁπίνοιαν θεὸν λαμβάνομεν, ἡ χεῖρον; Clem. Alex. *p.* 520. *vid. p.* 517.

This consideration also prompteth us to frequent addresses of prayer, thanksgiving, and all kind of adoration toward God: for all reason dictateth it to be unseemly, to be in his presence with our back turned unto him; without demonstrations of regard and reverence to him; without answering him, when he speaketh to us; that is, without corresponding to the invitations, which he frequently by his providence maketh to us, of conversing with him, of seeking his favour, and imploring his help, and returning thanks for his mercies.

V. Lastly, the consideration that God doth uphold all things, and consequently our selves, in being, may upon several good accounts, be influential upon our practice; particularly it may powerfully deter us from offending and displeasing him; for put case our life, our livelihood, all the conveniencies and comforts of our being should wholly depend upon the bounty and pleasure of any person, should we not be very wary and fearful to affront, or injure, or displease such a person? It is in the highest degree so with us in respect to God; and why are we so inconsiderate, that the same reason hath not the same effect upon us?

This consideration also should mind us how infinitely we are obliged to the goodness of God, who when he may by the bare withdrawing his conservative influence utterly destroy us, and suffer us to fall to nothing, doth notwithstanding our many provocations, the many neglects and injuries he receiveth from us, continually preserve us in his hand, and every moment imparteth a new being to us. For which, and all his infinite mercies and favours toward us, let us for ever yield unto him all thanks and praise. *Amen.*

Maker of Heaven and Earth.

SERMON XII.

ACT. IV. 24.

O Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is.

IT may be demanded, why besides that of *Almighty*, no other Attribute of God is expressed in our *Creed?* why for instance, the perfections of infinite *wisdom* and *goodness* are therein omitted? I answer

1. That all such perfections are included in the notion of a God, whom when we profess to believe, we consequently do ascribe them to him (implicitely.) For he that should profess to believe in God, not acknowledging those perfections, would be inconsistent and contradictious to himself. *Deum negaret* (as *Tertullian* speaks) *auferendo quod Dei est.* He would deny God by withdrawing what belongs to God.

Adv. Marc. *cap.* 3.

2. The title παντοκράτως, as implying God's universal providence in the preservation and government of the world doth also involve or infer all divine perfections displayed therein; all that glorious majesty and excellency, for which he is with highest respect to be honoured and worshipped by us, which added to the name of God doth determine what God we mean, such as doth in all perfection excel, and with it doth govern the world.

3. I may add *thirdly*, That the Doctrine of God's univerſal providence being not altogether ſo evident to natural light as thoſe attributes diſcovered in the making of the world (more having doubted thereof, and diſputed againſt it with much more plauſibility) it was therefore convenient to add it; as a matter of Faith clearly and fully (as we did ſhew) atteſted unto by divine Revelation. So much may ſuffice to remove ſuch a ſcruple concerning the fulneſs and ſufficiency of the *Creed* in that particular. I proceed,

MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH.

This clauſe is one of thoſe, which was of later times inſerted into the *Creed*; none of the moſt ancient Expoſitours thereof (*Auſtin*, *Ruffin*, *Maximus Taurinenſis*, *Chryſologus*, &c.) taking any notice thereof. But *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and other moſt ancient Writers in their Rules of Faith, exhibit their ſenſe thereof, and the Confeſſions of all General Councils (the *Nicene*, and thoſe after it) expreſs it. And there is great reaſon for it; not only thereby to diſavow and decry thoſe prodigious errours of *Marcion*, *Manichæus* and other ſuch *Hereticks*, which did then aſcribe the creation of the world (or of ſome parts thereof, ſeeming to their fancy leſs good and perfect) to another *God* or *Principle* inferiour in worth and goodneſs to that God which was revealed in the Goſpel; or did opinionate two Principles (not diſtinct only but contrary one to the other) from one whereof good things did proceed, from the other bad things were derived: But for that the creation of the world (which the holy Confeſſors of Chriſt do here in the Text aſcribe unto God) is that peculiarly auguſt and admirable work, by which we learn that He is, and in good meaſure what He is; by which, I ſay, the exiſtence of God is moſt ſtrongly demonſtrated, and in which his divine perfections are moſt conſpicuouſly diſplayed; which is the prime foundation of his authority over the world, and conſequently the chief ground of all natural Religion; of our juſt ſubjection, our reaſonable duty, our humble devotion toward him: the title, *Creatour of heaven and earth*, is that alſo, which moſt eſpecially characterizes and diſtinguiſhes the God whom we believe and adore from all falſe and fictitious Deities; for, as the *Pſalmiſt* ſings, *All the gods of the nations are but idols, but the Lord made the heavens:* and, *Thou* (prayeth *Hezekiah*) *art the God, thou alone of all the kingdoms of the earth, thou haſt made heaven and earth:* and, *The gods* (ſaith the Prophet *Jeremy*) *that have not made the heavens and the earth, they ſhall periſh from the earth, and from under the heavens:* and, *We preach unto you* (ſaid S. *Paul* to the ignorant *Lycaonians*) *that ye ſhould turn from thoſe vanities unto the living God, which made heaven and earth.* It is therefore a point, which worthily hath been inſerted into all *Creeds*, and Confeſſions of our Faith, as a neceſſary object of our belief, and 'tis indeed a ſubject no leſs wholſome and fruitful, than high and noble; deſerving that we employ our beſt thoughts, and moſt careful attention upon it: to the commemoration thereof God conſecrated the great Sabbatical Feſtivity among his ancient people; nor ſhould even the conſideration of the great works concerning our Redemption aboliſh the remembrance of it: to confer ſome advantage thereto, we ſhall now ſo diſcourſe thereon, as firſt to propound ſome Obſervations explicative thereof, and conducing to our information about it, then to apply the conſideration thereof to practice.

Pſal. 96. 5. 2 King. 19. 15, 19. Jer. 10. 11. Act. 14. 15. 17. 24.

We may *first* obſerve, that the ancient Hebrews, *having* as it ſeems in their Language no one word properly ſignifying the *World*, or univerſal frame and complexe of things created (that *Syſteme*, as the Author *de Mundo* defines it, *conſiſting of heaven and earth, and the natures contained in them*) did for to expreſs it uſe a collection of its chief parts (chief abſolutely in themſelves, or ſuch in reſpect to us) *the heaven*, and *the earth*, adding ſometimes, becauſe of the word *earth* its ambiguity, the *ſea* alſo: yea ſometimes, for fuller explication, ſubjoining to *heaven* its *hoſt*, to *earth* its *fulneſs*, to the *ſea* its *contents*. So, *In ſix days the Lord made heaven and earth*, ſaith *Moſes*: and, *Do not I fill heaven and earth, ſaith the Lord?* (in *Jeremy*:) and, *It is eaſier for heaven and earth to paſs, than for one tittle of the law to fail*, ſaith our *Saviour*: and, *God*, ſaith S. *Paul*, *who made the world, and all things therein, ſeeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth* (where the *World*, *and all things therein* do ſignifie the ſame with *heaven and earth*; he firſt uſes the word (*world*) which the *Greek* language afforded, then adds the *circumlocution*, whereby the *Hebrews* did expreſs it.) By heaven and earth therefore we are, I ſay, to underſtand thoſe two regions ſuperiour and inferiour, into which the whole ſyſteme of things is divided, together with all the Beings that do reſide in them, or do belong unto them, or are comprehended by them; as we ſee fully expreſſed in our Text, and otherwhere; particularly with utmoſt diſtinction by the Angel in the *Apocalypſe*: who ſwears *by him that liveth for ever, who created the heaven, and the things that are therein; and the earth with the things that therein are, and the ſea with the things therein.*

σύστημα ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ γῆς, καὶ τῶν ἐν τούτοις περιεχομένων φύσεων. *de M.* 2. Lipſ. *Phyſ. St.* 2. 7.

Gen. 1. 1.

Jer. 23. 24.

Luke 16. 17.

Act. 17. 24.

Pſal. 69. 34. Neh. 9. 6. Exod. 20. 11. 2 Kin. 19. 15. Iſa. 42. 5.

Revel. 10. 6.

By *heaven* then is underſtood all the ſuperiour Region encompaſſing the Globe of earth, and from it on all ſides extended to a diſtance unconceivably vaſt and ſpacious, with all its parts and furniture, and inhabitants; not only ſuch things in it as are viſible and material, but alſo thoſe which are immaterial and inviſible; ſo we are plainly taught by S. *Paul*: *By him* (ſaith he) *were created all things, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, both thoſe that are viſible, and thoſe that are inviſible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him*; that is, not only the material and ſenſible parts, or contents of heaven (thoſe bright and beautiful lamps expoſed to our view, with the fluid matter in which they may be conceived to float or ſwim) but thoſe Beings of a more pure and refined ſubſtance, and thence indiſcernible to our ſenſe, however eminent in nature, mighty in power, exalted in dignity, whoſe ordinary reſidence and *proper habitation* (their ἴδιον οἰκητήριον, as S. *Jude* termeth it) is in thoſe ſuperiour Regions; in that they are Courtiers and domeſtick Officers of God (whoſe throne, and ſpecial preſence, or the place where he more peculiarly and amply diſcovereth himſelf, and diſplayeth his glory, is in heaven) attending upon him, and miniſtring to him; *encircling his throne* (as it is in the *Revelation*) and *always* (as our *Saviour* telleth us) *beholding his face*; Even theſe all were made by God: The time indeed when, and the manner how thoſe inviſible ſublime creatures were made, is not in the hiſtory of the Creation, or otherwhere manifeſtly expreſſed (becauſe perhaps it doth exceed the capacity, or doth not ſute the condition of man to underſtand them; or becauſe it doth not much concern us, or not much conduceth to our edification to know them) but that they were made by God,

Coloſ. 1. 16.

Jud. 6.

Heb. 1. 14. Dan. 7. 10. Pſal. 103. 21. Rev. 5. 11. Matt. 18. 10.

The Greek *Fathers commonly* (*and* S. Hierom *after them*) *conceived they were made before the creation of this material world*: S. Auſtin *thinks them meant under* Fiat lux. *De Civ. D.* 11. 9.

Διὰ τὸ τοῖς εἰσαρωθίοις ἔτι καὶ νηπίοις καὶ τὸ γνῶσιν ἀνεπιδέκτοις. Baſ. *hexem.* 1.

Φῶτα δεύτερα τὰ πρώτα φωτὸς ἀπαυγάσματα. Naz. *Orat.* 43.

God, and that when we call God the *maker of heaven* they are comprehended, as the creatures of God, dwelling there, is evidently declared in Scripture: for beſide the fore-mentioned clear and full place of S. *Paul*, the Angel forecited in the *Revelation* ſaith, that God *created the heaven, καὶ τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ, and the things in it*; and in our Text, it is ſaid that God *made heaven and all things in it* (πάντα τὰ ἐν αὐτοῖς) which plainly includeth the Angels; if all things in it, then ſurely the Angels, who are often expreſſed to be in heaven, being indeed the principal, and moſt conſiderable things therein. And, *Thou haſt made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their hoſt* (pray the *Levites* in *Nehemiah*) where according to the *Jews* notion, who ſay there are three heavens; *Cœlum nubiferum*, or the Firmament; *Cœlum aſtriferum*, the (ſtarry) Heavens; *Cœlum angeliferum*, or the Heaven of Heavens; where the Angels reſide (the third heaven in S. *Paul*;) by the hoſts of heaven, are meant the Angels; as alſo the hoſts of God do ſeem to ſignifie in the 103. *Pſalm*; where 'tis ſaid, *Bleſs the Lord ye his angels, that excel in ſtrength; that doe his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word; Bleſs ye the Lord all his hoſts, ye miniſters of his, that doe his pleaſure.* Whence they are termed *the ſons of God*; as where in *Job* 'tis ſaid, *There was a day, when the ſons of God came to preſent themſelves before the Lord*; and in ſeveral other places: And S. *Jude* telleth us of the laps'd Angels, that they did not retain τὴν ἑαυτῶν ἀρχήν, *their beginning*, or primitive ſtate; wherefore they had a beginning, and whence could they have that, but from God; who alone is eternal (*who alone* originally, intrinſecally and neceſſarily *hath*, as S. *Paul* ſaith, *immortality*; and conſequently alone, [as *Ariſtotle* by ſeveral arguments proveth againſt *Plato*,] hath eternity. The Angels alſo are ſubject to God's juriſdiction and governance, which argueth their proceeding from him, and dependence upon him; In fine the *Pſalmiſt* reckons them among the works of God; for having ſaid, *Bleſs the Lord, ye his angels*; and, *Bleſs the Lord all ye his hoſts*, he recapitulating and concluding ſubjoins, *Bleſs the Lord all his works in all places of his dominion*; and again, in the 148. *Pſalm*, ſummoning all the creation to a conſort of doxology, he begins with the heavens, then proceeds to the earth, making a very particular recitation of the chief parts and inhabitants belonging to each; and in the firſt place mentioning the angels, then the ſtars, then the heaven of heavens; he ſubjoineth the reaſon why they ought all to praiſe God: *Let them* (ſaith he) *praiſe the name of the Lord, for he commanded, and they were created, he hath alſo eſtabliſhed them for ever and ever; he hath made a decree, which ſhall not paſs.* Thus we are by divine revelation inſtructed concerning the exiſtence and original of thoſe heavenly inviſible beings, to the knowledge of whom, that they are, what they are, whence they are natural light could not reach; although from the reliques of primitive Tradition even the *Pagans* themſelves commonly in part did acknowledge this truth, calling all the inferiour or ſecondary Gods; whom they conceived to converſe together happily (ἐν τῷ ἀνωτάτῳ τόπῳ) in the higheſt place above (as *Ariſtotle* ſaith) in ſubjection to God, and attendance on him, the children of the Supreme God; *Plato* calls God Πατέρα καὶ δημιουργόν, the *Father, and framer* of them all, according (as he avoweth himſelf) to ancient Tradition. And thus concerning thoſe Beings piety doth oblige us to believe and profeſs that God is their maker, it eſpecially conducing to his glory to believe, that he is the authour of their ſublime natures, and donour of thoſe excellent properties, with which they are endowed, and wherein they ſo far ſurpaſs all other Beings.

Apoc. 10. 6. Marc. 12. 25. 13. 32, &c. Neh. 9. 6. 2 Cor. 12. Pſ. 103 20, 21. Job 2. 1. 38. 7. Pſ. 89. 6. 29. 1. Jud. 6. 1 Tim. 6. 16. Ariſt. *de Cœlo*, 1. *cap. ult.* Pſal. 103. 20, &c. Ariſt. *de Cœlo*, 1. 3. *Polit.* 1. 1. Plato *in Tim.*

As

As for all other things both in heaven and earth, the material frame of the visible world, with all its parts compacted together in so fair, so fit, so firm and stable an order, they (as we have sometime sufficiently discoursed) even to natural understanding speak themselves to have been produced by a most wise, most powerful, most beneficent authour, that is by God; the which is confirmed by innumerable testimonies of holy Writ, so evident and obvious, that we need not to cite them; and to thus much the generality of mankind hath always consented; as also the most and best reputed Philosophers did in general terms avow it, acknowledging God the authour and builder of the World.

But there is one particular, wherein they seem unanimously to have dissented from what Christian piety inclines us to acknowledge, as most suitable to the divine perfection and Majesty; which concerns the origine of that *matter*, of which corporeal things do subsist. For even *Plato* himself, who so positively doth assert the world to have been framed by God, is yet conceived (I speak so dubiously, because his writings about this point are somewhat obscure, and as *Justin Martyr* proves, inconsistent with themselves) to suppose the matter of things to be eternal; he ascribing only to God the forming and disposing it into a good order, answerable to some patterns pre-existent in his wise understanding; even as a good Artist doth out of an unshapen lump of stuff frame a handsome piece of work, conformable to some *Idea* (or image) pre-conceived in his fancy: so that he represents God, rather as a builder out of prepared materials, than as a Creatour of the World: *Socrates* and *Plato* (saith * *Plutarch*) *did suppose three principles of things, God, Matter, Idea; God is the mind; Matter the first subject of generation and corruption; Idea an incorporeal subsistence in the conceptions of God.* *Anaxagoras* also, as the same *Authour* (and *Aristotle* before him) telleth us, did assert two Principles; the one *passive*, the *matter* consisting of an infinite number of small particles like to one another in shape; the other *active*, *understanding*, which ranged those troops of little bodies into order: to the same effect *Pythagoras* his conceits, though expressed with much obscurity are reduced. *Thales* his opinion was in effect the same, who (as *Cicero* telleth us) *said, that water was the principle of things, and God that mind, which fashioned all things out of water.* * The *Stoicks* also were of the same opinion: *It seems to them* (saith *Laertius* in *Zeno*'s life) *that there are two principles of all things, the agent, and the patient; that the patient is the matter void of qualities, but the agent, reason which is therein, that is God.* † *Tertullian* against *Hermogenes* saith, that *he did take from the Stoicks to place matter with God; which matter did always exist, being neither born nor made, and no-wise having either beginning or end, out of which afterward the Lord made all things:* And ‖ *Come now* (saith the same *Father* in his Book against the *Valentinians*) *let the* Pythagoreans *learn, let the* Stoicks *acknowledge, and even* Plato *himself, whence matter, whom they would have unmade, did draw its both*

Tim. p. 1058. Just. Mart. *Cohort.* 1. *ad Græc.* p. 8.

Ut igitur faber, cùm quid ædificaturus est, non ipse facit materiam, sed ea utitur, quæ sit parata, fictorque item cerâ; sic isti providentiæ divinæ materiam præsto esse oportuit, non quam ipse faceret, sed quam haberet paratam. Cic. *apud* Lact. 2. *pag.* 180.

Quibus oculis intueri potuit vester Plato *fabricam illam tanti operis; quâ constitui à Deo, atque ædificari mundum facit?* Cic. *de N. D. &c.*

* Plut. *de placitis* 1. 3.

*Ἀναξαγόρας τε ὁ μιχανῆ χρῆται τῷ νῷ πρὸς κοσμοποιΐαν. Arist. *Met.* 1. 4.

Thales *aquam dixit esse initium rerum, Deum autem esse mentem, quæ ex aqua cuncta fingeret.* D. N. D. 1.

* Δοκεῖ δὲ αὐτοῖς ἀρχαὶ εἶναι δύο τὸ ποιοῦν καὶ τὸ πάσχον· τὸ μὲν οὖν πάσχον εἶναι τὴν ἄποιον ὕλην, τὸ δὲ ποιοῦν τὸν ἐν αὐτῇ λόγον τὸν θεόν. Laert. *in* Zen. Lipsi. *in Phys.* Sen. *Ep.* 65.

† *Sumpsit à* Stoicis *materiam cum Domino ponere, quæ & ipsa semper fuerit neque nata, neque facta, nec initium habens omninò, nec finem, ex quo Dominus omnia postea fecerit.* Tertul. *in* Herm. 1.

‖ *Age nunc discant* Pythagorici *agnoscant* Stoici, Plato *ipse, unde materia, quam innatam volunt & originem & substantiam traxerit in omnem hanc struem mundi.* Adv. Valent. 15.
Vid. Athenag. *leg. pag* 19.

both origine and substance toward all this structure of the world. Yea *Aristotle* tells us, that generally all natural Philosophers before him did conceive, and did assume it for a principle; that nothing was made out of nothing, or that every thing produced had necessarily some pre-existent matter, out of which it was produced: *It is* (saith he) *the common opinion of naturalists, that nothing can be made out of nothing*; and, *That it is impossible, that any thing should proceed from nothing, all that have studied about nature do consent:* which principle *Aristotle* himself not only admits, but extends farther, affirming it impossible that any thing should be produced out of matter not pre-disposed to admit the form, which is to be produced; οὐδὲ γίνεται ὅτι ἓν ἐξ ὅτου ἓν, *Neither can* (saith he) *every thing be made of every thing, but of some subject fitted thereto,* (or susceptive thereof) *as animals, and plants out of their seed.* Which principles deduced from the observing natural effects, or works of art performed always by alterations, additions, subtractions or transpositions of some matter subjacent, we may safely in respect only to such kinds of effects, proceeding in the ordinary course of nature, admit; allowing no natural agent; no created artificer sufficient to produce any thing without some matter or subject aptly qualified and prepared to receive its influence; but from hence to conclude universally, that every action possible doth require a matter pre-existent, or a pre-disposed subject, is no-wise reasonable: because such a thing doth not usually according to the course of nature happen; because there is no cause obvious that can perform so much; because we are not acquainted with the manner or way of doing such a thing, that therefore the thing is in it self absolutely impossible, is no warrantable argumentation: No Logick will allow us from particular experiments to establish general conclusions, especially such as do concern the determination of what is absolutely impossible; that must be fetched from abstracted notions of reason, not from singular appearances to sense; there may be for all that we (we pitifully short-sighted creatures in this our dark state) can by any means know, agents of another sort, and powers in manner of efficacy much differing from all those which come within the narrow compass of our observation. Especially to imagine, that the supreme Being, who made the world in a manner, whatever that manner were, incomprehensible, cannot himself act otherwise than we see these inferiour things (not only infinitely lower in degree, but wholly different in nature) do act, is grosly vain and unreasonable: *It is impossible* (saith S. *Chrysostom* well) *for man's nature by curious inquiry to penetrate the workmanship of God.* From sense or experience then such conclusions cannot well be derived; it assures us that some effects are possible, but cannot help us to determine what is impossible. Neither are there any certain principles of reason, from whence it may be collected, that it is impossible, that some substances should be totally produced *de novo*, or receive completely an existence, which they had not before: That no such principles are innate to our minds (if indeed there be at all any innate principles, which some Philosophers deny) every man's experience can tell him: neither do these Philosophers alledge any such; nor (as we before shewed) can any such be drawn from experience. If they say, the proposition is αὐτόπιστος, or evidently credible of it self, without any proof,

Κοινὴ δόξα περὶ φυσικῶν ἐξ οὐκ ὄντος γίγνεσθαι ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος]. Τὸ γιγνόμενον ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ὄντος γίγνεσθαι ἀδύνατον περὶ οὗ ταύτης ὁμογνωμονοῦσι τὰ δόξης πάντες οἱ περὶ φύσεως. *Phys.* 1. 4. 8. *Vid. de Gener. & Corrup.* 1. 3. *& Metaph.* 1. 1, 3.

Phys. 1. 9.

Ἀεὶ δέ τι ὑπόκειται, ἐξ οὗ γίγνεται τὸ γιγνόμενον, οἷον τὰ φυτὰ καὶ τὰ ζῶα ἐκ σπέρματος. *Phys.* 1. 8.

Erit aliquid quod aut ex nihilo oriatur, aut in nihilum subitò occidat; quis hoc Physicus dixit unquam? Cic. *de Divin:* 2.

Ἀδύνατον τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῃ φύσει τῷ θείῳ δημιουργίᾳ περιεργάζεσθαι. Chrys. *in Gen.* λογ. 6.

proof, 'tis a precarious and groundleſs aſſertion; ſuch as ought not to be admitted in any ſcience, or any diſceptation; except they can ſhew that the terms of theſe propoſitions (or of the like equivalent ones.) A ſubſtance is producible altogether *de novo*; A ſubſtance may exiſt, which did not exiſt; Something may be produced out of nothing, do involve a contradiction; which it rather is evident they do not, there being nothing contained in the notion of ſubſtance inconſiſtent with ſuch a producibility, or with novity of exiſtence, no more than there is in the notion of figure, or of motion, which things no man hardly denies to receive a new exiſtence. In fine, nothing is more reaſonable than to confeſs, that our reaſon can no-wiſe reach the extent of all powers, and all poſſibilities; and that we much (as Saint *Chryſoſtome* ſpeaks) do tranſgreſs our meaſures and bounds, if we pretend to know what things God is able to produce, or how he doth produce any: *His works* (as *Lactantius* ſpeaketh) *are ſeen with eyes, but how he made them, the mind it ſelf cannot ſee.* Thoſe opinions therefore of the ancient Philoſophers, that the matter of the world (or of natural things) was eternal and neceſſarily pre-exiſtent, and that there could be no creation out of nothing, were aſſumed altogether without any clear or ſure foundation. We may ſay unto them, as our Lord did once ſay to the *Sadduces*, *Ye err, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God. The poverty*, and narrowneſs *of man's natural underſtanding* (not going uſually beyond matters obvious to ſenſe) *and their inability by the meanneſs of their reaſon to look up to the height of truth, did* (as S. *Baſil* ſays) *deceive them.* And that theſe opinions (revived and embraced by divers perſons in our days) are falſe, and contrary to our Faith, that in truth all the *matter* of things both could be, and really was created by God, may from ſeveral reaſons appear:

Τὸ περβαίνειν οἰκεῖον μέτρον. Chryſ.

---*hoc eſt modum conditionis ſuæ tranſgredi, nec intelligere quouſque homini liceat accedere.* Lact.

Opera ipſius videntur oculis, quomodò autem illa fecerit, nè mente quidem videtur. Lact. 2.

Matt. 22. 29.

Ἐξεπλήσσων αὐτὰς ἡ ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως ἡ πενία--- ἐ δυνηθέντες διὰ λογισμῶν ταπεινότητα περὶς τὸ ὕψος ἐπιδεῖν τ ἀληθείας. Baſ. *hexaem. hom.* 6.

1. It is often in general terms affirmed in Scripture, that God did make all things; all things in heaven and earth: Now it is unſafe, and never without urgent reaſon allowable, to make limitations or reſtrictions of univerſal propoſitions, eſpecially of ſuch as are frequently and conſtantly thus ſet down: And, like as S. *Paul* ſomewhere diſcourſes; Rom. 10. 11, &c. becauſe it is ſaid in the Prophets, *Every one that believeth in him, ſhall not be aſhamed*; and, *whoſoever ſhall call upon the Lord, ſhall be ſaved*; therefore both *Jews* and *Greeks*, in caſe of their belief and invocation of God, are capable of acceptance and ſalvation; ὁ γὰρ θεὸς διαστολὴν, for that there is no diſtinction or exception made: So it being ſaid univerſally, and unlimitedly, that all things were made, and no reaſon appearing which compells to reſtrain that univerſality, therefore the matter of things was alſo made; the matter being one thing, yea in the opinion of moſt Philoſophers, as well ancient as modern, the principal thing, the only ſubſtantial thing in nature; all other things being only modes, affections or relations thereof. Whence *Ariſtotle* telleth us, that moſt of the firſt Philoſophers did affirm nothing at all really to be made, and nothing ever to be deſtroyed; becauſe matter did always ſubſiſt and abide the ſame, as if no other thing beſide in nature had any being conſiderable. If God therefore did not produce matter it ſelf, he could hardly be accounted authour of any thing in nature, ſo far would he be from being truly affirmed the maker of all things: Upon this ground

Ariſt. *Phyſ.* 1. 8. *Metaph.* 1. 3.

Cicero

Cicero (as *Lactantius* cites him) denied that God was the Authour of any of the Elements: *It is not probable*, said he, *that the matter, whence all things did arise, was made by divine Providence*; and, *if matter was not made by God, then neither earth, nor water, nor air, nor fire were made by him*; to invert which discourse, we say, that God did make all these things (*Earth*, *Sea*, *Fire* and *Air*) as the Holy Scripture frequently asserts, wherefore the matter of them was also his work: he was not only (as S. *Basil* speaks) *an inventour of figures* (or a raiser of motions) *but the maker of nature it self*; and of all that is substantial therein.

Primum igitur non est probabile eam materiam rerum unde orta sunt omnia, esse divinâ Providentiâ effectam, sed habere & habuisse vim, & naturam suam: ---Quòd si non est à Deo materia facta, nè terra quidem, & aqua, & aër, & ignis à Deo factus est. Cic. *apud* Lactant. 2. *pag.* 150.

Ὁ θεὸς--- ὑλῆς ποιμάτων ἐστιν εὑρετὴς ἀλλ' αὐτῆς τῆς φυσεως ἔτι δὲ τῶν ὄντων δημιουργός. Bas. hex. 6.

2. Again, God is in Scripture affirmed to be the true proprietary, and possessour of all things, none excepted; how so, if he did not make them? for, *He that did not make*, *cannot* (as *J. Martyr* argues) *have any right to that which is not made.* It is the argument, by which the Scripture frequently proves God to be the owner, and disposer of things, because he made them: *The earth* (saith the *Psalmist*) *is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein*; *for he hath founded it upon the seas, and prepared it upon the floods.* So, because (we may say) he did produce matter, and doth sustain its being; therefore he (by the most excellent sort, and upon the best ground of right) doth own it, and may justly use it at his pleasure; otherwise might we not say with *Tertullian? If God did not make matter, he using a thing not his own, because not made by him, either he used it precariously as needing it, or injuriously, as usurping upon it by force.*

Τῷ γὰρ μὴ πεποιηκότι ἐξουσία πρὸς τὸ μὴ χρῆσθαι. Just. M. *Cohort ad Gr.* 1. *p.* 22.

Psal. 24. 1. Gen. 14. 19. Deut. 10. 14.

---- *de alieno usus aut precariò usus est, quà egens ejus, aut in juriâ, qua prævalens ejus.* Tert. *adv.* Hermog. 9.

3. The supposing any thing to be eternal, uncreated, and independent upon God doth advance that Being in those respects unto an equality with God, imparting thereto so great and divine Attributes: *It will become* (as S. *Basil* saith) *God's peer, or equal in dignity, being dignified with the same privileges.* That supposition likewise in effect deriveth God of those special perfections, Independency, and All-sufficiency; making him in his operations, and performances to depend upon, and to be in a manner subject unto matter; to need its concourse; and to be unable to perform any thing farther than it admits: for, *None* (as *Tertullian* discourseth) *is free from needing that, whose stock he useth*; *none is exempt from subjection to that, which he needs that he may use*; *and none, who lends of his own to use, is not in this superiour to him, to whom he lends it for use:* the very doubting about this made *Seneca* put such absurd, and impious questions, as these: *How God's power is limited*; *whether he effects whatever he pleaseth, or is disappointed by want of matter*; *whether he doth not form many things ill, not from defect of art in himself, but from disobedience of the subject-matter:* which questions we easily resolve by saying, Nothing is impossible to God; his will can never be crossed, or disappointed; he can never doe any thing bad, or imperfect in its kind; because he createth matter it self, answerable to his design.

Ὁμότιμος ἔσται, θεῷ τῶν αὐτῶν πρεσβείων ἀξιούμενος.

Nemo non eget eo, de cujus utitur; nemo non subjicitur ei, cujus eget ut possit uti; & nemo qui præstat de suo uti non in hoc superior est eo, cui præstat uti. Tert. *adv.* Herm. 4, 5.

Quantum Deus possit; materiam ipse sibi formet; an data utatur; utrum idea materiæ priùs supervenial, an materia ideæ; Deus quicquid vult efficiat, an in multis rebus illum tractandæ destituant; & à magno artifice prave formentur multa, non quia cessat ars, sed quia id in quo exercetur sæpe inobsequens arti est. Sen. *præf. Nat. Qu.*

4. As *Ariſtotle* well diſcourſed againſt the ancient Philoſophers, who before *Anaxagoras* did aſſign but one Principle of things, a material and paſſive one, as if no active principle were required; ſo may we argue againſt him, and them together. If God did produce, and inſert an active principle into nature (as who can imagine thoſe admirable works of nature, the ſeminal propagation, and nutrition of plants, and however more eſpecially the generation, motion, ſenſe, fancy, appetite, paſſion of animals to be accompliſhed by a mere paſſive agitation of matter, without ſome active principle diſtinct from matter, which diſpoſeth, and determineth it to the production of ſuch effects?) if God could, I ſay, produce, and inſert ſuch an active Principle (ſuch an ἐντελέχεια, as the Philoſopher calleth it), why might he not as well produce a paſſive one, ſuch as the matter is? what greater difficulty could he find in doing it?

5. Yea farther, If God hath produced immaterial beings, or ſimple, and uncompounded ſubſtances diſtinct from matter, ſuch as Angels, and the ſouls of men, merely out of nothing (for out of what preexiſtent ſtuff could they be made?) then may he as well create matter out of nothing; for what greater difficulty can we conceive in creating ſo much lower, and more imperfect a thing, than in creating thoſe more excellent ſubſtances, ſo much fuller as it were of entity, or ſo far more removed from nothing? if any one thing is producible out of nothing, why may not all things capable of exiſtence be ſo produced by a competent, and omnipotent virtue? *Why not* (as *Tertullian* argued) *all things out of nothing, if any thing out of nothing; except if the divine virtue, which drew ſomewhat out of nothing, was inſufficient to produce all things thence?* But that ſuch immaterial ſubſtances were produced by God, we before from many plain teſtimonies of divine revelation did ſhew: and particularly the ſouls of men are produced from God's breath, or by the efficacy of his word.

Cur non omnia ex nihilo, ſi aliquid ex nihilo; niſi ſi inſufficiens fuit divina virtus omnibus producendis, quæ aliquid protulerit ex nihilo? Tertull. *adv.* Herm. 15.

6. The manner of God's making the world expreſs'd in Scripture, by mere will and command, (*He ſpake, and it was done; he commanded, and it ſtood faſt; he commanded, and they were created*) that only by uttering the word *fiat* (not audibly, but mentally, that is by an act of volition) all things ſhould be formed and conſtituted in their ſpecifical natures and perfections, doth argue, that matter, or any other thing poſſible, might eaſily by the divine power be produced out of nothing. Likewiſe effecting miracles ſuperiour, or contrary to the law and courſe of nature, without any preparatory diſpoſitions induced into the ſuſcipient matter, in the ſame manner, by mere willing, ſaying, or commanding, whereof there be in the Scripture frequent inſtances, doth perſuade the ſame; θέλω, καθαρίσθητι, *I will, be thou cleanſed: Woman, great is thy faith,* γενηθήτω σοι, ὡς θέλεις, *be it to thee, as thou deſireſt: young man, I ſay to thee, Wake,* from the ſleep of death; So did our Saviour ſpeak, and the effect immediately followed; whereby as he demonſtrated his divine power, ſo he declared the manner whereby divine power doth incomprehenſibly operate in the production of things; and that it therein no-wiſe dependeth upon matter: for it is no-wiſe harder, or more impoſſible to produce matter it ſelf, than to produce a form therein without, or againſt an aptitude to receive it: nay it ſeemeth more difficult *to raiſe children unto Abraham out of ſtones*, than to draw them out of nothing;

Pſal. 33. 9. 148. 5.

Luke 5. 13. Matt. 15. 28. Luke 7. 14.

Matth. 3. 9.

nothing; there being a positive obstacle to be removed, here no apparent resistance; there as well somewhat preceding to be destroyed, as somewhat new to be produced, here only somewhat simply to be produced: especially considering, as we said, that God useth no other means, instruments or applications in these productions, than his bare word or command; which there is no reason, why we should not conceive as able immediately to make the matter, as to produce the forms of things.

7. Lastly, The Holy Text, describing the manner and order of the creation, doth insinuate this truth. *The Scripture* (saith *Tertullian* well) *doth first pronounce the earth to be made, then setteth out its quality; as likewise first professing the heaven made, it in the sequel doth superinduce its disposition. In the beginning* (saith *Moses*) *God made heaven and earth; now the earth was without form*; that is, it seems, God at first did make the matter of heaven and earth devoid of all form and order, a confused and unshapen mass; then he digested, and distinguished the parts of them, by several steps orderly raising thence all those various kinds, and well arrayed hosts of goodly creatures: First he made the stones and timber, and all requisite materials, then did he rear and frame this stately fabrick: So the words do sound, and may well be understood.

Scriptura terram primò factam edicit; dehinc qualitatem ipsius ediserit; sicut & cœlum primò factum professa dehinc dispositionem ejus superinducit. Tertull. contra Hermog. 26.

Τὴν ὕλην προυποκύσας εἰδοποίησεν ὕστερον, ἐκείνῳ τάξιν καὶ σχῆμα, καὶ μέγεθος πειθεὶς. Greg. Naz. Or. 43.

From these Premisses we may conclude, against those Philosophers, who destitute of the light of revelation did conceit otherwise, and against those Christians, who have followed the Philosophers (as *Hermogenes* of old, and *Volkelius* of late, together with the Sectatours of their opinions) that God did create (in the most strict and scholastical sense of that word, did create) that is, either immediately, or mediately did produce out of nothing, or did bestow entirely a new existence unto every thing, which is, not excepting any one; and that is the sense of the words, having *Made heaven and earth*; or of the Title, *Maker of heaven and earth* ascribed unto God.

Which Title as all sober Christians have always acknowledged, and the holy Oracles do most plainly avouch due to the one true God alone (for, *To us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things*) so there were divers Hereticks of old, *Marcion* and others of the *Gnostick* crew, who contradicted it; affirming that the God of the Old Testament, who made the world, and enacted the ancient *Law*, whom *Moses* and the *Prophets* did declare, was not the same God with him, from whom the Gospel proceeded, and who preached therein; the *Mosaick* God being a worse condition'd God, fierce and rigid, angry and implacable, delighting in wars and mischiefs; but the *Evangelical* God, the Father of our Lord, being mild and gentle; void of all wrath and spleen; very indulgent and beneficent: Of kin to that fancy of *Marcion* was the errour of the *Manichees*; who supposed two first causes of things; from one whereof good, from the other evil did fatally proceed; which conceit it seems they drew from the *Persian*, *Egyptian*, or other *Ethnical* Doctrines; the which we have recited by *Plutarch* in his discourse

1 Cor. 8. 6.

Prædicat hic duos esse Patres, divisdque regna:
Esse mali causam Dominum, qui condidit orbem;
Quique figuravit carnem spiramine vivam;
Quique dedit legem, & vatum qui voce locutus;
Hunc negat esse bonum, justum tamen esse fatetur,
Crudelem, durum, belli cui sæva voluptas,
Judicio horrendum, precibus mansuescere nullis:
Esse alium suadens, nulli qui cognitus unquam;
Hunc ait esse bonum, nullum qui judicat æquè,
Sed spargit cunctis vitam, non invidet ulli.

Adv. Marc. Poëm. 1.

Plut. *de* Iſide, & Oſiride. Aug. *de Civ. Dei. XX. V. cum* Lud. Vive. Laërtius *in proœmio.* Plato *de Leg. X.* Euſebius *de Prap.* 24. Ariſt. *Metaph. IV. I.* Simplic. *in* Epict.

about *Iſis*, and *Oſiris: The Perſian Magi* (ſaid he) *had their Oromazes, and Arimanius; the Egyptians their Oſiris, and Typhon; the Chaldæans their good, and bad Planets; the Greeks their Zeus, and Hades; the Pythagoreans their Monas, and Dyas; Empedocles his concord, and diſcord,* &c. the like report we have in divers other Writers: The common reaſon, or ground upon which theſe erroneous conceits were built, was this; there appearing to be in nature ſome things imperfect, and ſome things bad (as ill diſpoſitions, inclinations and paſſions of mind; ill tempers and diſeaſes of body, attended with pains and troubles in life; vices, diſcords, deformities, antipathies, irregularities, monſters, poiſons, and the like things diſperſed in nature) this ſort of things, they ſuppoſed could not proceed from perfect goodneſs, the fountain of what was good, lovely, orderly, convenient, pleaſant and deſirable: *If* (diſcourſeth *Plutarch*, expreſſing the main of their argument) *nothing can naturally ariſe without a cauſe, and good cannot afford cauſality to evil, it is neceſſary that nature ſhould have a proper ſeed and principle of evil as well as good; and thus it ſeems to the moſt and wiſeſt, for they indeed conceive two Gods as it were counterplotting each other; one the contriver and producer of good things, and the other of bad; calling the better One God, the other Dæmon.* But this diſcourſe hath two faulty ſuppoſitions: It ſuppoſeth ſome things to be imperfect and evil, which are not truly ſuch; and, to thoſe things, which are truly ſuch, it aſſigneth an imaginary and wrong cauſe:

Εἰ γὰρ ἔξωθεν ἀναιτίως πέφυκε γενέσθαι, ἀρχὴν ὃ κακὸν τ' ἀγαθὸν οὐκ ἂν βεβαίως, δεῖ γένεσιν ἰδίαν καὶ ἀρχὴν ὥσπερ ἀγαθοῦ, καὶ κακοῦ τινὰ φύσιν, &c. Plut. *de* Iſ. & Oſir.

1. It ſuppoſeth ſome Beings according to their original nature and conſtitution to be evil and imperfect; which ſuppoſition is, I ſay, falſe; for there is no ſort of creature, which did not at firſt paſs the divine approbation: *God ſaw every thing which he had made, and behold it was very good:* Good, that is, convenient and ſutable to its deſign (or its Authour's *Idea*) fair and decent in its place, according to its proportion; very good, that is, perfect and complete in its degree, without any defect, blemiſh or flaw; not liable to any reaſonable blame or exception. There are indeed among the creatures ſome degrees of perfection (it was fit there ſhould be ſo in great variety, that things might by compariſon illuſtrate and commend one another; that there might be regular ſubordinations, and ſubſerviencies, and harmonies; that ſeveral faculties of intelligent creatures might be exerciſed, and improved, and delighted; that the πολυποικίλος σοφία, *the manifold* or multiform *Wiſdom* of the Creatour might be diſplayed, acknowledged and celebrated; there are, I ſay, for ſuch purpoſes in nature creatures gradually different in excellency) whence ſome things may be ſaid comparatively imperfect, or rather leſs excellent and noble in reſpect to other things, endued with higher faculties, or (as they be ſometimes called) perfections of nature; ſome things are leſs active, and more paſſive than others; are not ſo capable of enjoyments delectable unto, and more ſubject to impreſſions diſtaſtful to their particular nature; which paſſivities and diſpleaſures are not ſimply wills, becauſe they do ſute the degree of the particular natures of thoſe ſubjects, being alſo ever over-balanced with other pleaſing activities and enjoyments: ſo have things different meaſures of

Gen. 1. 31.

Naturæ omnes quoniam ſunt, & ideò habent modum ſuum, ſpeciem ſuam, & quandam ſecum pacem ſuam, profectò bonæ ſunt. Aug. *de Civ.* D. XII.

of excellency, but nothing as it comes from God's hand, or ſtands in its rank in nature, is poſitively imperfect, or void of that perfection, which is due to its kind; much leſs is any creature abſolutely bad, that is ugly, or noxious, or troubleſome, or cumberſome to the Univerſe; ſo that it were better away out of it, than in it. *God* (ſaith the *Hebrew* Wiſe-man) *created all things, that they might have their being, and the generations of the world were healthful, and there is no poiſon of deſtruction in them.* Every thing contributes ſomewhat to the uſe and benefit, or to the beauty and ornament of the whole: No weed grows out of the earth, no inſect creeps upon the ground which hath not its elegancy, and yields not its profit; nothing is abominable, or deſpicable, though all things are not alike aimable and admirable; there is therefore nothing in all the compaſs of nature unfit, or unworthy to have proceeded from God; nothing which he beſeemingly, without derogation to his excellencies, may not own for his work; nothing which in its rank and degree doth not confer to the manifeſtation of his glorious power, admirable wiſdom, and excellent goodneſs: *O Lord* (cryed the devout *Pſalmiſt* upon particular ſurvey, and conſideration of them) *how manifold are thy works, in wiſdom haſt thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches!* That which we call *poiſon*, is ſuch only relatively, being noxious or deſtructive to one part, but innocent, wholeſome and uſeful to ſome other part; and never prejudicial to the whole body of things: yea even to that part it ſelf it is commonly beneficial in ſome caſe or ſeaſon; affording, if not continual alimony, yet ſometime phyſick thereto, and ſerving to expel another poiſon, or miſchief more imminently dangerous. That which we call a *monſter*, is not unnatural in regard to the whole contexture of cauſes, but ariſeth no leſs methodically, than any thing moſt ordinary; and it alſo hath its good end and uſe, well ſerving to illuſtrate the beauty and convenience of natures uſual courſe. As for pain and grief incident to the natures of things, without regard to any demerit or juſtice, they are not properly evils, but adherencies to the leſs perfect natures of things; in a ſtate liable to which God not only juſtly, but wiſely, according to his pleaſure might conſtitute things for the reaſons and ends before inſinuated; for no reaſon obliged him to confer upon every thing extreme perfection; he might diſpenſe his liberalities in what kind and meaſure he thought good. In fine, the reaſon of offence we take at any thing of this kind, ſeeming bad or ugly to us, ariſeth from our defect of knowledge and ſagacity, we not being able to diſcern the particular tendency of each thing to the common utility and benefit of the world.

Pſal. 104. 24.

Ἔστι τὸ τέρας τῶν παρὰ φύσιν τι· παρὰ φύσιν δ' ἐ πᾶσαν, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολύ· παρὰ γὰρ τὴν ἀεὶ, ἢ τὼ ἐξ ἀνάγκης οὐδὲν γίνεται παρὰ φύσιν. Ariſt. *de Gen. Anim.* 4.

Τῆς τε ὅλης δημιεργίας, ὥσπερ τινες ὑπόμναι, ἢ ἀναγκαῖαι φύσεις. Max. Tyr. *XXV.*

Divina nos admonet providentia non res inſipienter vituperare, ſed utilitatem rerum diligenter inquirere, & ubi noſtrum ingenium vel infirmitas deficit, ibi credere occulta, &c. atque hæc ipſa aut humilitatis exercitatio eſt, aut elationis attritio. Aug. *de Civ. Dei II.* 22.

2. But as for thoſe real imperfection, and evils truly ſo called (*which* alone, as S. *Baſil* ſpeaketh, *are properly evil, and moſt worthy of the appellation of evils*) habitual diſtempers of ſoul, and irregular actions; errours, and vices, and ſins, we need not ſearch for any one eternal, or primitive cauſe of them: Although order, uniformity, beauty and perfection do, yet diſorder, confuſion, deformity and defect do not argue any unity of cauſe, whence they ſhould

Τὰ κυρίως κακὰ, ἅπερ αὐλίστα ἐστὶ τῆς τῶν κακῶν περιγραφῆς ἄξια. Baſ. *in Orat. Quòd Deus eſt non author mali.*

Peccatum à Deo non eſt, quia nec eſt. Lipſ.

ſhould ſpring; the true cauſes of them are ſufficiently notorious; not the will, or power of a Creatour, but the wilfulneſs and impotency of creatures are the fountains of them. They are no ſubſtantial beings, and ſo do not need an infinite power to create them; they do hardly need a poſitive cauſe; being themſelves rather defects, than effects; privations of being, than poſitive beings: *Let no man* (ſaith S. *Auſtin*) *ſeek an efficient cauſe of a bad will; for there is no efficient, but a deficient thereof; for that it ſelf is not an effection, but a defection:* and, *An evil will* (ſaith he again) *is the efficient cauſe of an ill work; an evil will hath no cauſe*; that is, none beſide it ſelf, or its own deficiency. And again: *Evil hath no nature, but the loſs of good hath received the name of evil:* however moſt certainly *the riſe and root of ſin is our free will and choice*; it is κακὸν βλάστημα προαιρέσεως (as *Cyrill. Hier.* ſaith) *a bad ſprout from our choice.* Men, or other intellectual and free agents their voluntarily averting themſelves from the ſupreme true good to inferiour appearing goods; their wilfully declining from the way which God doth ſhew and preſcribe to them; their rejecting the advices, and diſobeying the laws of God; their thwarting the dictates of that reaſon which God did put in them; their abuſing their natural faculties; their perverting and corrupting themſelves, and others alſo, by ill example, perſuaſion, allurement, violence; theſe cauſes of ſuch evils are moſt viſible and palpable: we need not go far, nor ariſe to the top of things to find an authour, upon whom we may charge our evils; they are moſt truly called our *ways*, our *works*, our *imaginations*, our *inventions* and *devices*; they are the children of our affected ſtupidity, and our naughty ſloth; of our precipitant choice, of our ſtubborn will, of our unbridled paſſion; they are wholly imputed to us, we are blamed, we are condemned, we are puniſhed for them: As it is horrible blaſphemy to aſcribe them to the moſt good God; ſo it is vain to imagine any other neceſſary principle, any uncreated miſchievous *Arimanius*, any ſpiteful Cacodæmon, any eternal Fate to father them upon.

Nemo quærat efficientem cauſam malæ voluntatis, non enim eſt efficiens, ſed deficiens; quia nec illa effectio eſt, ſed defectio.

Mala voluntas efficiens eſt operis mali, malæ autem voluntatis efficiens eſt nihil. Aug. *de Civ. D.* XII. 6, 7.

Mali nulla natura eſt, ſed amiſſio boni mali nomen accepit. Aug. *de C. D.* XI. 9.

Ἀρχὴ γὰρ ῥίζα τῆς ἁμαρτίας τὸ ἐφ' ἡμῖν καὶ αὐτεξούσιον. Baſ. *ubi ſupr.*

Deut. 4. 16. 31. 29. Gen. 6. 11. Exod. 32. 7, &c.

Τὴν μοχθηρίαν ἡ τῆς ψυχῆς ἐξουσία κυίσκει τε καὶ πλησφορεῖ. Max. Tyr. XXV.

Αἰτία ἑλομένου· θεὸς ἀναίτιος. Plato *de Rep.* X.
Οὐ γὰρ ἐξ ἀρχῆς, μὰ Δία, ἦν ἐξ ἀρχῆς. Max. Tyr.

The miſchiefs alſo of pain and grief conſequent upon thoſe diſtempers and miſdeanours (*that unwilling brood of wilful evils*, as *Damaſcene* calls them) have very diſcernible originals: they are partly to be imputed to us, and partly attributed to God: We by our faults deſerve, and draw them to our ſelves; God in juſtice and wiſdom doth inflict them on us: *Perditio tua ex te*; *O, Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf*; and, *Wo unto their ſoul, for they have rewarded evil unto themſelves*; ſo doth God charge the cauſe of ſuch evils upon us; and, *Shall there be any evil in the city, and the Lord hath not done it? Doth not evil and good proceed out of the moſt High? I am the Lord, and there is none elſe; I form the light, and create darkneſs; I make peace, and create evil*; ſo God aſſumes the cauſality of them to himſelf. We need therefore not to inquire after any other cauſe of theſe evils (*malа pœnæ*) ſo called becauſe they are diſpleaſing to ſenſe or fancy; although conſidering the needfulneſs, and uſefulneſs of them in reſpect to publick benefit (as they are exemplary and monitive) and their wholſomeneſs for

Ἐκουσίων κακῶν ἀκούσια ἔκγονα. *Damaſ. de Orth. F.* IV. 20.

Hoſ. 13. 9.
Iſa. 3. 9.
Amos 3. 6.
Lam. 3. 38.
Iſa. 45. 57.

Tertul. *in Marc* 2.

for particular correction and cure (for, *No chastening*, as the *Apostle* saith, *for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them, which are exercised thereby*) in such respects they may rather be called good things; however as they have any thing bad in them, they proceed from us, as they contain somewhat good, they are from God; which sufficiently confuteth those Heretical opiniators, and decideth the controversie; it being vain to suppose any other, beside these most apparent causes of such evils; Our bad desert, and God's just Providence. * It is considerable, that even vice (although the worst thing in the world, and bad to the subject thereof) is yet in some respects useful; it in regard to the whole is not unprofitable; it serveth to the illustration of God's holy Attributes; it is a foil to vertue, and setteth off its lustre. But let thus much suffice, concerning the objects of the Creation.

Heb. 12. 11.

*Γίνεται καὶ ἡ κακία πως χρήσιμον, καὶ τὸν τῆς φύσεως νόμον, καὶ ἐκ ἀχρήστως πρὸς τὰ ὅλα. Chrysost. apud Plut. de Stoic. contr. 31, 32. Sen. Qu. Nat. præf. & de Benef. 21. & Epist. 65.

I shall next touch a consideration or two concerning the manner how, and the reason why God did make the world; which will commend to us his doing it, and intimate some grounds of duty, and both direct and excite our practice in respect thereto: The manner of God's producing the world was altogether voluntary, and absolutely free; it did not issue from him ἀπροαιρέτως, without counsel or choice, not (as some Philosophers have conceited) by natural or necessary emanation or result; as heat from fire, or light from the Sun, or shadow from a body; but from a wise free-choice: He so made the world, that he could wholly have abstained from making it, that he could have framed it otherwise, according to an infinite variety of ways. He could not be fatally determined, there being no superiour cause to guide him, or to constrain him any wise (to doe, or not to doe; to doe thus, or otherwise.) He could not be obliged to impart any perfection, being absolute master of all things possible, and debtour unto none upon any account: 'Tis his privilege therefore, and property to perform all things κατὰ βουλὴν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ, *according to the counsel of his will*, or according to his wise pleasure, as S. *Paul* expresseth it; and accordingly we hear the *Elders* in the *Revelation* acknowledging: *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, καὶ διὰ τὸ θέλημά σου, and for thy will they are and were created:* they do affirm God's pleasure to be the cause of his creating things, and they imply its being so to be the ground of our due veneration, gratitude, and all devotion; these being tributes due unto free goodness and bounty; if he made all things fatally, no praise or thanks were due to him; if he doeth things so, there is no reason to offer prayers to him, to seek his aid, or implore his favour; no devotion toward him hath a ground, or can subsist. 'Tis also evident, that if the world had been produced in way of necessary emanation, that it should have been eternal; as if the Sun had been eternal, his light had been eternal also; if fire had been, its heat likewise had been from eternity: but that the world was produced in time, not long since, within six or seven thousand years, not only faith and divine Chronology do assure us, but reason also shews, and all history conspires to persuade us; there being no plain monument, or probable memory of actions beyond that time; and by what progressions mankind was propagated over the world; how,

Facit quàm optimum potuit; ait Plato *in* Tim.

Ἄιτιον μὲν αὐτῷ ὁμολογῶν τὸν θεὸν, ἄιτιον δὲ ἀπροαιρέτως ὡς τῆς σκιᾶς τὸ σῶμα, καὶ τῆς λαμπηδόνος τὸ ἀπαυγάζον Bas. hexaem. a. Οἱονεὶ ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δυνάμεως. Id.

Δῶλοι βασιλέων εἰσιν, οἱ βασιλεῖς θεῶν, θεοὶ δ' ἀνάγκης. Philemon.

Eph. 1. 11.

Revel. 4. 11.

how, and when, and where Nations were planted, Empires raiſed, Cities built, Arts invented or improved, it is not very hard to trace near the original times and places: The world therefore in reſpect of time conceivable by us is very young, and not many ſucceſſions of ages, or lives of men have paſſed between its beginning and ours; whence it plainly appears, that it was freely produced by God.

And how he produced it, the Scripture farther teacheth us; it was not with any laborious care or toil; not with the help of any engines or inſtruments ſubſervient; not by inducing any preparatory diſpoſitions or aptitudes, but φιλῷ τῷ βέλεσθαι, by his mere willing (as *Clemens Alex.* ſpeaks) his will and word were (as *Tertull.* expounds it) the hands, by which it is ſaid that God made the heavens; at his call they did all immediately ſpring up out of nothing, at his command they preſently ranged themſelves into order: it was not a high ſtrain of Rhetorick in *Moſes* (as *Longinus* deemed) thus to deſcribe the creation, but a moſt proper expreſſion of that incomprehenſible efficacy, which attends the divine will and decree.

Adv. Hermog. 45.

Long. *Sect.* 7.

But ſince God did not only make the world freely, but wiſely; and ſince all wiſe agents act to ſome purpoſe, and aim at ſome end, why (may it be inquired) did God make the world? what impulſive reaſon or inducement was there moving his will to doe it? we may anſwer with *Plato*; ἀγαθὸς ὢν, *he was good*; *and he that is good, doth not envy any good to any thing:* His natural benignity and munificence was the pure motive, incited or invited him to this great action of communicating exiſtence, and ſuitable perfection to his creatures, reſpectively: No benefit or emolument could hence accrue to him; he could receive no acceſſion of beatitude; he did not need any prophet or pleaſure from without, being full within, rich in all perfection, completely happy in the contemplation and enjoyment of himſelf: *Can a man,* can any creature, *be profitable to God?* No; *our goodneſs doth not extend to him*; we cannot any-wiſe advance, or amplifie him thereby; 'tis becauſe goodneſs is freely diffuſive and communicative of it ſelf; becauſe love is active and fruitful in beneficence; becauſe higheſt excellency is void of all envy, ſelfiſhneſs and tenacity, that the world was produced ſuch as it was; thoſe perfections being intrinſecal to God's nature (for *God is love,* that is, eſſentially loving and good) diſpoſed him to beſtow ſo much of being, beauty, delight and comfort to his creatures. Hence, *the earth* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *is full of the goodneſs of the Lord*; that is, every thing therein, according to its ſtate and degree, is an effect of the divine goodneſs, partakes thereof both in its being, and in its enjoyments; and, *The Lord* (ſaith he again) *is good to all, and his tender mercies* (or his bowels of affection) *are over all his works*: he is good, and tenderly kind toward all his works, as well in producing them, as preſerving them; in freely rendring them capable of receiving good, as in carefully providing, and liberally diſpenſing good unto them: *That thou giveſt them* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, ſpeaking with reſpect to the Univerſity of things) *they gather*; *thou openeſt thy hand, they are filled with good*; it is from God's open hand (that is, from his unconfined bounty and liberality) that all creatures do receive all that good which fills them; which ſatisfieth their needs, and ſatiateth their deſires: A glimpſe of which truth the ancient *Pagans* ſeem to have

Quæris quid propoſitum ſit Deo? bonitas; ita certè Plato ait: Quæ Deo faciendi mundum cauſa fuit? Bonus eſt; bono nulla cujuſquam boni invidia eſt. Sen. *Ep.* 65.

Ἐπίηνον ἀγγέλους, ἀρχαγγέλους, ὧν τὰς ἄλλας τῶν ἀσωμάτων ἰσίας· ἐπίηνον δὲ δι' ἔτερον μὲν ἕνεν, δι' ἀγαθότητα δὲ μόνῳ, &c. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 9. *ad* Stagir.

Job 22. 2.

Pſal. 16. 2.

1 Joh. 4. 8, 16.

Pſal. 33. 5. 119. 64.

Pſal. 145. 9. רחמיו

Pſal. 104. 28.

have had, when they (as *Aristotle* observed) did commonly suppose love to have been the first and chief of the Gods; the original source and framer of things. But I will no longer insist on this Point in way of doctrine or disquisition; I shall only adjoin a little application.

Arist. Metaph. I. 4.

Πρωτιστον μεν Ερωτα θεων μητισατο παντων. Parmenides.

Ἠδ' Ἔρος, ὁς πάντεσσι μεταπρέπει ἀθανάτοισιν. Hesiod.

1. The belief and consideration of this Point (that God is the Maker of Heaven and Earth) must necessarily beget in us highest esteem, admiration, and adoration of God, and his divine Excellencies, his Power, Wisdom and Goodness: For what a Power must that be (how unconceivably great both intensively and extensively must it be?) which could so expeditely and easily rear such a stupendiously vast frame? vast beyond the reach of our sense, of our imagination, of any rational collection that we can make? the earth, on which we dwell, divided into so many great Empires, full of so many inhabitants, bearing such variety of creatures different in kind, having in respect to the whole but the like proportion, as a little sand hath to the earth it self, or a drop of water to the great Ocean? What a Wisdom must that be, how unconceivably large and penetrant, that could contrive such an innumerable number of creatures (the artifice, which appears in one, in the least of which doth so far transcend our conceit) could digest them so fitly, could connect them so firmly in such an order? What a Goodness and Benignity must it be (how immense and boundless?) that did extend it self in affection and care, for so many creatures abundantly providing for the need and comfort of them all? how transcendently glorious is the Majesty of him, that was authour of all those beauties and strengths, those splendours and magnificencies we do with so much pleasure, and so much wonder behold? Well might the devout *Psalmist* and divine *Prophets* hence frequently take occasion of exciting us to praise, and celebrate the perfections of God: Well might even Heathen Philosophers from contemplation of the world be raised into fits of composing *Hymns* and *Elogies* of its great Maker.

2. This consideration likewise may confer to the breeding of hearty gratitude, and humble affection toward God; for that we are upon many accounts very nearly and highly concerned in this great production. We our selves, whatever we are, and all we have, and all we enjoy; all our intrinsecal endowments, and all our extrinsecal accommodations are parts thereof, and did proceed from God; yea all the whole frame was designed by him with a particular regard, and from an especial good will unto us; was fitted for our enjoyment and use: The world was made as a convenient house for us to dwell in, as a pleasant theatre for us to view, as a profitable school for our instruction, as a holy temple for us to perform offices of no less sweet, than reasonable devotion; for our benefit those huge orbs roll incessantly, diffusing their glorious light, and dispensing their kindly influences; for our sake the earth is decked with all that goodly furniture, and stored with all that abundance of comfortable provisions: All these things out of pure benevolence, not being moved with any desert of ours, not regarding any profit of his own, before any desire or any thought of ours (before we were capable of wishing or thinking) God was

Mundus quasi communis Deorum, atque hominum domus, aut urbs utrorumque. Cic. *de* N. D. II. *de* Fin. IV.

Mundus Deorum templum. Sen. *de Ben.* VII. 7. *Epist.* 90. Cic. *in Som.* Sci. Philo. *de Mun.* 2. *&c.*

Ψυχὴν σωθυτήριον, ἢ διδασκαλεῖον, *&c.* Bas. M.

— ἐ πάντων ἀμείβων ἔδωκεν, ἐ δὲ καταδυμάτων ἐνήδυνεν, *&c.* Chrys. *ad fr.* Z. *vid.*

Cogitavit nos ante natura quàm genuit, &c. Sen. *de Benef.* 2. 23.

pleased to contrive, and to accomplish for us: *We* (said a *Philosopher*) *regard and esteem our selves overmuch, if we think our selves worthy, that so great matters should be agitated for our sake*; and the *Psalmist* signifies the same, when upon contemplation of the World, he saith: *When I consider the heavens, the works of thy fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him?* That the authour of so great and glorious a work should vouchsafe to regard so mean things as us, to visit us continually with a provident inspection and care over our welfare, to lay so vast projects, and accomplish so mighty works in regard to us; what a demonstration of admirable condescension, what a ground of wonder and astonishment, what an argument of love and thankfulness toward God is this?

Nimis nos suspicimus, si digni nobis videmur, propter quos tanta moveantur. Sen. *de Ira*, 27.

Psal. 8.

3. Yea what a ground and motive to humility should this consideration be unto us? What is man? what, I say, is man in comparison to him that made the world? what is our strength, what our wit, what our goodness, what any quality or ability of ours, in respect to the perfection of those things in him? how weak, silly, narrow, poor and wretched things must we needs appear to our selves, when seriously we consider the immense excellencies displayed in the World's creation; how should this depress, and debase us in our conceits about our selves? Especially if we reflect upon our own unprofitableness, our ingratitude, and our injustice toward our Creatour; how none, or how scant returns we have made to him, who gave unto us, and to all things for us, our being and theirs, our all and theirs; how faint in our acknowledgments, how negligent in our services we have been; yea how preposterously, instead of our due homage and tribute, we have repay'd him affronts and injuries; frequently opposing his will, and abusing his goodness.

4. This consideration is further a proper inducement unto trust and hope in God; and withal a fit ground of consolation to us in all our needs and distresses. He that was able to doe so great things, and hath been willing to doe so much for us; he that having made all things, can dispose of all, and *doeth* (as King *Nebuchadnezzar* taught by experience confessed) *according to his will in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, so that none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?* How can we distrust his protection or succour in our exigencies? this consideration good men have been wont to apply to such purposes: *My help* (saith the *Psalmist*) *cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth:* Well might he be assured, having so potent and faithful an aid: and, *Happy* (saith he again) *is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help; whose hope is in the Lord his God, which made heaven and earth; the sea, and all that therein is:* Happy indeed he surely is; no disappointment or disaster can befall him, who doth with reason confide in him that made the world, and can manage it to his advantage. The Prophet *Jeremy* begins his prayer thus: *O Lord God, behold thou hast made heaven and earth by thy great power and stretched-out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee:* The creation of the World is such an experiment of God's power and goodness, as may support our faith in all encounters; so that we should not think any thing so difficult, but that God is able; nor so high, but that God is willing to perform it for us, if it make toward our real good.

Dan. 4. 35.

Psal. 121. 2. 124. 8. 146. 5.

Jer. 32. 17.

5. Finally, This consideration ministreth a general incitement unto all obedience; which from God's production of all things doth appear, upon

upon several accounts, due and reasonable; all other things do constantly obey the law imposed on them, insist in the course defined to them; and shall we only be disobedient and refractary, irregular and exorbitant? Shall all the hosts of heaven most readily and punctually obey God's summons? Shall *the pillars of heaven tremble, and be astonished at his reproof?* Shall *the sea* with *its proud waves* be curb'd, and confined by his decree? Shall *fire and hail, snow and vapour, and stormy winds* (such rude and boisterous things) *fulfil his word?* as they are all said to do doe; and shall we be unruly and rebellious? we, who are placed in the top of nature, for whom all nature was made, to whom all nature serves; shall we only of all things in nature, transgress against the Authour and Governour of nature?

Isa. 48. 13. 40. 26. Job 9. 5. 26. 11. 38. 11. Jer. 5. 22. Psal. 148. 8.

But I leave the farther improvement of this grand Point to your meditation, concluding with the exhortation of that Angel in the *Apocalypse: Fear God, and give glory to him; worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of water:* Even to him be all obedience, and adoration, and praise for ever, and ever. *Amen.*

Revel. 14. 7.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIII.

OF THE

Truth and Divinity

OF THE

Christian Religion.

EPHES. I. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted) *having heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation.*

THAT our Religion in gross is true and agreeable to reason, is a ground upon which the truth of its single doctrines and articles of faith doth lean; it is therefore requisite that it first be well supported, or that we be thoroughly assured thereof. Being therefore engaged at other times to discourse upon the particular points of

Christian doctrine, which suppose this general one; I shall take occasion collaterally in these exercises to insist upon this subject; supposing in those, what in these we shall endeavour to prove; so both avoiding there such grand digressions, or the treating upon matters not directly incident; and supplying here what seems necessary or useful there to the confirmation of *our faith.*

Now in the words (I did now reade) S. *Paul* styles the Christian doctrine (and in many other places of Scripture it is also so called) *the word of truth* (that is a most true doctrine) and *the gospel of our salvation* (that is a message brought from heaven by our Saviour and his Apostles; in which the ways and means of attaining salvation (that is of that best happiness which we are capable of) the overtures thereof from God, and the conditions in order thereto required from us are declared.) And that we have reason to entertain it as such, I shall immediately address my self to shew.

Μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ πίστευσον. Orig. 1. pag. 8, 9. Orig. 6. p. 282. Πίστευσον ἵνα σῶσαι θέλῃς ἢ ἄπιθι.

It was anciently objected by *Celsus*, and other Adversaries of our Religion, that Christianity did exact from men ψιλὴν καὶ ἄλογον πίστιν, *a bare groundless faith*; did impose νόμους ἀναποδείκτους, *laws uncapable of proof*; (that is, as to the goodness and reasonableness of them) did inculcate this rule μὴ ἐξέταζε, ἀλλὰ μόνον πίστευε, *do not examine or discuss, but only believe*; that it debarr'd inquiries and debates about truth, slighted the use and improvement of reason, rejected humane learning and wisdom, injoyning men to swallow its dictates, without chewing, or any previous examination concerning the reason and truth of them.

The ground of this accusation was surely a great mistake, arising from their not distinguishing that belief, whereby we embrace Christianity it self in gross, from that belief, whereby in consequence to the former we assent to the particular doctrines thereof: especially to such as concern matters supernatural, or exceeding the reach of our natural understanding to penetrate or comprehend. For as to the first kind, that belief whereby we embrace Christianity it self, as true in the gross; I say, it is no-wise required upon such terms; Our Religion doth not obtrude it self upon men in the dark, it doth not bid men to put out their eyes, or to shut them close; no; nor even to wink, and then to receive it; it rather obliges them to open their eyes wide, to go into the clearest light; with their best senses to view it thoroughly, before they embrace it. It requires not, yea it refuses (ordinarily) a sudden and precipitate assent; admitting no man (capable of judging and chusing for himself) to the participation thereof, or acknowledging him to be a believer indeed; till (after a competent time and means of instruction) he declares himself to understand it well, and heartily to approve it. Never any Religion was so little liable to that censure; none ever so freely exposed it self to a fair trial at the bar of reason; none ever so earnestly invited men to consider, and weigh its pretences; yea provoked them, for its sake and their own (at the peril of their souls, and as they tendred their own best good and safety) to an ἐυγνώμων, ἐξέτασις, an equal and discreet examination thereof. Other Religions have for their justification insisted upon the examples of Ancestours, the prescriptions and customs of times, their large extent and prevalence among multitudes of people, their establishment by civil laws, and countenance of secular powers (arguments wholly extrinsecal and of small validity) declining all other test or trial of reason: Yea, 'tis remarkable how *Celsus* (and others who made the foresaid objection) did contradict and confute themselves, affirming men ought without scruple to conform

Vid. Orig. *in* Cels. *lib.* 3. *pag.* 142. Ὅταν τα πιστεύσας ἐκ ἁπλῶς, οὐδὲ ἀλόγως ἀλλὰ μετὰ σοφοφείας, χάρισμα εἰληφὼν ἐκ θεῦ, &c. *Const. Apost.* 8. 1.

Hæ sunt religiones. &c. Lactant. 2. 6. (p. 171.)

Orig. *V. pag.* 248, &c.

form in opinion and practice to the Religion prescribed by the Laws of their Country, be they what they will, never so absurd or dishonest. Δεῖ φυλάσσειν τὰ εἰς κοινὸν κεκυρωμένα (things established by common authority must be observed.) And, τὰ παρ' ἑκάστοις ὀρθῶς ἂν περάτοιτο ταύτῃ δρώμενα, ὅπῃ ἐκείνοις φίλον (things are every where rightly done, being done according to the fashion of each place) such were the rules and maximes those men urged; and this was indeed exacting irrational belief; a stifling mens reason, and muzling their judgments: this was a method enforcing men blindly to yield consent to errours and inconsistences innumerable. But the teachers and maintainers of Christianity proceeded otherwise; confiding in the pure merit of their cause, they warned men to lay aside all prejudices; to use their best understandings; in a case of such moment, to apply themselves to an industrious and impartial search of the truth: Let one for the rest speak their sense:

Quæ omnia sapiens servabit tanquam legibus jussa, non tanquam Diis grata. Sen. *apud* Aug. *de Civ. D. 6.* 10.

Omnem istam ignobilem Deorum turbam, quam longo ævo longa superstitio congessit sic (inquit) adorabimus, ut meminerimus cultum ejus magis ad morem, quàm ad rem pertinere. Id. 16.----

----*Colebat quod reprehendebat, agebat quod arguebat, quod culpabat adorabat.* Aug. *ib. de.* Seneca.

Oportet in ea re maximè, in qua vitæ ratio versatur, sibi quemque confidere, suoque judicio ac propriis sensibus niti ad investigandam & perpendendam veritatem, quàm credentem alienis erroribus decipi tanquam ipsum rationis expertem: dedit omnibus Deus pro virili portione sapientiam, ut & inaudita investigare possent, & audita perpendere: We ought especially, says he, *every one of us in that matter, which chiefly concerns our manner of life, to confide in our selves; and rather with our own judgment, and our proper senses strive to find out and judge of the truth, than believing other mens errours to be deceived, like things void of reason: God hath given all men a competent share of wisdom, that they might both search out things not told them, and weigh what they hear.* So especially just and candid was Christianity in its first offering it self to the minds of men; it propounds indeed and presses, as evident in it self, the worth and consequence of the matter; but refers the decision on either part (so far as concerns every particular man) to the verdict of that reason and conscience, with which to such purposes God hath indued every man. And that it can proceed no otherwise appears farther, from the nature of that faith it requires: It commends faith as a great vertue, and therefore supposes it both voluntary and reasonable; it promises ample rewards thereto, and so implies it a work not of necessity or chance, but of care and industry; it declares infidelity to be very blameable, and threatens severe punishment thereto; why? because it signifies irrational negligence or perverseness. Lact. 2. 7.

Ἕξεις πίστεως ἐστὶν ἀνδρὸς λογικοῦ συγκατάθεσις. Clem. Alex.

In fine, Christianity doth not inveagle any man by slight, nor compel him by force, (being indeed commonly destitute of those advantages; nor being able to use them, if it would) but fairly by reason persuades him to embrace it; it doth not therefore shun examination, nor disclaim the judgment of reason; but earnestly seeks and procures the one, chearfully and confidently appeals to the other. *Examine all things; hold fast that which is good.* 1 Thess. 5. 21. *Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they be of God.* 1 Joh. 4. 1. *See that no man deceive you.* Matt. 24. 4. *Be always ready, with meekness and respect, to give to every one that demands it of you, an account of the hope in you.* Eph. 5. 6. 1 Pet. 3. 15. These are the Maximes which Christianity goes upon in the propagation and maintenance of its self.

Indeed after it hath convinced men of its truth in general, having evidenced the truth of its fundamental principles, it then requires a full and cordial assent, without exception, to its particular doctrines grounded

ded upon, or deduced from them. When, I say, it hath, to the satisfaction of a man's mind, with solid reason made good its principles; it then injoins men to surcease farther scruple or debate concerning what it teaches or draws from them; which is a proceeding most reasonable, and conformable to the method used in the strictest Sciences: For the principles of any Science being either demonstrated out of some higher Science, or evidenced by fit experiments to common sense; and being thence granted and received, 'tis afterward unlawful and absurd to challenge the conclusions collected from them; so if it have been proved and acknowledged that our Principles are true (for instance, that God is perfectly veracious, and that Christian Religion hath *his* authority, or attestation to it) 'twill then be a part of absurd levity and inconsistency to question any particular proposition evidently contained therein; and in this sense or in these cases it is true indeed that Christianity doth engage us to believe simply and purely, doth silence natural reason, and condemn curious enquiry, and prohibit dispute, especially to persons of meaner capacities or improvements. And thus, I take it, those Christians of old were to be understood, who so much commended immediate faith, excluded reason from being too busie in matters of Religion, discountenanced that curiosity, which searched into and would needs sound those inscrutable mysteries, which our Religion teaches. Our Religion then will allow (yea it invites and exhorts) an Infidel to consider and judge of its truth, although it will not allow a Christian to be so vain and inconstant, as to doubt of any particular doctrine therein; seeing by so questioning a part, he in effects renounces the whole, and subverts the foundation of his faith; at least ceases thereby to be a steady Christian. I might then well invert our Adversaries discourse, and offer it as a good argument of our Religion its truth, that it alone among all Religions, with a candour and confidence peculiar to truth, calls us to the light, is willing, yea desirous to undergo trial; I add, yea challenges as its due from all men, and demands it of them as a necessary duty to hear it, to consider it seriously, to pass sentence upon it; for as commonly errour and groundless conceit, being conscious of their own weakness, are timorous and suspicious, and thence ready to decline all proof and conflict of reason; so truth, knowing its own strength, is daring and resolute; enters boldly into the lists, being well assured (or hopeful) of good success in the combat.

Bas. in Ps. 15.

Joh. 3. 21, 22.

Which proceeding, proper to Christianity, is in it self very plausible, and may well beget a favourable prejudice on its side; and that it is not confident without reason, will appear upon our examining the principles and grounds on which it stands: The *first* Principle of Christianity (common thereto and all other Religions) is that there is one God (sovereign and transcendent in all perfections; the maker and governour of all things.) The *next* (which also no Religion doth not acknowledge) is that God is perfectly veracious, so that whatever appears to be asserted, or attested to by him is certainly true; which Principles (by reasons I hope proper and sufficient) I partly have proved, and partly shall hereafter upon occasion shew: A *third* is, that God is the authour of the Christian doctrine, and law; that he hath revealed this doctrine to mankind, and confirmed it by his testimony; that he hath imposed this law upon us, and established it by his authority. This Principle (being the foundation and sum of our faith) involves matter of fact; and consequently being not evident immediately in it self, doth (for a full conviction of a man's mind, and producing therein a solid

persuasion)

perſuaſion) require a rational probation; and that it may appear we believe it like reaſonable men, not (as *Pagans* and *Mahometans*, and thoſe of other Sects do) upon wilful reſolution, or by mere chance, as alſo for ſetling the ground of particular Articles comprehended under this, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew the reaſonableneſs thereof; advancing my diſcourſe by ſeveral ſteps and degrees. I obſerve *firſt* that

Μάθωμεν τοίνυν ὅτι πρὸς ἕλλωας διαλέγεσθαι, ἵνα μὴ ὡς δόγματα ἢ βούλημα τὰ ἡμέτερα ὑπολάβωσι, ἀλλ' ὡς πάντα πεπεισμένοι περὶ τῶν ἡμῖν ἐλπιζομένων. Chryſ. in 1 Cor. 1, 17.

I. It is reaſonable to ſuppoſe that God ſhould at ſome time or ſeaſon fully and clearly reveal unto men the truth concerning himſelf, and concerning them as he and they ſtand related to each other; concerning his nature and will, concerning our ſtate and duty, reſpectively; the nature and attributes of God, the nature and qualities of man being compared do perſuade thus much.

It is apparent to common experience, that mankind being left to it ſelf (eſpecially in matters of this kind) is very inſufficient to direct it ſelf: that it is apt to lie under woful ignorance, to wander in uncertainty, to fall into errour, to poſſeſs it ſelf with vain conceit, to be abuſed with any ſort of deluſion, which either the malice of wicked ſpirits, or the ſubtilty of naughty men, or the wildneſs of its own fond paſſions and deſires can put upon it, or bring it under; 'tis conſequently expoſed to all thoſe vices, diſhonourable, hurtful and deſtructive to its nature; and to all thoſe miſeries, which from ignorance and errour, from vice and wickedneſs do naturally ſpring; eſpecially to an eſtrangement from God, and an incapacity of his love and favour. The two only remedies of all theſe miſchiefs (natural light and primitive tradition) how little they did avail to cure them; how the one was too faint in it ſelf, and eaſily loſt in miſts of prejudice from ill education and bad cuſtom prevailing generally; how the other (beſides its other defects) ſoon was polluted, and indeed quite ſpoiled by adulterate mixtures of fond, impure and vile ſuperſtitions; woful experience doth more than enough evince. We ſee, that not only the generality of mankind did ſometime lie in this ſad condition, but that even the moſt elevated and refined wits (thoſe among men, who by all poſſible improvement of their reaſon did endeavour to raiſe themſelves from this low eſtate; to reſcue their minds from the common ignorance, the miſtakes, the ſuperſtitions and follies of the world) could by no means in any good meaſure attain thoſe ends; for what did their earneſt inquiries, or their reſtleſs ſtudies produce, but diſſatisfaction and perplexity of mind? wherein did their eager diſputations conclude, but in irreconcileable differences of opinion, and greater uncertainties than were when they began? moſt were plung'd into a deſperate Scepticiſm (a doubt and diffidence of all things) none arrived higher than ſome faint conjectures, on ſome unſteady opinions concerning thoſe matters of higheſt conſequence; ſuch notions as were not effectual enough to produce in them a practice (in any good meaſure) ſutable to the dignity of man's nature, to the duty he owes to God, to the capacities man hath of doing and receiving good; from which due glory to God, or much benefit to man did accrue. Ἐματαιώθησαν ἐν τοῖς διαλογισμοῖς, *they were made vain* (or, they were fruſtrated, deluded, befooled) in their reaſonings and diſputes; the reſult of their buſie ſpeculations was, that *their fooliſh heart was darkned*; ſo darkned, that with all the light they had, they could not ſee any thing; at leaſt not clearly diſcern what chiefly it concerned them to know; *The world by wiſdom* (by all the wiſdom it could get) *did not know God*; did not acquire

Rom. 1. 21. Eph. 4. 17. 1 Cor. 1. 21.

acquire a requisite measure of knowledge in divine things: did not however know him so, as to glorifie him; as to thank him for the benefits received from him; as to bring forth worthy fruits of piety and vertue. So much S. *Paul* observed of them; and not he alone did observe it, but even themselves were sensible of this their unhappiness, whence so many complaints concerning the blindness and infirmity of man's mind, concerning the obscurity and uncertainty of things, concerning the insuperable difficulty of finding truth, concerning the miserable consequences from these, do occur among them.

Rom. 1. 21, &c. 18.

---- Hinc causa mali mortalibus ægris Naturam nescire Dei.

Now this being the natural state of men, destitute of divine conduct and assistance; do they not (I pray) greatly need another light to guide them in this darkness, or to bring them out of it; a helpful hand to free them from these inconveniences? and is it not reasonable to suppose, that God who is alone able, will also be willing in due time to afford it? He, who in nature is most benign and bountiful, most pitiful and gracious; whose goodness fills the earth, and whose mercy is over all his works; he, who bears to man the special relation of a Father, and bears to him a suitable tenderness of affection and good will; he, all whose attributes seem concerned in engaging him upon this performance; not only his Goodness to *instigate* him, and his Wisdom to *direct* him, but even his Justice in some manner to *oblige* him thereto.

Psal. 33. 5. 104. 24.

1. His Goodness: *Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb?* Yea; though 'tis unnatural and unusual, 'tis yet possible she may, because nature in her is not unalterably constant, and the same; but the immutable God cannot so cease to be mindful of, to be compassionate toward his children. That gracious ear cannot hear mankind groan so dolefully under bitter oppressions; that pitiful eye cannot behold his own dear off-spring, the flower of his creation, lying in so comfortless, so remediless distress, without feeling some pity, without being moved to reach some relief; such notes surely cannot be grateful, such spectacles cannot be pleasant to him, nor can he then forbear long to provide means of removing them from his presence. We esteem it want of goodness (yea an effect of very bad disposition) not to direct a bewildred traveller, not to relieve, if we can, even a stranger fallen into great distress: and if we being in such degree bad, are inclinable to perform such good offices, how much more ready may we suppose him, who is goodness it self, (goodness infinite and absolute) to doe the like for all mankind, so much needing his guidance and help? He who hath settled our outward estate in so advantageous a posture, who hath made provisions so various and ample for the needs and conveniences (yea for the pleasure) of our bodies, would he have so little care over our better part, and leave our souls so slenderly furnished, letting them pine as it were for want of spiritual sustenance? how can we think his good providence defective in so main, so principal a part thereof? Thus doth divine goodness (to my apprehension) very strongly confirm our supposition.

Isa. 49. 15.

Vid. Ezek. 16.

2. And his Wisdom enforces the same: God made the world to express his goodness, and to display his glory; and his goodness who can be sensible of? his glory who can perceive, who can promote, but man? but he who is endewed with reason, enabling him to reflect upon the good he feels, to admire the excellency he discovers, to render grateful acknowledgments for the one, to utter acclamations of praise to the other? which purposes yet will be utterly (or at least, in great measure) frustrated, should God for ever suffer men to continue in such ignorance,

norance, doubt or mistake concerning himself; if men are not fully perswaded that he made the world and governs it, how can they pay those due homages of dread to his glorious power, of admiration to his excellent wisdom, of love to his transcendent goodness? This grand theatre would (as it were) stand useless, and all the wonders acted thereupon would appear in vain, should there be wanting a spectatour; should man be altogether blind or heedless; yea man's faculty it self, that his seeing faculty of mind would signifie nothing, were there not a light rendring things visible to him. Common sense hath dictated to men, that man is capable of shewing respect, of performing duty and service to God, that also God requires and expects them from him; the same declares, that God best knows what kinds of service, what expressions of respect best please him. Reason tells, that God would have man act in the best manner, according to the design of his nature; that he would have the affairs of men proceed in some good order, that he even desires earnestly the good of men, and delights in their happiness: and if so, 'tis reasonable to suppose, that being most wise he should dispose fit means for accomplishing those ends; for securing himself, as it were, from disappointment; that therefore he should impart to men a competent knowledge of himself, should declare his good will and pleasure to them, should reveal both the best way of their serving him, and the best means of their attaining happiness to themselves. So divine wisdom grounds an argument for our supposition.

3. God's Justice also seems not a little to favour it; every good Governour thinks it just to take care that his subjects should understand his pleasure, and be acquainted with his laws; he causes them therefore to be solemnly promulgated, that all may take notice; if any of them by long disuse are become unknown, he revives the knowledge of them by new proclamations; to quicken obedience he propounds fit rewards, and deters from disobedience by menacing suitable punishments, knowing man's nature resty and unapt to move without these spurs: And is it likely the sovereign Governour and Judge of all the world should observe less equity in his administrations? that he should neglect any means necessary or apt to promote his subjects performance of their duty, to prevent the breaches of his laws? He that loves righteousness above all, he that so earnestly desires to be duly obeyed, he that infinitely delights in his subjects good; can he fail sufficiently to declare his will, to encourage men to comply with it, to terrifie them from transgressing it? will he suffer his laws to remain unknown, or uncertain; will he not consider the infirmities of his subjects, will he leave any fair apology for disobedience? No, the superlative justice of God seems to perswade the contrary.

4. I might add, that generally it seems unbecoming the Majesty divine, that he should endure the world, his kingdom, to continue under a perpetual usurpation and tyranny; to suffer, that his imperial throne should be possessed, his authority abused, his name insulted over by enemies and rebels against him; (by evil spirits, whether those of hell, or those on earth) that a cruel fiend, that a cursed ghost, that a brute beast, that a chimæra of man's fancy should be worshipped, while himself is forgotten and neglected, is dishonoured and despised; that iniquity and wickedness (with all the filthy brood of ignorance and errour) should every where flourish and domineer, while righteousness and vertue lie prostrate and are trampled upon: This surely the King of glory, the great patron of goodness will not permit to be; sooner ra-

Act. 10. 38. Eph. 2. 2.

ther may we conceive that, to remove these indecencies and these mischiefs, he would presently turn the world into a desart and solitude, or pour a deluge of water over the face of the earth, or with flames of vengeance consume it into ashes.

We cannot indeed judge or determine concerning the special circumstances or limits of God's dealing toward man in this particular; concerning the time when, the manner how, the measure according to which God will dispense those revelations of himself; those depend upon mysteries of counsel and wisdom surpassing our comprehension: That God should for a while connive at mens ignorance, and suffer them to grope after divine truth; to try them, as he did the *Israelites* in the wilderness, how they would behave themselves in that state; to prove how they would use their talent of natural light, to make them sensible of their own infirmity, to shew them whence all their welfare must proceed, on whom all their happiness depends, to make them more able to value, more desirous to embrace the redress vouchsafed them; as also, to demonstrate his own great clemency, long-suffering and patience; that I say for such purposes, and others unsearchable by our shallow understanding, God should for some time forbear, with a full evidence to declare all his mind to men, is not so strange or unlikely; but that for ever, through all courses of time, he should leave men in so forlorn a condition, in such a depth of ignorance, such perplexity of doubt, such captivity under sin, such subjection to misery, seems not probable, much less can it seem unprobable that he hath done it: It cannot, I say, in any reason seem misbecoming the goodness, wisdom or justice of God clearly to discover to us, what he requires us to doe, what good he intends for us, what way leads to our happiness, how we may avoid misery. This consideration if it do not prove peremptorily, that God cannot but sometime make such a revelation, nor that he yet hath actually done it (forasmuch as we cannot reach the utmost possibilities of things, nor are fit judges of what God must necessarily doe; although to my apprehension this sort of reasoning, with due caution used, subsisting in general terms, and not over precisely applying it to particular cases (implicated by circumstances and specialties not falling under our judgment) hath great force;) yet it removes all obstruction to our belief, and disposes us with more readiness to admit the reasons which follow: For it being not unprobable, yea according to the reason of the thing very probable that he should doe it, we have cause with attention and expectation of success on this hand to regard the arguments that pretend to prove he hath done it.

Act. 17.27,30. 14. 16. Deut. 8.15,16. Exod. 16. 8. *Vid* Gen. 15, 16, &c.

This is the first step of our discourse, at which we shall stop for the present.

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIV.

OF THE

Impiety & Imposture

OF

PAGANISM

AND

MAHOMETANISM.

EPHES. I. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted) *having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*

THAT the Christian doctrine is what S. *Paul* here calls it, *word of truth*, and did proceed from the God of truth, is the Proposition we are endeavouring to verify and persuade. To that purpose we did first discourse, that it is very probable God should sometime clearly and fully reveal his mind to men, concerning matters relating to his own glory and service, their good and happiness.

II. I now proceed another step, and assert, that no other Revelation of that kind and importance hath been made; that no other Religion, which hath been or is now in being, can with good probability pretend to have thus proceeded from God; so as by him to have been designed for a general, a perpetual, a complete instruction, and obligation of mankind. There have appeared but *three* pretences thereto, that of ancient *Paganism*, that of *Mahometanism*, and that of *Judaism* (for the more particular pretensions of enthusiastical Impostours have been subordinate either to Christianity it self, or to one of those; and besides having found no considerable progress or continuance in the world, nor countenance (as it were) from providence, are not pertinent to this consideration, besides that they are all generally disclaimed) but that none

of thoſe three pretences are well grounded, I ſhall, examining each briefly, ſhew: (briefly, I ſay, for I need not inſiſt on them largely, the matter having paſt ſo many good pens, eſpecially that excellent one of *Grotius*; however it falling in my way and method, I ſhall offer what hath concerning it occurr'd to my thoughts.)

For the firſt, ancient *Paganiſm*; it did indeed (in the parcels thereof or by retail) pretend to a kind of divine Revelation; that it derived its notions and its forms of practice from the direction of inviſible powers, given to ſingle perſons or places, in ſeveral ways, (by immediate apparition, by prophetical inſpiration, by ſignificant events or prodigies) but it did not, nor could not pretend to any one uniform revelation from the ſovereign God ſolemnly delivered and directed to all mankind; which is an argument not only that thoſe pretended revelations were imperfect and inſufficient to the ends propounded, but alſo falſe and counterfeit: For we may well ſuſpect thoſe edicts, which are clancularly ſet up in corners, and which run not in the King's name, nor are marked with his royal ſignature, to have proceeded from impoſtours, or from rebels; eſpecially if the matter of them doth not advance, but depreſs his authority; doth not promote but prejudice his intereſt; doth not comport with, but contravene his pleaſure, otherwiſe declared. And ſuch was the manner, ſuch the matter of thoſe *Pagan* revelations. Put the whole body of that Religion (if I may ſo call it) together, and you have nothing but a lump of confuſion and inconſiſtency, of deformity and filthineſs, of vanity and folly, little as may be therein tending to the reverence of God, or to the good of man; to the promoting vertue and goodneſs in humane converſation, to the breeding love and goodwill in men toward one another, to the maintaining juſtice, peace and good order in ſocieties; much apt to produce the contrary effects. It was not (I ſay) ever one ſimple or uniform, one fixed or conſtant thing, but according to difference of place and time various, and mutable; diverſly ſhaped and model'd according to the fancy and humour, deſign or intereſt of the ſtate that allowed, the prieſts that managed it, and the people that received it; a plain ſign (that excepting ſome general ſcattered notions deduced from ancient Tradition) it did wholly proceed from humane device, or from a worſe cauſe (the ſuggeſtion of evil ſpirits, abuſing the fondneſs and pravity of men.) Survey it, and what ſhall you find therein, but a bundle of idle, ill contrived, incredible and inconſiſtent ſtories; (arguing nothing of truth or ſincerity, little of wit or diſcretion in thoſe who invented them) thoſe attended by practices fooliſh, lewd and cruel; unworthy of humane nature, contrary to common ſenſe and honeſty? Their worſhip (that of the ſupreme Lord being neglected, *&c.*) you will ſee directed towards objects moſt improper and unbecoming: to the ghoſts of dead men; men in their lives (if we may truſt the reports of their devouteſt adorers) famous for nothing ſo much as for vicious enormities, for thefts and rapine, for murthers and parricides, for horrid luſts, adulteries, rapes and inceſts; and ſuch perſons, alive or dead, what good or wiſe man would not rather loath and deſpiſe, than worſhip or reſpect? to ſomewhat, though not otherwiſe yet, in degree of nature worſe than thoſe, even to brute beaſts; to the moſt vile, the moſt miſchievous of them; (dogs, ſerpents, crocodiles) to pay veneration unto which how unſpeakably abject a mind doth it argue? yea they ſtooped lower, even to creatures inanimate, to the ſtars and elements, to rivers and trees, and other ſuch things, which we ſee acting by natural neceſſity, not yielding any ſignification of underſtanding, of

Indè furor vulgò, quòd numina vicinorum
Odit uterque locus, dum ſolos credit
Habendos
Eſſe Deos, quos ipſe colit---
Juv. *Sat* 15

ſenſe,

sense, of life in them; which therefore, so far inferiour to us in nature, how sottish a baseness was it to adore? nay, they descended to a lower degree, if it may be, of folly, dedicating temples, and offering sacrifices to things even void of subsistence; to mere qualities and accidents of things, to the passions of our minds, to the diseases of our bodies, to the accidents of our lives: Who would think any man could be so mad as to reckon impudence, that odious vice; a fever, that troublesome disease; or fortune (that unaccountable name of nothing; which wise men so little trust, and fools so much complain of) among things divine and venerable? Can I mention any thing worse than all these, which the degenerate ignorance, and naughtiness of man hath crouched to? yes, (with a folly of all most wretched and deplorable) they fawned upon, they obeyed, they offered their dearest pledges of life and fortune to the sworn enemies as of God and goodness, so of their own good and welfare, to the very cursed fiends of hell: whom, if they had been extremely blind and senseless, by the quality of those rites and mysteries they suggested (so bloudy and cruel, so lewd and foul) they might easily have detected to be so. Such objects as these was their devotion spent upon, to these they paid their respect, in these they reposed their confidence; And was such a Religion likely to proceed from God, was it like to produce any glory to him, or any benefit to man? from such thorns what fruits can we hope should *sprout* of good life, of sound morality? what piety toward God, what justice, truth or goodness toward man; what sobriety or purity in themselves can we expect should arise from such conceits, and such practices? surely, no other than those, which S. *Paul* describes in the *first* Chapter of his *Epistle* to the *Romans*, and in the *second* of the *Epistle* to the *Ephesians*, and S. *Peter* 1. 4. 3. which history plainly shews to have been no slanderous imputations upon Gentilism. If any good did appear in the conversation of some men, who followed that Religion, it is not to be imputed to the influence of that, but to some better cause; to the reliques of good nature, to the glimmerings of natural light, breaking forth in some, and by their precept or example conveyed to others; to the necessary experience concerning the mischiefs of vice, and advantages of vertue; or (perhaps also) to secret whispers and impressions of divine grace upon some mens minds, vouchsafed in pity to them and others whom they might teach or lead into ways somewhat better, than those common ones of extreme wickedness and folly; to these, I say, or such causes all instances of practice in any measure innocent or commendable may rather be ascribed, than to that Religion, which was much apter to corrupt and debauch, than to better or civilize men; for with what intention soever they were spoken, there was not much of real calumny in those words of *Lucretius*.

——— sæpius olim
Religio peperit scelerata, atque improba facta.

But it is needless to discourse much against that which hath no reasonable patron, and which scarce any wise man, when it was in fashion, did seriously think to have had any truth or reality in it. *Plato*, you know, often inveighs against the inventers of those beastly Fables in heathen Theology (upon which yet all the œconomy of their religious practice did depend;) *Aristotle* attributes the constitution of those Religions to the subtilty of Statesmen; there is none of the Fathers, I think, or any other disputer against Heathenism who hath more directly or earnestly oppugned it than *Pliny* hath: There was few or none of the Philosophers,

Arist. *Metaph.* 12. 8.

Lib. 2. *cap.* 7.

Vid. Plut. *de ſuperſt. p.* 291. *De Leg. X.* &c. *De div. p* 240. *Tuſc.* 9. 1: *Ep.* 301.

ſophers, who did not ſignify his diſlike or contempt of the vulgar opinions and practices concerning Religion; what *Cicero* ſaith of one part, the wiſer ſort did judge of all: *Tota res eſt inventa fallaciis aut ad quæſtum, aut ad ſuperſtitionem, aut ad errorem* (the whole buſineſs was deceitfully forged either for gain, or out of ſuperſtition, or from miſtake.) They did indeed, moſt or all of them, in their external behaviour comply with common practice, out of a politick diſcretion, for their ſafety and quiet ſake; but in their inward thoughts and judgments they (as by many paſſages in their Writings doth appear) believed nothing, nor liked any thing in it: they obſerved thoſe things (as *Seneca* ſaid) *tanquam legibus juſſa, non tanquam diis grata* (not as acceptable to the gods themſelves, but as commanded by the laws of their country.) And indeed this diſſimulation was ſo notorious, that even the vulgar diſcerned it; and therefore ſeldom the wiſer men were reputed among them the moſt religious, but liable to accuſation for impiety; and ſome of them ye know ſuffered extremities upon that ſcore, who could not altogether conceal that contempt, which the vanity of popular ſuperſtitions had begotten toward them in their hearts.

Hæc & dicuntur & creduntur ſtultiſſimè, & plena ſunt futilitatis, ſummaque levitatis. Balbus *in* Cic. *de N. D.* 2.

Vid. Auguſt. *de Civit. D. lib.* 4 33. *lib.* 6. 10.

I might add that all thoſe *Pagan* Religions did vaniſh together with the countenance of ſecular authority and power, ſuſtaining them; which ſhews plainly enough, that they had little or no root in the hearty belief or approbation of thoſe who profeſſed them.

And thus much may ſuffice, I ſuppoſe, to declare, that *Paganiſm* did not proceed from divine Revelation, but from humane invention or ſuggeſtion Diabolical.

I ſhall only adjoin that the conſidering this caſe of *Heathens* may be of good uſe, (and to that uſe indeed S. *Paul* hath largely applied it) in confirming what we before urged, The great need of ſome full and plain Revelation to the world of God's mind, in order to God's glory and man's good; as alſo it is of ſingular uſe (which alſo the ſame *Apoſtle* frequently did put it to) by the contemplation thereof to diſcover our great obligations to bleſs and thank God for his great mercy in revealing his heavenly truth to us, from whence we are freed from errours and miſchiefs ſo deplorable; which otherwiſe from humane infirmity, and the Devil's malice we ſhould eaſily (and in a manner neceſſarily) have incurred.

That pretence was ancienter in ſtanding; but there hath even ſince Chriſtianity ſtarted up another, (*Mahometaniſm*) which if not upon other accounts, yet in reſpect to its age, and to the port it bears in the world, demands ſome conſideration; for it hath continued a long time; and hath vaſtly over-ſpread the earth: neither is it more formidable in its looks, than peremptory in his words; vanting it ſelf to be no leſs than a complete, a general, an ultimate declaration of God's pleaſure, cancelling and voiding all others that have gone before. But examining both the ſubſtance and circumſtances thereof, conſidering the quality of the inſtruments by whom, of the times when, it was introduced; of the places where, of the people who firſt, or afterward did receive it; the manner of its riſe, progreſs and continuance; as alſo the matter it teaches, or injoins; we ſhall not find ſtamped on it the genuine characters of a divine original and authority; but have great reaſon to deem it a brood of moſt lewd and impudent cozenage. In times of great diſturbance

bance and confusion, when barbarous nations, like torrents, did overflow the world, and turned all things upside down; in times of general corruption and disorder in mens minds and manners, when even among Christians ignorance and superstition, dissension and uncharitableness, impiety and iniquity did greatly prevail; in a very blind and obscure corner of the earth, among a crew of wild thieves and runagates (such have those *Arabians* been always famed and known to be) this *Sect* had its birth and fosterage; among those fierce and savage over-runners of the world it got its growth and stature; into this sort of people (being indeed in its constitution well accommodated to their humour and *genius*) it was partly insinuated by jugling tricks, partly driven by seditious violence; the first Authour hereof being a person, according to the description given of him in their own Legends, of no honest, or honourable qualities, but having all the marks of an Impostour; rebellious and perfidious, inhumane and cruel, lewd and lascivious, of a base education, of a fraudulent and turbulent dispositon, of a vicious life, pretending to enthusiasms, and working of wonders; but these such as were both in their nature absurd and incredible, and for their use vain and unprofitable: at such a season, and in such a soil, by such means, and by such a person (abetted by Associates like himself, whom his arts, or their interests had inveagled to join with him) was this Religion first planted; And for its propagation it had that great advantage of falling in the way of barbarous people, void of learning and civility, and not prepossessed with other notions or any sense of Religion; who thence (as mankind is naturally susceptive of religious impressions) were capable and apt to admit any Religion first offering it self, especially one so gross as this was, so agreeable to their furious humours and lusts. Afterward being furnished with such Champions, it diffused it self by rage and terrour of arms; convincing mens minds only by the sword, and using no other arguments but blows. Upon the same grounds of ignorance and force, it still subsists; neither offering for, nor taking against it self any reason; refusing all examination, and upon extreme penalties forbidding any dispute about its truth; being indeed so far (whether out of judgment or fatal instinct) wise, as conscious to its self, or foreboding, that the letting in of a little light, and a moderate liberty of discussing its pretences would easily overthrow it. Now that Divine wisdom should chuse those black and boisterous times to publish his will is, as if the King should purposely order his Proclamations to be made in a tempestuous night, when no man scarce dared to stir out, nor any man could well see what was done, or hear what was said; much fitter surely to that purpose were a serene and calm day; a time of general civility and peace, like that of *Augustus Cæsar*. That the declaration of God's mind should issue from the deserts of *Arabia* (that den of robbers) is as if the King should cause his Edicts to be set up in the blindest and dirtiest nook of the Suburbs; the Market-cross surely, or the Exchange (the place of most general and ordinary concourse) such as, in respect to the world, was the flourishing Empire of *Rome*, were more convenient, and wisely chosen for that purpose: that passing over the more gentle and tractable part of his people, a Prince should send his laws to a rabble of *Banditti*; should pick out for his messenger a most dissolute Varlet; attended with a crew of desperate ruffians, resolved to buffet and rifle all they met; were an odd way of proceeding: To communicate his pleasure unto the better and more orderly sort of people (such as were the subjects of that well governed Empire) by persons

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of good meaning, mild diſpoſition, and innocent behaviour, (ſuch as were the *Apoſtles* of our Lord) in a quiet and gentle manner (ſuch as theſe only uſed) would ſurely better become a worthy Prince: Thus even the exteriour circumſtances of *Mahometaniſm* (both abſolutely and in compariſon) belonging to its riſe, its growth, its continuance (ſo full of indecency, of iniquity, of inhumanity) ground ſtrong preſumptions againſt its divinity; or rather plainly demonſtrate, that it could not proceed from God, whoſe truth cannot need ſuch inſtruments, or ſuch courſes to maintain it, whoſe goodneſs certainly abhors them. But farther, if we look into the matter and inward frame thereof, we ſhall find it a maſs of abſurd opinions, odd ſtories, and uncouth ceremonies; compounded chiefly of the dregs of Chriſtian Hereſies, together with ſome ingredients of *Judaiſm* and *Paganiſm* confuſedly jumbled, or unskilfully tempered together. From Chriſtian Hereſies it ſeems to have derived its negative Doctrines, oppoſite to Chriſtianity; as for inſtance, when allowing Chriſt much reſpect, it yet denies his being the Son of God; and that he did really Suffer; rejecting his true ſtory, it affixes falſe ones upon him: as alſo ſome poſitive ones; for example, that unreaſonable opinion, ſo much miſ-beſeeming God, that God hath a body (*Mahomet* forſooth once touched his hand, and felt it very cold) might be drawn from the *Anthropomorphites*; that Doctrine concerning the fatal determination of all events (ſo prejudicial to all religion, ſubverting the foundations of juſtice between God and man, man's free choice in ſerving God, God's free diſpoſal of rewards ſutable to mens actions) they probably borrowed from the *Manichees*, a Sect that much obtained in thoſe *Eaſtern* parts. The *Jew* contributed his ceremonies of Circumciſion and frequent purgations by waſhing, his abſtinence from ſwines fleſh, his allowance of polygamy and divorce: I might add that perhaps from him they filcht that proud inhumane, and uncivil humour of monopolizing divine favour and good-will to themſelves; ſo of reſtraining their own kindneſs and reſpect to perſons of their profeſſion, or ſect; condemning, deſpiſing, and hating all the world beſide themſelves; calling all others dogs, and adjudging all to certain damnation; and which is more, affirming, that all of their belief, how wicked ſoever their lives have been, ſhall at length aſſuredly partake of ſalvation; ſo partial do they make Almighty God, ſo addicted to a mere name and outward ſhew; feigning him as in ſhape, ſo in paſſions humane and like themſelves. Indeed in this main part of religion, a true notion of God, his nature, his attributes, his method of providence, their doctrine is very peccant, repreſenting him in his nature and actions very unworthily. Their deſcriptions concerning the ſtate of men after death (that main and principal part of Religion, which gives life and vigour to the reſt) whence can we better deduce its original, than from the *Pagan* notions or ſtories of *Elyſium* and *Hades*; what better pattern can we find, whence that paradiſe of corporeal delight, or rather of brutiſh ſenſuality, ſhould be tranſcribed, which any man ſees how poor an encouragement it is, how unworthy a reward to vertue; yea, how much it is apt to detract from, to diſcourage all performances of reaſon and honeſty? The like we might ſay of the puniſhments (which in due correſpondence to the rewards they propound) they only or chiefly inflict upon the body; the main part, it ſeems, of which a *Mahometan* man conſiſts. And muſt he not be very ſtupid, who can ſuffer himſelf to be perſuaded, that ſuch conceits (conceits favourable indeed to pleaſure, and indulgent to the fleſh, but contrary to vertue, prejudicial to the ſpirit and reaſon

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of man) should come from the God of wisdom and holiness? Farther, how *Mahomet* was inspired, his stories alone will evince; stories patched up out of old histories corrupted, mangled and transplaced; interlarded with fabulous Legends, contrary to all probable records of history (the names, places, times, and all the circumstances whereof he most unskilfully changes and confounds) yea repugnant to the nature and possibility of things; so that in a manner every tale he tells is an evident argument of an ignorant, and an impudent Impostour; And he that so blunders and falsifies about matters of fact, who will trust him in matters of right and reason? which things, if it were worth the while, might by various instances be shewed; and you may *every where* receive satisfaction therein. The like might be said concerning its multitude of silly ceremonies, grounded on no reasonable design, nor subservient to any purpose of vertue; the institution whereof no man therefore without injury to the divine wisdom can impute thereto. But I shall onely add two farther considerations upon this matter: One; that whatever is good or plausible in this Religion (such as are some precepts of justice and charity, although these confined among themselves) may reasonably be supposed taken from Christianity, which being seniour in standing may (in points wherein both agree) well go for the mistress; and however that upon the score of such doctrines or laws, we have no reason to think this Religion came from God; for why should he reveal that again, which in a larger extent, upon better grounds, with more advantage he had declared before; which also then was commonly embraced and acknowledged? I also observe, that this Religion by its own free concessions doth evidently destroy its self: for it admits Christianity once to have been a true doctrine, proceeding from and attested to by God: but Christianity did ever declare it self to be a general, perpetual, perfect and immutable Rule of faith and practice; that never any accessions thereto, any alterations thereof ought to be made or admitted; that whatever spirit (coming after it) should offer to innovate, or pretend to new discoveries contrary to, or different from it, must be suspected of delusion; foretelling and forewarning against such endeavours that should appear, as fallacious and mischievous: this it appears (by the Writings of those, who first planted Christianity; Writings, which no man in his wits can question to be theirs; being through a continual uninterrupted course of times, from the beginning, by general consent of both friends and adversaries acknowledged and attested to as so; all characters within them imaginably proper for that purpose confirming the same; as also by the current tradition of their disciples immediate and mediate, extant in records unquestionable; and by all other means conceivable) this, I say, it most plainly appears was one grand doctrine and pretence of Christianity at first, which the *Mahometans* acknowledging originally true and divine in the gross, must consequently grant it self to be an Imposture.

And thus much seems sufficient to demonstrate that Religion not to be of a divine extraction. I shall next proceed to consider the pretences of *Judaism*; and to shew that neither it was such a perfect Revelation, as we proved it probable God would vouchsafe to make: But that shall be the subject of another discourse.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XV.

OF THE IMPERFECTION OF THE Jewish Religion.

EPH. I. 13.

In whom ye also (trusted) *having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation.*

THAT it is probable God should vouchsafe to Mankind a full and clear declaration of his mind and will concerning their duty, and their welfare; I did shew: That *Paganism* and *Mahometanism* without reason and truth did or does pretend thereto I also briefly discoursed; I now proceed to examine the plea, which *Judaism* puts in; and to make good that neither It is well grounded (which, as the cause deserves, I shall doe somewhat more largely.) The *Jewish* Religion we acknowledge had its birth from the revelation and appointment of God; its truth, and its goodness we do not call in question; *Heb.* 7. 18,19. but yet looking into it, we shall find it in many respects defective, and wanting the conditions due to such a revelation, as we require. For it was not universal; (neither being directed to, nor fitted for the nature and needs of mankind;) it was not full and compleate, it was not designed to be of perpetual obligation, or use.

1. *First*, I say, this *Revelation* was not general; not directed to, or intended for to instruct and oblige mankind: it self expresly affirms so much: the whole tenour and frame thereof shews it; so do all the circumstances of its rise and progress. That it was intended peculiarly for that small Nation, possessing a very inconsiderable portion of the earth: distinguished, and indeed, as it were, concealed from the rest of mankind both on purpose, and in effect; for it so remained for many Ages, (till the *Macedonian* first, and afterward the *Roman* conquests opened the world and disclosed them) hid in a solitary obscurity; even so far as to scape the observation of the most inquisitive surveyours of the

the earth, the most curious searchers into the customs of all people (as of *Herodotus* for instance, who nicely describing the places and manners of the People all about them, could not discern them, and takes no notice of them, although for their peculiar manners otherwise most remarkable, and deserving his mention,) appears by express passages in their law, and holy writings: *He sheweth his word unto Jacob, his statutes and his judgments unto Israel*; *He hath not dealt so with any nation*; *and his judgments they have not known them:* 'Tis plainly affirmed, that God did make that discovery of his will and mind peculiarly to that people, and to no other, *I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people, that ye should be mine*; (saith God to the *Jews*:) *So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.* (saith *Moses* in his address to God;) *Thou art a holy people unto the Lord thy God*; *The Lord hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth* (saith *Moses* to that people;) which passages (together with divers others of the same import) being used to engage and encourage a singular obedience, do plainly say, that God transacted with that people singly and separately from all other; taking them (on purpose) as it were, into a corner, at a good distance and beyond hearing of others, that he might there signify alone to them his pleasure, peculiarly concerning them. Yea to this purpose, of maintaining a distance and distinction from the rest of mankind, divers of their laws were appointed; as not onely the nature of such laws doth imply, but words annexed to them sometimes express; *I am the Lord your God, which have separated you from other people*; *ye shall therefore put difference between clean beasts and unclean.* Whence Saint *Paul* calls their law μεσότοιχον φραγμὸν, a *partition* wall, that fenced that nation, and severed it from others; and an enmity, being framed to set them in distance and variance from the rest of men. That whole business also of this constitution is frequently styled a covenant, *made* not between God and mankind, but between God and that single nation; a covenant in formal terms mentioning them, and them onely; sealed with marks and characters peculiar to them; requiring conditions and duties possible or proper onely for them to perform; exhibiting promises onely sutable to them; propounding rewards which they onely were capable to receive; and punishments, which they onely could undergo. *Hear, O Israel*, is the usual *style*, according to which those laws are directed, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt*; is the introduction to the *Decalogue* it self (which among all parts of that law looks fairest towards a general importance and obligation; which yet is so specially directed, and is indeed peculiarly called the covenant between God and that people; *viz. Synecdochically*, as being the principal part directive of their duty.) In the body of the laws it self, there is often made a distinction between them who were bound to observe it and others that were not; between *brethren* and *strangers*; between *Hebrews* and *Aliens*; with duties suited and limited in regard to that distinction: (as in the cases of *remitting debts*, *releasing servants*, *exacting use*, and the like;) There are enjoined duties which others could not properly, or decently perform; such as observation of Feasts in commemoration and thankfulness for mercies vouchsafed to that Nation; as also others which could not be observed by all men with any possibility or convenience; such as those of repairing thrice a year to one certain place, established for God's worship; of bringing tithes and oblations thither,

Pſal. 147. Pſal. 76. 2. Levit. 20. 26. Exod. 33. 16. They were not to marry, not to trade, to converſe, &c. *Vid.* Grot. *in Evang. p.* 130. Deut. 7. 6. 14. 2. Levit. 20. 24. Eph. 2. 14. Deut. 4. 13. 29. 14, 25, &c. Deut. 4. 1. 5. 1. 6. 3. &c. Pſal. 81. 8. Deut. 4. 13. Exod. 34. 28. Deut. 17. 15. 1. 16. Exod. 25. 46. Deut. 15. 3. 12. Levit. 25. 47, &c. Deut. 16. 1. Deut. 16. 16. 14. 21, &c. Exod. 23. 19, &c.

and the like; neither was the number of *Priests* and *Levites*, set a-part for God's service, proportioned otherwise, than in respect to that one people. The encouragements also and rewards promised to obedience do incommunicably pertain to them, as also the discouragements from and punishments for disobedience; a long and prosperous enjoyment of the Land of *Canaan* was the meed set before them, if they should obey and make good their part of the covenant; a dispossession thereof, or affliction in it, was the punishment threatned, if they should presume to disobey, and violate those engagements; *Ye shall walk in all the Laws, which the Lord your God hath commanded you; that ye may live, and that it may be well with you*; and *that ye may prolong your days in the land, which ye possess. Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to doe it; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may encrease mightily, as the Lord God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey*: Such were the promises exciting to obedience; and the threatnings deterring from disobedience were answerable, as everywhere in their law and story is visible.

Deut. 5. 33. Deut. 6. 3. &c. *Moses novos ritus, contrariosque cæteris mortalibus indidit.* Tac. 5. *Cætera Instituta sinistra, fœda pravitate valuere.*

I may also hereto add; that as the laws and rites of this Religion were designed only for this People, as they did onely agree to their circumstances; so they were onely suted to their inclinations, and their capacities; their inclinations, which were very stubborn and perverse; their capacities, which were very low and gross, as their own Prophets do upon many occasions affirm and complain; being dissentaneous and repugnant to the common humour and *genius* of mankind: so experience discovered them to be, when they became more apparent and observable: *Judæorum mos absurdus, sordidúsque*: (The *Jewish way of life is uncouth and sordid*, was *Tacitus* his censure; *Hist.* V. 5.) and, They run counter to all men (was S. *Paul*'s imputation on that People; 1 *Thess.* 2. 15.) to which the general conceit of men concerning them did agree; so little plausible, or probable was their way; so liable to dislike and contempt, which argues it unfit to be commended by the God of wisedom to the generality of mankind.

By which and many other like considerations obvious enough may appear, that this dispensation was not (either according to its nature, or in its design) general, or such as respected the main body of mankind, but rather very particular and restrained; designedly restrained to the oblation and use of one place or people, if compared to the world of men, inconsiderably narrow and small; the fewest of all people God himself says they were.) That in fine, this constitution had onely the nature of a municipal law, imposing burthens, and indulging privileges upon one City or Territory; not of a common civil sanction, established for the obligation, use and benefit of the whole Commonwealth, or Empire subject to the Almighty King.

Deut. 7. 7.

'Tis not therefore in reason to be taken for such a Revelation, as we argued needfull for us, and to be expected from him, *who* (as the *Psalmist*, as reason, as experience tells us) *is good to all*; *and whose tender mercies are over all his works*; from him, who is the common father of all, and (as S. *Paul* expresseth it) *hath made of one bloud* πᾶν ἔθνος *ἀνθρώπων, the whole nation and commonwealth of mankind*; from him, who cannot be in affection any-wise fond or partial; a respecter of persons, or of nations (as Saint *Paul* in the second to the *Romans*, and Saint *Peter* in the *Acts* also implies.) From him, who is not onely the Maker, but (as our *Apostle* also styles him) *the Saviour of all men*; and (as even the *Hebrew* Wise-man asserts) *careth for all alike*; being *desirous*

Psal. 145. 8. Act. 17. 26. The King of the World, the Judge of the earth. Rom. 2. Act. 10. 34. 1 Tim. 4. 10. 2. 4. Wisd. 6. 7. 11, 23, &c.

sirous that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; not willing that any should perish, but that all men should come to repentance. From him, who is not only φιλεβραῖος, or φιλέλλην, (a lover of *Jews*, or of *Greeks*;) but φιλάνθρωπος, *a lover of men*, and φιλόψυχος, *a lover of souls*; who, lastly, *is not the God of the Jews onely, but of the Gentiles also*, as Saint *Paul* urges this argument; and as also the reason of the thing, and the voice of nature doth declare: From this God, I say, so disposed, so related toward us all, so equally concerned in regard to us; so impartial in his affection, so unconfined in his bounty; we should have reason to expect rather no Revelation at all, than one so scant, and pinched in such narrow bounds; so ill proportioned to the glory due to himself, to the need and benefit of mankind. We cannot reasonably imagine that he should contract the effects of his goodness, or the manifestations of his glory to so slender a parcel of mankind, (no better qualified, no more deserving such special regard, than the rest; as himself to repress their fond conceits, and, probably, in way of anticipation, to intimate his design of farther extending that favour in due season to others, who might pretend thereto with as much right and reason as themselves, doth sometime declare.) That he, who hath freely dispensed the influences of Sun and Stars to all alike, should cause the light of his heavenly truth to shine, as it were, but into one small closet of his spacious house; leaving all the rest, so many stately rooms thereof, encompassed with shades of ignorance and error; that he should pour down the showres of his blessings spiritual (otherwise than he hath done those natural) upon one onely scarce discernible spot of ground; letting all the world beside (like a desart of sand) lie parched with drought, overspread with desolation and barrenness.

2 Pet. 3. 9. Tit. 3. 4. Sapient. 11. 26. Rom. 3. 29. Plat. Theæt. ἐδεῖς θεὸς ἀνθρώποις.

Deut. 9. 4. Matt. 5. 45.

This Revelation therefore was not in this respect sufficient; wanting in its nature and design that due condition of generality and amplitude. But,

Ἐπὶ τῶ παλαιᾶς ὁ νόμος ἔκειτο, ὅτε ἦν πολλὴ ἀείσις πολιτείας ἡ ἀκείβεια, ὅτε εἰσαγωγὴ τῦ θείε λόγ, ὅτε παιδικὰ τὰ παεηγγέλμαλα, ὅτε τὸ γάλα, ὅτε ὁ παιδαγωγὸς, ὅτε ὁ λύχνος, ὅτε ὁ τύπος, καὶ ἡ σκιά. Chryſ. Tom. 6. Or. 44.

2. Farther; As this Revelation was particular, so was it also partial; as God did not by it speak his mind to all, so did he not therein speak out all his mind. Our *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* chargeth it with blameableness; εἰ πρώτη ἦν ἄμεμπτος, *if the first covenant had been blameless*;) with imperfection, with weakness, with improfitableness, (ἀδύνατοις μὲν γὰρ γίνεται προαγόσης ἐντολῆς διὰ τὸ αὐτῆς ἀσθενὲς, καὶ ἀνωφελὲς· Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐτελείωσεν ὁ νόμος· *There is made an abolition of the precedent commandment for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof: For the law made nothing perfect*;) He means all this in degree and in comparison to what was possible, and in some respects needfull. Which charge may be easily made good, *(à priori)* considering both the parts thereof which direct, and those which excite to practice; together with the means and aids enabling, and facilitating obedience to the laws, or rules enjoined; also, *(à posteriori,)* if we regard the fruits and effects thereof. Surveying first, I say, the directive part, we may observe both a redundancy in things circumstantial or exteriour, and a defectiveness in things substantial and interiour: there be ritual institutions in vast number very nicely described, and strongly pressed; The observation of times and places, the distinction of meats and of habits, *(touch not, taste not, handle not)* corporeal cleansings and purgations; modalities of exterior performance in sacrifices and oblations, those δικαιώματα σαρκὸς (justifications of the mere flesh, that onely concerned the body,

Heb. 8. 7. 7. 18. Gal. 3. 21. ὁ δυν. ζωοποιῆσαι. Rom. 8. 3. τὸ ἀδύνατον τῦ νόμυ, ἐν ᾧ ἠσθένει.

Heb. 9. 9, 10.

body, or outward man, and could not perfect the observers conscience; could neither satisfy or edify his mind and inward man) we see with extreme punctuality prescribed and enjoined, some of them under very heavy penalties (of utter extermination and excision.) While moral duties (duties of justice and charity, yea of temperance and sobriety it self,) and spiritual devotions (so exceedingly more agreeable to rational nature, and which could not but be much more pleasing to God) were more sparingly delivered in precept, less clearly explained, not so fully urged with rational inducements; nor, in a due proportion guarded with rewards. Many things were plainly permitted, or tacitly connived at (as *polygamy*, and *divorce*; some kinds of retaliation, cursing, revenge; some degrees of uncharitableness) which even natural reason dislikes, or condemns. So faulty was that dispensation as to the part thereof directive of life; and it was no less in that part, which promotes and secures good practice, by applying fit excitements to obedience, and fit restraints from disobedience; rightly managing those great instruments and springs of humane activity, natural courage, hope and fear. Nothing so damps mens alacrity in endeavour, as desperation or diffidence of good success; nothing so quickens it as a confidence, or strong presumption thereof: And how then could they be very earnest in endeavours to please God, who were not assured of (yea had so much reason to diffide in) God's placability and readiness (upon repentance) to forgive sins wilfully and presumptuously committed, such as no man surely lives altogether free from? The not opening a door of mercy seems discouraging and apt to slacken performance of duty; what was then the shutting it up close, the bolting it with that iron bar: *Cursed is he, that abides not in all things written in this law to doe them?* which at least will exclude assurance, will quash the hopes of mercy; will consequently enervate the sinews of care and industry in serving God. Neither were the rewards of either kind (those that spurr'd to obedience, those that stop'd from disobedience) in measure or in kind such as the reason of things doth afford and require. They were onely temporal, and chiefly corporeal or sensible; such as belonged to the outward state of this transitory life, which neither can deserve much regard, nor are apt to have great efficacy: for who will in effect, why should any man in reason highly value the accommodations of this short and uncertain life? who will, who should be greatly terrified with the inconveniences thereof? whom probably would such considerations sufficiently animate to encounter and sustain the perils, the difficulties, the troubles and the disgraces, to which often the practice of vertue is exposed? whom would they guard from the enchantments of pleasure, profit and honour, alluring men to sin? the pleasures of sense how improper an encouragement, how unworthy a recompence are they for the labours and atchievements of vertue? incomparably better surely, more worthy of regard, and more effectual upon man's reason; more apt to produce and to promote real vertue and hearty piety, are the rewards concerning the future state of our immortal soul; which yet 'tis a question whether that law doth ever mention; 'tis plain, it doth not clearly propound and apply them. Indeed as to evident discovery concerning the immortality of man's soul, or the future state (so material a point of Religion, of so grand moment and influence upon practice) even the *Gentile* Theology (assisted by ancient common Tradition) seems to have outgone the *Jewish*, grounding upon their revealed law;

Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10.

Ὅτε πάντα ὧδε σαρκικὰ, καὶ τῷ ὄντι λόγου ἄξια. Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 98. Πῶς ἐρεῖν ἔστιν ὅτε λόγῳ ὧδε, καὶ μελλόντων μνήμη, &c. Chrys. *ad Olymp. C.* p. 60. *Vid. Tom.* 7. p. 16.

law; the *Pagan* Priests more expresly taught, more frequently inculcated arguments drawn from thence, than the *Hebrew* Prophets; a plain instance and argument of the imperfection of this Religion.

I subjoin God's not thereby (in an ordinary certain way, according to any pact or promise) affording, or exhibiting such interiour influences of grace upon the minds of men; as, considering the natural frailty, blindness and impotency of men, appears necessary to render them obedient to the rules of duty, to guide them in the ways of truth and goodness, to free them from errour and sin, to shield and animate them against temptation; is a main defect in that Religion; apt to breed fear in the onset upon duty, to nourish doubt in the performance thereof, to settle despair upon a fall or defeat. It presented to mens eyes the obligation to duty, the difficulty thereof, the danger of transgressing it, but did not openly represent the means requisitive to perform it. And what can be more discouraging or discomforting than to see ones self, upon great peril and penalty, obliged to that, which is apparently very hard, or (considering his strength) impossible, no help to support being visible? especially joining the consideration before touched, that no evasion by pardon, no rise by repentance doth appear. Whence we may well infer, that indeed, in effect, this dispensation was what Saint *Paul* calls it διακονία θανάτου & διακονία κατακρίσεως *(a ministery of death and condemnation) a subjection to a curse; a killing letter*; bearing nothing less in the looks and language thereof, than certain death and unavoidable ruine; (a lying under insupportable slavery both to the guilt and punishment of sin.) *If thou doest ill sin lyeth at the door.* 2 Cor. 3. 7, 9. Gal. 3. 10. 2 Cor. 3. 6. Gen. 4. 7.

Neither in discoursing thus do we lay any misbeseeming imputation upon God, the Author of that Religion; the making so imperfect a Revelation no-wise being disagreeable to his wisedom, his goodness, or his justice. As for a time he might withhold the declaration of his mind to all mankind, so might he (upon the same or like grounds of wise counsel) forbear to declare some part thereof to that People: no special reason appears that could oblige, that might induce him not to be reserved as well in part to these few men, as in whole to those, all the rest of men; yea, there be good reasons assignable, why the divine wisdom should be then so sparing of its mind, why God should onely shew his back parts (as it were) to *Moses*, and *not let him see his face*; (not discover all of his nature and of his pleasure to him) why then he should seem to delight in, to lay so much stress on those carnal and ceremonious observances; why he should forbear to exact that height of spiritual duty, and not draw men to complyance with the best motives of pure reason. A dawning of light perhaps more became that morning of times, than a meridian brightness; that infancy of the world was not it may be ripe for a more deep and perfect instruction; that Nation however (to whose state, to whose disposition and capacities those laws and institutions were adapted) was very unfit for the highest and hardest lessons. For a Nation it was (as from infallible hands we have it) not wise, or considerate; not grave, or constant; not meek, or pliable; but a very stupid and heady, a very fickle and humorous, a very froward and stubborn generation of men; *They are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding* (was said of them at first by him, who delivered their law, or rather by God himself who injoined it) *And, I knew that thou art obstinate, and thy neck is an iron sinew, and thy brow brass: I have even from the beginning declared it to thee* (saith the *Prophet* concerning *the house of Jacob*: alluding it seems to those many passages Deut. 32. 28. *Vid.* Jer. 4. 22. 5. 4. Neh. 9. Isa. 48. 4.

Deut. 31. 27. Exod. 32. 9. Deut. 9. 6, 13, &c. *Vid.* Psal. 78. 36. 57.

passages in the *Law*, where they are termed *a stiff-necked people*: uncapable thence both of the finest notions and the more rigorous precepts; like children, by reason of the grossness of their apprehension, and the unruliness of their passion they were not οἰκεῖοι ἀκροαταὶ *(proper auditours)* of a more pure and accurate discipline; wherefore as such the divine wisdom and goodness was pleased to deal with them; dispensing with the infirmities of their age, condescending to the meanness of their capacities, feeding them with milk, alluring them with pretty shews, scaring them with frightfull appearances, indulging them innocent trifles, pastimes and sports, so tempering his ordinances, as might best serve to keep them in good humour; to draw and entice them easily unto somewhat good, to curb and restrain them from mischief. Whence Saint

Gal. 4. 9. 3. *Paul* calls those institutions with good reason *elements (poor and mean elements*, and *elements of the world*; *rudiments of knowledge and discipline*, suted to the capacity of the first age, and the meanest rank; such as vulgar and silly people were fit to learn, and able to practice) with

Gal. 3. 24. good reason he calls the Law a *pedagogue*, that by instilling into those

Gal. 4. 9. νήπιοι (those *infants* or little children, so also he terms them) some imperfect notions of truth; by keeping them in some good order did prepare them for a higher instruction, did predispose them toward a better course of life. Indeed, we may easily conceive that such variety of superficial formalities might well agree to childish and plebeian fancies; but to men of somewhat elevated minds, and well improved reason; of sound judgment, and large experience; who had tasted, and could relish rational entertaiments (and such in some measure and comparatively are men generally born and brought up in countreys and places, were civility hath obtained; at least they are capable of being so, fit means being used to render them so) they must needs be insipid and disgustful. In the study of truth, and practice of vertue there are alluring beauties and sweetnesses; which it cannot but displease him, who hath seen and felt them, to be diverted from, by an obligation to attend (so precisely) upon such an abundance of petty, circumstantial, exteriour observances; to be forced, I say, to chew such husks of things, to him, who thereby must neglect so delicious kernels, cannot but be grievous and irksome. Wiser men are never much affected with laborious and tedious pomps; they are designed always to amuse children, and the common sort. I add, that this dispensation was suted not onely to the childish fancy, but to the slavish spirit of that People; who having in them little of ingenuity, or willingness freely to doe good; would be apt to wax not only dronish and lazy, but sturdy and insolent; had they not been kept under and inured to something of burthen and toil. Such all wise men know to be the proper course of managing people of slavish temper; but toward men of a disposition more ingenuous, tractable and free (such as commonly men civilized, and well governed are or may become) such a proceeding were incongruous; they will either refuse to undergo such unnecessary burthens, or bear them unwillingly; their obedience will be none, or lame, or unkindly and heartless. God therefore dealt according to wisdom with the *Jews*, when he imposed such burthens upon their shoulders, when he pinched their stiff necks with such yokes, when he detained them in such fetters; (so they were, and so they are truly called by our Apostles; burthens intollerably heavy; yokes very galling and vexatious; fetters very strait and grievous; which they reasonably therefore reckon it a very valuable privilege and benefit, purchased by our Saviour for us, to be

Act. 15. 10, 28. Gal. 5. 1. Gal. 3. 23.

loosed

looſed from) but ſuch a diſpenſation could not be convenient for the rational nature in common and for perpetuity; it neither becomes God himſelf, who will not without need or profit vex his creatures; who cannot be fully ſatisfied with performances of ſo mean a ſort; who neceſſarily doth affect ſervices of a more excellent nature and importance (thoſe ſpiritual ſervices of love, reverence and gratitude; of purity, righteouſneſs and goodneſs:) It doth not ſute man, not being apt to perfect his nature, not being able to ſatisfy his mind. As he, by the improvement and uſe of his reaſon, will eaſily diſcern the ſmall worth of ſuch performances, ſo will he not readily comply with them without regret; but will ſoon apprehend the matter to be indeed, as S. *Paul* repreſents it, that an obligation to ſuch rites is *a bond againſt us*, (ἐξαλείψας τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν, ὃ ἦν ὑπεναντίον ἡμῖν) which in reaſon he may expect to be wiped out and *cancelled*; that a law conſiſting of ſuch precepts hath an *enmity*, or repugnance to his nature; that ſuch a diſpenſation is a *pupillage*, and a *ſlavery*, which he earneſtly muſt deſire to be redeemed and mancipated from.

Coloſ. 2. 14. Gal. 3. 24. 4. 1. Gal. 4. 3, 5, &c.

Thus doth this Revelation upon many reſpects, grounded on the very intrinſick nature thereof, appear partial and imperfect; and conſequently not ſuch as that, which we reaſonably may expect from the divine wiſdom and goodneſs.

'Tis true (which ſome may deem an objection againſt our diſcourſe, but I ſhould rather take for a good confirmation thereof) that God did afterward annex ſome labels (as it were) to this deed; that he imparted by degrees farther manifeſtations of light and grace to that people by the inſtructions, and by the exemplary practices of Prophets and holy men raiſed up among them by his eſpecial inſtinct and order; in a manner and upon occaſions extraordinary. The Prophets frequently declared, that God had not much delight in thoſe ceremonious obſervances; nor would accept them otherwiſe than as proceeding from good diſpoſitions of mind, and as accompanied with practices of moral duty and more ſpiritual piety; that he chiefly did require of them hearty reverence toward himſelf, and ſubmiſſion to his will; ſtrict juſtice and tender charity toward their neighbours; meekneſs and patience in their behaviour; temperance and ſobriety in all their converſation. By them alſo he diſcovered more of his gracious diſpoſition, and of his merciful intentions toward them; that he would not be extreamly rigorous in puniſhing the tranſgreſſions of his law; that he would not refuſe pardon to the moſt grievous ſins, not remain irreconcileable toward the moſt hainous offenders, upon their ſincere repentance and amendment of life. By the practices of holy men he alſo ſhewed, that the rigour of that ceremonious law was mitigable; that in ſome caſes its obligation might be relaxed, and its obſervance diſpenſed with; that a ſervice more refined and rational was eſpecially acceptable to God; that he loved a purer devotion, a perfecter righteouſneſs, a higher charity than ſuch as the letter of their law preſcribed. By them alſo he intimated (which their devotions plainly infer) that he not only exacted ſuch duties, but was ready to afford them his aſſiſtance to the performing them; by teaching and admoniſhing them within; enlightning their minds, and enflaming their affections; directing, exciting, and quickning them to obedience. Thus did that morning of divine knowledge, from the firſt dawning, by degrees grow more lightſome; yet never arrived to a perfect daylight; the ſhadows were not quite diſperſed; the whole *horizon* of heavenly truth was not diſcloſed thereby. Even thoſe arbitrary and extraordi-

Iſa. 66. 3. Iſa. 1. 11, 12, 13, &c. Mic. 6. 7. Hoſ. 6. 6. Pſal. 50. 8, 9, &c. 51. 16. Pſal. 50 14. 51. 6, 17. Iſa. 1. 16, 17. 58. 6. Mic. 6. 8. Hoſ. 6. 6. Pſal. 130. 3, 4. Iſa. 1. 18. Iſa. 55. 7. Ezek. 18. 21. 33. 12. Matt. 12. 3. Pſal. 51. 6, 17.

traodinary dispensations of farther instruction are so many good arguments, that God did not primarily intend the *Jewish* Law for a complete delivery of his mind; his reserving so much to be upon occasion detected implied that more still might rest behind; accordingly as indeed we see, that the future state, and immortality it self was not by the Prophets fully brought to light; that the better covenant, established upon better assurances, was not yet revealed; that all means requisite for the glory of God, for the good of man were not throughly provided for.

Heb. 8. 6. *Vid.* Heb. 11. 13, 40.

Of which Conclusion we shall add this one farther probation, that *Judaism* did not serve (in effect) sufficiently to better mens lives; to qualify a competent number of men for God's favour, or for their own happiness; by disposing their minds to any tolerable degree of true sanctity, piety, and righteousness acceptable to God, profitable to humane society, perfective of man's nature. 'Tis a point that Saint *Paul* in his *Epistle* to the *Romans* insisteth much upon, and excellently applies to this same purpose: The *Jews* were highly conceited of their way, scorning the rest of men as altogether ignorant of God's will, and uncapable of his favour; but Saint *Paul* represses their arrogance, by shewing the difference was not so great (as they imagined) between them and others, not even in those respects; for that the special revelation which they were so proud of) had not produced effects considerably better in them, than the light of reason and the law of nature (means so despicable in their esteem) had brought forth in others; which charge being made good, 'tis evident they had no reason to prize their way so much; or to confide therein, as perfect; as thoroughly, in the best manner, and in reasonable measure sufficient to qualify them for God's favour, or to bring them into a state of happiness;) yea 'tis plain upon that supposition in some respects their way had the disadvantage, and made their condition worse than that of other men; rendring their faults more grievous and inexcusable, more provoking God's displeasure against them; especially seeing upon the tenour of their Religion, they had scarce any better ground to presume of pardon or impunity, than other men had from instincts of nature, from rational conjecture. Now that such a Charge upon them is no slander, we need no other probations than what the continual stream of their own Histories doth represent concerning their manners; than the many full and plain testimonies of their own Prophets concerning them; than the extreme punishments by divine justice inflicted upon them; than the common reputation they have continually had among men, grounded upon experience. What is their history but one continued tragedy, as it were, setting out the various strange rebellions and apostasies of that people, with the miserable consequences proceeding from them? what do their prophetical writings contain beside pathetical expostulations, severe reproofs, dreadfull comminations of Judgment upon them, for their prodigious impieties, iniquities and lewdnesses; general in extension over all persons, excessive in degree, by no means curable or corrigible? *Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem (Hierusalem,* that place of universal concourse, the heart of that nation, the special seat and sanctuary of their religion) *see now and know and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man; if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it* (says *Jeremy* 5. 1.) There is a conspiracy of her Prophets in the midst thereof (of *Hierusalem*) *like a roaring lyon ravening the prey; Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned*

Rom. 2.

Jer. 5. 1.

Ezek. 22.

faned my holy things; her princes are like wolves; the people of the land have used oppression and exercised robbery: And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found none, saith; *Ezekiel*: And the rest frequently harp upon the same thing: But these *Prophets*, you'll say, lived in unhappy times: so circumstantiated, that no religion could have much prevailed upon mens minds and lives; such as make every religion liable to the same exceptions: well, but *Isaiah*, one would think, lived in better times; for how many better Kings had that Nation) that more strictly practised or earnestly promoted piety) than *Hezekiah*? yet, *A sinful nation, a people laden with iniquities, a seed of evil doers*, were they, it seems, even then; *the land was defiled under the inhabitants thereof; the whole head was sick, and the whole heart faint; from the soal of the foot even to the head there was no soundness in the body of that nation.* Yea, when did that religion flourish in greater vigour and strength, when had it more advantage of exerting its best vertue, than in the peaceful and prosperous times of that great and mighty, that good and zealously pious Prince, King *David*? yet even in his reign, according to his own observation and testimony, *they were* (generally) *corrupt and did abominable works; they all were gone aside, and were altogether become filthy; there was none that did good, no not one.* But we need not urge particular instances, since we have it so often affirmed in gross, that the manners of that people, from first to last, were constantly naught and offensive to God: *The children of Israel, and the children of Judah* (saith God himself in *Jeremy*) *have onely done evil before me from their youth.* And again; *Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have even sent you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them; yet they hearkened not unto me.* The law, although by extraordinary persons, in fittest opportunities, with utmost vehemence and diligence inculcated and urged upon them, proved continually ineffectual to produce the fruits of piety and righteousness. The same you may see confessed by *Ezra*; and not only acknowledged, but evidently demonstrated by *Nehemiah* in a punctual narration, deduced from the beginning to his time; in the ninth chapter of that Book.) Again; The heavy calamities by divine justice so often inflicted, so long continued upon them; and at last, God's so visible utter direliction and disowning them, do also sufficiently declare what their deserts, and what their qualities have been; as also what good may ever be expected from them. For as God never punishes grievously without a proportionate cause, so he never quite deserts, but in a desperate case, when no competent emendation may be expected. He is not wont to lop off the branches, but when they grow dead and barren; he never cuts down the tree, while there is any hope of fruit. This providence therefore toward that people shews, that in God's esteem, that law is to be laid aside, as an instrument grown useless, and unfit for his purposes; unfit to serve his glory, to further mens good.

Is. 1. 4, 5, 6.

Psal. 14. 53.

Jer. 32. 30.

Jer. 7. 25. Jer. 16. 12. 11. 7.

Ezra. 9. 7.

Neh. 9.

I add; That through all course of times their manners have not procured in a manner from any men any good-will, or respect; but indeed the common dislike, contempt and hatred of men: they have always (since well known and observed in the world) been reputed a sort of people not onely above all men vain and superstitious, addicted to fond conceits and fabulous stories, but extremely proud and arrogant, churlish and sowre, ill-natured and false-hearted toward all men; not good or kind, yea not so much as just or true toward any but themselves;

Juven. Sat. 14. *(Non monstrare vias eadem nisi sacra colenti;*
Quæsitum ad fontem solos deducere verpos;

Tac. V. pag. 621. Vid. Grot. de Jure B. lib. II. 15. 9. *Apud ipsos fides obstinata, misericordia in promptu, sed adversus omnes alios hostile odium.)* such are the obvious characters of them, such were their humours noted to be; humours, not onely implausible, but really blamable, deservedly offensive and odious; being contrary to the common sense, to the natural ingenuity of man. They have been long, as we see them now, to be, partly for the vanity of their conceits, partly for the baseness of their minds and manners, and partly also for the wretchedness of their condition, the scorn and obloquy of all Nations.

Now the tree, which hath always bore such fruits (so unsavoury, so unwholsome) we have no reason to admire, to esteem excellent and perfect: It might *be good* for those times, when men willingly did feed on acorns, on crabs, on bramble-berries; but cannot so well serve now, when higher improvements of reason, when philosophy and learning by a general influence upon the world have prepared the palates of men to relish, their stomachs to digest more delicious and more wholesome fare. But I

3. Proceed, to shew the third defect, which I at first observed, in this Religion, that it was not designed for perpetual obligation and use: (As it was particular in respect of the persons, to whom it was directed, whom it obliged; as it was partial and incomplete in its frame, so it was, according to its design, temporary and mutable.) This conclusion we might infer from what hath been said concerning the narrow extent, and concerning the intrinsick imperfection thereof; for supposing a new general and perfect revelation made to mankind, (such as we asserted probably should be) that would naturally swallow and void those which are particular and imperfect; as comprehending them, it would render them useless; as supplying the defects, correcting the defaults, or removing, paring away the superfluities of them, it would discover them unfit for continuance. As rivers run into the Sea, as shadows flee before the Sun, so these small and shallow, these dusky and faint revelations would discharge themselves into, would vanish before a complete and universal one. Nothing in nature, or in providence that is scant, or defectuous, can be stable and lasting. Thus, I say, is this a conclusion, a consequence of those which preceded; but we have another more convincing sort of evidence to prove it by (most valid *ad homines*) even by many pregnant intimations; yea many expres remonstrances and predictions, that God did intend in due time to introduce a great change in affairs of this kind; to refine, and reform the Mal. 3. 1, 3. Heb. 9. 10. state of things; to break open those inclosures, and to remove those bars of separation; to enlarge the bounds of his dominion, and to receive all nations into the fold of his most special care and love: In fine, that he would dispense a general full revelation of his mind and will, of his grace and favour to mankind; such as should not be consistent with that particular and partial law, such as implies a disannulling thereof for obligation, and disabling it for use. The holy writings of that people Deut. 18. 15, 18. Act. 3. 23. acquaint us, that God intended *to raise up another Prophet* (for extraordinariness and eminency) *like to Moses, which should have words by God put into his mouth* (new words surely, new revelations from God; for why should he with that solemnity be sent to utter stale matters?) whom they

they should upon peril of their lives and welfare, be particularly obliged to hearken (that is to yield attention and obedience) unto. That *the days should come, when the Lord would make a new covenant with the house of Israel*, different from that which he made with their fathers after their delivery from *Egypt*; not to be written upon stones, but impressed upon mens hearts; in regard to which passage we may with the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* well argue; *If the first had been faultless*, and designed to abide in force, *there would have been no place found for the second*; and, that by speaking of a new covenant, be antiquated (or declared his intention to antiquate) the old one. Jer. 31. 31. Heb. 8. 7, 13.

That time should be, when they should say no more, The ark of the covenant of the Lord; neither it should come to mind, neither should they remember it, neither should they visit it; they are the words of the Prophet *Jeremy*, concerning better times to come; wherein, God *should give them pastours according to his own heart, which should feed them with knowledge and understanding*; but in a way 'tis evident, altogether different from the *Jewish* institution; without any regard to the ark of their covenant, that seat and emblem of God's especial presence among them. Jer. 3. 16.

That *another priesthood* should infallibly (for God swore so much) be established, not *after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchisedeck* (not appointed to offer carnal sacrifices, but to impart spiritual benedictions.) Psal. 110. 4.

That time should be, *when God would gather all nations and tongues, and they should come and see his glory*; and out of them, *God would take* (that which the *Mosaical* constitution would not any-wise permit) *for Priests, and for Levites.* Isa. 66. 18. 21.

That there should appear a *Sion*; a mountain seated above all mountains (visible and conspicuous to all the world) wherein God would place his perpetual residence (the seat of his worship, of his especial presence and influence) to *which all nations should flow* (or willingly resort) to learn God's will, and walk in his ways; (which *Sion* could not be that literal one, long since desolated and disregarded; and which however, did it stand in repute, could be no convenient receptacle, or resort for all the world; 'tis surely another spiritual *Sion*, or mystical rock, which is prophecied of.) Psal. 132. 13. Mich. 4. 1, 2, 7, &c. Joel. 2. 28. 3. 16.

That God will create new heavens, and a new earth; (a thoroughly new world, or new state of things;) such *as that the former should not be remembred, nor come into mind.* Isa. 65. 17. 66. 22.

That God would *pour his spirit* of Prophecy *upon all flesh*) although we see the prophetical spirit hath long deserted the *Jewish* nation, not so much as any pretence thereto remaining.) *That the earth should be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*; (*Judaism* surely is not this knowledge, which never did, nor is ever likely to fill the earth.) That *from the rising of the sun, to the going down thereof, God's name should be great among the Gentiles*; and *in every place incense should be offered unto his name, and a pure offering* (In every place incense, acceptable to God, should be offered; not onely at *Hierusalem*, to which the *Jewish* service was confined.) That a time was *determined to finish transgression, and make an end of sins; to make a reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and prophecy; and to anoint the most Holy.* Joel 2. 28. Hab. 2. 14. Mal. 1. 11. Dan. 9. 24.

That God would send him, so much needed and *desired by all nations to whom the gathering of the people should be*; *the Sun of righteousness, arising* Hag. 2. 7. Gen. 49. 10. Mal. 1. 3. 4. 2.

Isa. 59. 20. 49. 8. 61. 1. Jer. 23. 5, 6. *arising with salvation in his wings*; *the Redeemer that should come to* Sion; *the Messenger of the covenant*; *whom God would give for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth*; *to cause to inherit the desolate heritage*; *the righteous branch, to be raised up unto* David; *to reign and prosper, executing judgment and Justice in the earth*; *whose name should be called, the Lord our Righteousness*; whom God *would anoint to preach good tidings to the meek, and bind up the broken-hearted*, &c. that is, in fine, God in due time would send the *Messias*, to enlighten the world with a perfect Instruction; to reveal God's will, and declare his mercy to mankind; to erect an universal spiritual Kingdom in the minds and hearts of men, reducing them to fuller knowledge and to better obedience of God: These places of Scripture (to which many others might be added) do sufficiently evince, that the *Mosaical* dispensation was in the design thereof mutable and transitory; that God intended, what the *Apostle* affirms, Heb. 7. 18. effected by our Saviour, an abrogation of the precedent command for its weakness and unprofitableness. Thus doth God's design concerning the abolition of this Religion appear by verbal testimonies; the same we see also declared by real effects: his providence hath made good his word, he hath not only disobliged men from that Religion, but hath manifestly discountenanced it; yea hath disabled, even the most obstinate adherents in opinion and will thereto, from the practice and exercise thereof, according to its primitive rules and prescriptions. Long is it (for above fifteen hundred years) since they exiled from their ancient country, and scattered over the world, have wanted a place whither to resort, wherein to perform those most weighty parts of worship and service to God, oblation of sacrifices, incense and tithes; their Tribes being confounded, the distinction of priesthood and people seems taken away; all the mysterious emblems of God's special presence, all the tokens of God's favour and endearment to them are embezil'd and quite lost; nothing is left substantial or solemn in their Religion, which x not if they would they could put in practice: all that they retain of their ancient institution is the observation of some petty formalities, in matters of less importance; which also they have so blended and corrupted with impure mixtures of their own device and forgery (false and impious opinions, ridiculous and uncouth ceremonies, idle and absurd stories) that we may justly suppose genuine *Judaism* no-where to be found; that it cannot be, nor is indeed any where practised.

So that what reason shewed fit to be, what God had declared should be, that experience doth attest to be done; the cessation and abolition of that way of Religion, both as to obligation and use.

So I pass over this second step of my intended discourse; That no other Religion excepting Christianity, which hath been, or is in being, can reasonably pretend to have proceeded from God, as an universal, complete and final declaration of his mind and will to mankind. Such as we argued it probable that so wise a God, so just a Lord, so gracious a father would sometime afford to his poor miserable creatures and children, the sons of *Adam*.

I have two great steps yet to take; One, that Christianity is in it self a doctrine and law endowed with the fore-mentioned conditions; in all respects worthy to come from God, apt to promote his glory, and procure man's benefit. Another, that it *de facto* did proceed from God, was attested to by him, and established by his authority. Which propositions I shall hereafter by God's grace, endeavour to prove.

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVI.

OF THE EXCELLENCY OF THE Christian Religion.

1 COR. II. 6.

We speak wisdom to those which are perfect.

THE meaning of these words (upon viewing the context, and weighing the scope of S. *Paul*'s discourse) I take to be in effect this; That however such parts of the Christian doctrine, which S. *Paul* discovered unto those, whom he began to instruct therein, (*the milk which he gave the babes in Christ to drink*) especially as propounded, proved and persuaded in so plain and simple a manner, without advantages of subtile reasoning or elegant language, might seem to persons really ignorant, unskilful, and dull of apprehension (although much conceited of their own knowledge, wit and reach) or to men prepossessed with contrary notions, and corrupt affections, to be foolish and unreasonable: Yet that the whole doctrine such as it is in it self, being entirely disclosed unto *perfect men* (that is to men of an adult and improved understanding, well disposed and capable, void of prejudicate conceits, and cleansed from vitious dispositions) would appear *wisdom*; wisdom, that is not onely exactly true, but highly important, and very well suted to the attainment of the best ends; even those ends, which it pretendeth to bring about, which are manifestly the most excellent that any knowledge can aim at; the glorifying of God, and salvation of man: this I suppose to be S. *Paul*'s assertion here; and thereof it is my intent, by God's assistance, to endeavour now some declaration and proof, by representing briefly some peculiar excellencies and perfections of our Religion; which may serve to evince the truth, and evidence the wisdom thereof; to make good, that indeed our Religion well deserveth the privilege it doth claim of a divine extraction, that it is

1 Cor 3. 1, 2.

1 Cor. 2. 7. is not an invention of man, but (as S. *Paul* calleth it) *the wisdom of God*, proceeding from no other Author, but the God of truth and wisdom. It is indeed a common subject, and so the best ever should be; it is always profitable, and now seasonable to inculcate it, for the confirmation of our selves, and conviction of others in this Age of wavering and warping toward infidelity; wherefore regarding more the real usefulness of the matter, than the squeamish fancy of some auditors, I shall without scruple propound what my own meditation hath suggested about it.

Matt. 11. 26. — *Neither knoweth any man the Father save the son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal him.*

1. The first excellency peculiar to the Christian doctrine I observe to be this; that it assigneth a true, proper and complete character or notion of God (complete I mean not absolutely, but in respect to our condition and capacity) such a notion as agreeth thoroughly with what the best reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, ancient tradition doth attest, and common experience doth intimate concerning God; such a character as is apt to breed highest love and reverence in mens hearts toward him, to engage them in the strictest practice of duty, and obedience to him: it ascribeth unto him all conceivable perfections of nature in the highest degree, it asserteth unto him all his due rights and prerogatives, it commendeth and justifieth to us all his actions and proceedings. For in his Essence it representeth him One, Eternal, perfectly simple and pure, Omnipresent, Omniscient, Omnipotent, Independent, Impassible and Immutable; as also, according to his essential disposition of will and natural manner of acting, most absolute and free, most good and benign, most holy and just, most veracious and constant; it acknowledgeth him the maker and upholder of all Beings, of what nature and what degree soever; both material and immaterial, visible and invisible; it attributeth to him Supreme majesty and authority over all: It informeth us, that he framed this visible world with especial regard to our use and benefit, that he preserveth it with the same gracious respect; that he governeth us with a particular care and providence; viewing all the thoughts, and ordering all the actions of men to good ends, general or particular. It declareth him in his dealings with rational creatures very tender and careful of their good, exceedingly beneficent and merciful toward them; compassionate of their evils, placable for their offences, accessible and inclinable to help them at their entreaty, or in their need; yet nowise fond, or indulgent to them; not enduring them to proceed in perverse or wanton courses; but impartially just, and inflexibly severe toward all iniquity obstinately pursued; it, in short, describeth him most amiable in his goodness, most terrible in his justice, most glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence: whatever perfections in essence, state or practice either Philosophers (by rational collection from innate notions, or from contemplation of natural effects, or upon observing occurrences in humane affairs) or other institutions from the reliques of primitive tradition, by politick reflection upon things, from other fountains, or by other means whatever have by parts (imperfectly, obscurely and faintly) attributed to God, all those our Religion in a full, clear and peremptory manner, with advantage beyond what I can express, doth ascribe and assert unto him; not intermixing therewith (as other doctrines and institutions may be observed to doe) any thing unworthy of him, or misbecoming him; adjoining nothing repugnant to that which natural light discerneth or approveth; but shewing somewhat beyond what it can descry, concerning God's incomprehensible nature and manner of subsistence, his unsearchable counsels

of

of wisdom, his admirable methods of providence, whereby he hath designed to commend his goodness to us, and to glorifie his justice; which sorts of truths exceeding man's reach to devise or comprehend as it becometh God (who so far transcendeth us in wisdom and knowledge) to reveal them, so they wondrously conspiring with the perfections of God otherwise discernible by us, do argue or confirm the divinity of the doctrine, which acquainteth us with them: For a doctrine, how plausible soever, which should teach us nothing about God, that by other means could not be found out, and whose bottom common sense might not fathom, there were no urgent cause why we should derive it from heaven, or why we should not rather deem it the invention of some witty or subtile man. But such a doctrine as this (which as it telleth us nothing about divine things, that contradicteth reason, so it informeth us many things, which no understanding of man had ever conceived, none can penetrate) we may justly presume to come from a superiour wisdom, we must at least avow it worthy of God; in the contrivances of man's wit or fancy about things of this nature (as in divers instances it hath happened) most probably many flaws and incongruities presently would have appeared; they would have clashed with themselves, or with the dictates of common reason: that, for instance, God should out of his own bosom send down his eternal Son to partake of our nature, and appear in our flesh, that with utmost advantage he might discover God's will and merciful intentions toward us, that he might set before us an exact pattern of good life; that by his obedience and patience he might expiate our sin, and reconcile God to mankind; that he might raise in us a hope of, and lead us in the way to happiness; this indeed is a mystery, and a depth of wisedom, which we should never have thought of, nor can yet thoroughly sound by thinking, which we better may admire, than we can understand; but neither doth good reason disallow it, nor can disprove it; yea good reason so far confirmeth it, as it cannot but admit it to import nothing but that which is plainly true and most credible, the immense goodness and justice of God; concerning which nothing ought to seem strange or uncouth to us, since even by the care expressed in matters of ordinary providence divine goodness appeareth so unaccountably vast and high, that upon consideration thereof worthily might *Job* and the *Psalmist* exclaim; *What is man that thou shouldest magnifie him, and that thou shouldest set thy heart upon him? Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the son of man, that thou makest such account of him?* Job 7. 17. Psal. 144. 3.

Now thus to instill into the minds of men a right and worthy notion of God, is palpably a great excellency of any doctrine or Religion: for beside that a true knowledge of God, (even barely considered as in way of theory most perfective of our understanding, it being conversant upon the noblest object of contemplation) is in it self very desirable; and upon the same ground errour in divine things is no small evil or defect; both these, such knowledge and such errour respectively, are very considerable, as having a powerful influence upon action; for according to mens conceptions about God is their practice, religious and moral, very much regulated; if men conceive well of God, they will be guided and moved thereby to render him a worship and an obedience worthy of him, and acceptable to him; if they are ignorant of him, or mistake about him, they will accordingly perform services to him, or pretences of service, which shall neither become him, nor please him; (God by Isa. 66. 3. 1. 13, 14.

Εὐλόγως τοῖς μὲν μοχθηροῖς φαύλας ἔχειν τὰς περὶ θεῶν διανοήσεις ἀνάγκη, τοῖς δὲ σπουδαίοις ἀεί- σας. Clem. Strom. 7. (pag. 511.)

such misconceptions being transformed into an idol, their religion will become vile or vain superstition.) And since all men apprehend the example of God a perfect rule of action, that they cannot do better than to resemble and imitate him, such as they conceive God to be, such in good measure they will endeavour to be themselves, both in their disposition and demeanour; whence infallibly the vertues and defects which lie in their notion, will exert and diffuse themselves into their life.

2. A second great excellency, peculiar to the Christian institution is this, that it faithfully informeth us concerning our selves, concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state past, present and final; points about which otherwise by no reason, no history, no experience we could be well resolved or satisfied: it teacheth us that we consist of a frail mortal body, taken from the earth and fashioned by God's hand, and of an immortal spirit derived from heaven, and breathed out of God's mouth, whereby we understand the dignity of our nature, and nobleness of our descent, our near alliance, and our great obligation to God; and consequently how it concerneth us to behave our selves both in regard to God, and toward our selves, in a manner answerable to such a relation, worthy of such an high birth and quality: it sheweth us, that we were originally designed by a voluntary obedience to glorifie our Maker, and in so doing to partake of joy and felicity from him; that accordingly we were created in a state agreeable to those purposes, wherein we were fit to serve God, and capable thereby ever to continue happy: but that by our unworthy distrust and wilfull disobedience we cast our selves from thence, and laps'd into this wretched state of inward blindness, errour and disorder, of outward frailty, sorrow and trouble: it acquainteth us farther, how being thus estrang'd from God, and exposed to the effects of his just dispeasure, we are yet again by his exceeding mercy and favour put into a capacity of recovering our selves, of being re-instated in a condition happy far beyond that, from which we fell, by returning unto God, and complying with his will declared unto us; as also how continuing obstinately in our degeneracy and disobedience we shall assuredly plunge our selves deeper into an abyss of endless misery: it fully representeth unto us, what shall be our future state and final doom, how it shall be suted to our demeanours and deserts in this life, what a strict trial, what a severe judgment all our actions (even our passant words, and our secret thoughts) must hereafter undergo, and how upon the result we shall become either exceedingly happy, or extremely miserable for ever. It is indeed this doctrine onely, which fully resolveth us about this weighty inquiry, which hath so much perplexed all men, and with so much irresolution exercised Philosophers, wherein the final end and happiness of man consisteth, and what is the way of attaining it; assuring us, that it consisteth not in any of these transitory things, nor in a confluence of them all, but in the favour and the enjoyment of God, with the blessings flowing thence; that this happiness is onely by a sincere and constant obedience to God's holy laws, or by the practice of such a piety and such a vertue which this doctrine prescribeth, to be obtained: These most important truths so useful both for the satisfaction of our minds, and the direction of our lives, this doctrine unfoldeth; I call them truths, and that really they are such even their harmony and consistence between themselves, their consonancy with inferences from all sorts of principles, which we can apply for learning of truth, with what about these matters reason collecteth, tradition reporteth,

reporteth, experience doth imply, may well persuade us: for that man was first made and constituted in a happy state, that he was for his misbehaviour detruded thence; that hence he is become so very prone to vice, and so much subject to pain, that our souls do abide after death, that after this life there shall be a reckoning and judgment, according to which good men (who here are often much afflicted) shall be rewarded with joy, and bad men (who commonly prosper here) shall be requited with pain, the wisest men upon these grounds, always have surmised; and their rational conjectures our Religion with a positive and express assertion doth establish. So great a light doth it afford (which is no small perfection thereof) to the knowledge of our selves, and our chief concernments, the objects next to God, and what concerneth him, best deserving our inquiry and information.

3. It is a peculiar excellency of our Religion, that it prescribeth an accurate rule of life, most congruous to reason, and sutable to our nature; most conducible to our welfare, and our content; most apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the publick benefit of all; by the strict observance whereof we shall doe what is worthy of our selves and most becoming us, yea shall advance our nature above it self into a resemblance of the divine nature; we shall doe God right and obtain his favour, we shall oblige and benefit men, acquiring withall goodwill and good respect from them, we shall purchase to our selves all the conveniences of a sober life, and all the comforts of a good conscience: For if we first examine the precepts directive of our practice in relation to God, what can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are those duties of piety, which our Religion doth enjoin? what can be more fit, than that we should most highly esteem and honour him, who is most excellent? that we should bear most hearty affection to him, who is in himself most good, and most beneficial to us? that we should have a most awfull dread of him, who is so infinitely powerfull, holy and just? that we should be very gratefull unto him from whom we have received our being, with all the comforts and conveniences thereof? that we should entirely trust, and hope in him, who can doe what he will, and will doe whatever in reason we can expect from his goodness, and can never fail to perform what he hath promised? that we should render all obedience and observance to him, whose children, whose servants, whose subjects we are born; by whose protection and provision we enjoy our life and livelihood? Can there be a higher privilege than liberty of access, with assurance of being favourably received, in our needs to him, who is thoroughly able to supply them? Can we desire upon easier terms to receive benefits, than by acknowledging our wants, and asking for them? Can there be required a more gentle satisfaction from us for our offences, than confession of them, accompanied with repentance and effectual resolution to amend? Is it not in fine most equal and fair, that we should be obliged to promote his glory, who hath obliged himself to further our good? The practice of such a piety as it is apparently λογικὴ λατρεία (*a reasonable service*) so it cannot but produce excellent fruits of advantage to our selves, a joyfull peace of conscience, and a comfortable hope, a freedom from all superstitious terrours and scruples, from all tormenting cares and anxieties; it cannot but draw down from God's bountifull hands showers of blessings upon our heads, and of joys into our hearts; whence our obligation to these duties is not onely reasonable, but very desirable.

As ye have received of us how ye ought to walk, and to please God. 1 Thess. 4. 1.

Conſider we next the precepts by which our Religion doth regulate our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren (ſo it ſtyleth all men, intimating thence the duties it requireth us to perform toward them) and what directions in that kind can be imagined comparably ſo good, ſo uſefull as thoſe which the *Goſpel* affordeth? An honeſt *Pagan* Hiſtorian ſaith of the Chriſtian Profeſſion, that *nil niſi juſtum ſuadet & lene*; the which is a true, though not full character thereof. It enjoineth us, that we ſhould ſincerely and tenderly love one another, ſhould earneſtly deſire and delight in each others good, ſhould heartily ſympathize with all the evils and ſorrows of our brethren, ſhould be ready to yield them all the help and comfort we are able, being willing to part with our ſubſtance, our eaſe, our pleaſure for their benefit or ſuccour; not confining this our charity to any ſorts of men, particularly related or affected toward us, but in conformity to our heavenly father's boundleſs goodneſs extending it to all; that we ſhould mutually bear one anothers burthens, and bear with one anothers infirmities, mildly reſent and freely remit all injuries, all diſcourteſies done unto us retaining no grudge in our hearts, executing no revenge, but requiting them with good wiſhes and good deeds. It chargeth us to be quiet and orderly in our ſtations, diligent in our callings, veracious in our words, upright in our dealings, obſervant of our relations, obedient and reſpectful toward our ſuperiours, meek and gentle to our inferiours; modeſt and lowly, ingenuous and compliant in our converſation, candid and benign in our cenſures, innocent and inoffenſive, yea courteous and obliging in all our behaviour toward all perſons. It commandeth us to root out of our hearts all ſpite and rancour, all envy and malignity, all pride and haughtineſs, all evil ſuſpicion and jealouſie; to reſtrain our tongue from all ſlander, all detraction, all reviling, all bitter and harſh language; to baniſh from our practice whatever may injure, may hurt, may needleſly vex or trouble our neighbour. It engageth us to prefer the publick good before any private convenience, before our own opinion or humour, our credit or fame, our profit or advantage, our eaſe or pleaſure; rather diſcarding a leſs good from our ſelves, than depriving others of a greater. Now who can number or eſtimate the benefits that ſpring from the practice of theſe duties, either to the man that obſerveth them, or to all men in common? O divineſt Chriſtian charity, what tongue can worthily deſcribe thy moſt heavenly beauty, thy incomparable ſweetneſs, thy more than royal clemency and bounty? how nobly doſt thou enlarge our minds beyond the narrow ſphere of ſelf and private regard into an univerſal care and complacence, making every man our ſelf, and all concernments to be ours? how doſt thou entitle us unto, how doſt thou inveſt us in all the goods imaginable; doſt enrich us with the wealth, doſt prefer us with the honour, doſt adorn us with the wiſdom and the vertue, doſt bleſs us with all proſperity of the world, whilſt all our neighbours good by our rejoycing therein becometh our own? how doſt thou raiſe a man above the reach of all miſchiefs and diſaſters, of all troubles and griefs, ſince nothing can diſturb or diſcompoſe that ſoul, wherein thou doſt conſtantly reſide, and abſolutely reign? how eaſily doſt thou without pain or hazard, without drawing bloud or ſtriking ſtroke, render him that enjoyeth thee an abſolute conquerour over all his foes, triumphant over all injuries without, and all paſſions within; for that he can have no enemy, who will be a friend to all, and nothing is able to croſs

Am. Marc. *l.* 22.

Τοιαύτη γὰρ ἡ τῆς ἀγάπης δύναμις· τὰς ἐκ πολλαπλασίας ἐφ' ἑαυτὸν ἐπολλαπλασίαντων ἐξίστησι ποιεῖ χαίρειν, κοινὰ τὰ ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ πλησίον ἀγαθὰ πείθουσα νομίζειν. Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. 19.

croſs him, who is diſpoſed to take every thing well? how ſociable, how ſecure, how pleaſant a life might we lead under thy kindly governance? what numberleſs ſorrows and troubles, fears and ſuſpicions, cares and diſtractions of mind at home, what tumults and tragedies abroad might be prevented, if men would but hearken to thy mild ſuggeſtions? what a paradiſe would this world then become, in compariſon to what it now is, where thy good precepts and advices being neglected, uncharitable paſſions and unjuſt deſires are predominant? how excellent then is that doctrine, which brought thee down from heaven, and would but men embrace thee, the peace and joy of heaven with thee?

If we farther ſurvey the laws and directions which our Religion preſcribeth concerning the particular management of our ſouls and bodies in their reſpective actions and enjoyments, we ſhall alſo find, that nothing could be deviſed more worthy of us, more agreeable to reaſon, more productive of our welfare and our content. It obligeth us to preſerve unto our reaſon its natural prerogative, or due empire in our ſouls, and over our bodies, not to ſuffer the brutiſh part to uſurp and domineer over us; that we be not ſwayed down by this earthy lump, not enſlaved to bodily temper, not tranſported with tumultuary humours, not deluded by vain fancy; that neither inward propenſions, nor impreſſions from without be able to ſeduce us to that which is unworthy of us, or miſchievous to us. It enjoyneth us to have ſober and moderate thoughts concerning our ſelves, ſutable to our total dependence upon God, to our natural meanneſs and weakneſs, to our ſinful inclinations, to the guilt we have contracted in our lives; that therefore we be not puft up with ſelf-conceit, or vain confidence in our ſelves, or in any thing about us (any wealth, honour or proſperity.) It directeth us alſo to compoſe our minds into a calm, ſerene and chearfull ſtate; that we be not eaſily diſtemper'd with anger, or diſtracted with care, or overborn with grief, or diſturbed with any accident befalling us; but that we be content in every condition, and entertain patiently all events, yea accept joyfully from God's hand whatever he reacheth to us. It commandeth us to reſtrain our appetites, to be temperate in all our enjoyments, to abſtain from all irregular pleaſures, which are baſe in kind, or exceſſive in degree; which may corrupt our minds, or impair our health, or endamage our eſtate, or ſtain our good name, or prejudice our peace and repoſe: it doth not prohibit us the uſe of any creature, whence we may receive innocent convenience or delight, but indulgeth us a prudent and ſober uſe of them all, with the ſenſe of God's goodneſs, and thankfulneſs to him, who beſtoweth them upon us. Our Religion alſo farther ordereth us (ſo far as our neceſſary occaſions or duties permit) to ſequeſter and elevate our minds from theſe low and tranſitory things, from the fading glories, the unſtable poſſeſſions, the vaniſhing delights of this world; things indeed unworthy the attention, unworthy the affection of an heaven-born and immortal ſpirit; that we ſhould fix our thoughts, our deſires, our endeavours upon objects moſt worthy of them, objects high and heavenly, pure and ſpiritual, infinitely ſtable and durable: Not *to love the world, and the things therein*; *to be carefull for nothing, but to caſt all our care upon God's* providence; not to *labour for the meat that periſheth, not* to *truſt in uncertain riches*; to have our treaſure, our heart, our hope, our converſation above in heaven; ſuch directions our Religion preſcribeth, by compliance with which, if man be at all capable of being happy, aſſuredly his happineſs muſt be attained; for that no preſent enjoyment

ment can render a man happy, all experience proclaimeth; the restless motions we continually see, the wofull complaints we daily hear, do manifestly demonstrate.

And who seeth not the great benefits, and the goodly fruits accruing from observance of these laws and rules? who discerneth not the admirable consent of all these particular injunctions in our Religion with that general one, *Whatever things are true, whatever things are just, whatever things are honest, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there be any vertue or any praise, that we should mind such things*, and practise them? Such, and far more excellent than I am able to describe, is the rule of Christian practice; a rule in perfection, in beauty, in efficacy far surpassing all other rules; productive of a goodness more complete, more lovely, more sprightfull than any other doctrine or institution hath been, or can be able to bring forth; much exceeding not onely *the righteousness of blind Pharisees*, but all the vertue of the most sage * Philosophers; somewhat in part concurrent therewith Philosophy hath descried and delivered ('tis no wonder it should, since all of it is so plainly consonant to reason;) yet what Philosophy hath in this kind afforded, is in truth, if compared with what our Religion teacheth, exceedingly meagre, languid and flat: two words here, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thy self*, do signifie more, do contain in them more sense and savour, to the judgment and relish of a well disposed mind, than the *Ethicks* of *Aristotle*, the *Offices* of *Cicero*, the *Precepts* and *Dissertations* of *Epictetus*, the many other Volumes of Philosophical morality all put together; in matter our Rule is far more rich and full, more sweet and sapid than theirs; in force and efficacy it doth also (as we shall hereafter see) far excell them.

Vid. Grot. *de Ver.* 4. 12. Phil. 4. 8.

* Τί ἄν τις εἴποι περὶ προσταγμάτων τῶν φιλοσοφίαν, περὶ ἐθνῶν νόμων τῶν ἀρετῶν, ἢ ἀγγελικῆς πολιτείας τῶν ἐντάξιαν; τοιοῦτον γὰρ ἡμῖν εἰσηγήσατο βίον, τοιούτους ἡμῖν ἔθηκε νόμους, τοιαύτῳ κατεσήσατο πολιτείαν, ὡς τὰς τούτοις χρωμένους ἀγγέλους εὐθέως γίνεσθαι, καὶ ὁμοίους θεῷ καὶ τῷ δυνάμιν τῶν ἡμετέρων. Chrys. *in* Joh. 1. 14.

Ὅσα παρὰ πᾶσι καλῶς εἴρηται, Χριστιανῶν ἐστι. Just. M. *Apol.* 1.

Vid. Lud. Viv. *in* Aug. *de Civ. D.* 10. 4.

Quæ disputationes, quæ literæ quorumlibet Philosophorum, quæ leges quarumlibet civitatum duobus præceptis, ex quibus Christus dicit totam legem prophetasque pendere, ullo modo sint comparandæ? Aug. *Epist.* 3. *ad* Volus.

Vid. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 19.

Δηλῶν ἐθέλει τέκνοις τὸ Χριστιανῶν ἄνδρας διὰ τῆς Χριστοῦ γνώσεως καὶ διδασκαλίας σωφρονεῖν, καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ, καρτερείᾳ τε βίου καὶ ἀρετῆς ἀνδρίᾳ εὐσεβείᾳς τε ὁμολογίᾳ ἑνὸς καὶ μόνου τοῦ ὄντων θεοῦ διαπρέπειν. Euseb. *hist.* 1. 4.

4. We may hereto annex this consideration, which may pass for another peculiar advantage of our Religion, that as it delivereth so excellent and perfect a rule of life, so it delivereth it unto us pure from any allay embasing, free of any clog encumbring it; for that it chiefly, and in a manner onely requireth of us a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties, plainly necessary or profitable; not withdrawing us from the practice of solid piety and vertue by obligations to a tedious observance of many external rites; not spending the vigour of our minds upon superficial formalities (or *busie scrupulosities*, as *Tertullian* termeth them) such as serve onely to amuse childish fancies, or to depress slavish spirits. It supposeth us men, men of good understanding, and ingenuous disposition, and dealeth with us as such; and much more such it rendreth us if we comply therewith. The ritual observances it enjoineth are, as few in number, in nature simple and easie to perform, so evidently reasonable, very decent, and very useful; apt to instruct us in, able to excite us unto the practice

Negotiosæ scrupulositates. Tertull. *in* Marc. 2.

Quædam pauca eademque factu facillima, & intellectu augustissima, & observatione castissima, Dominus, & Apostolica tradidit disciplina, sicuti est baptismi sacramentum, & celebratio corporis & sanguinis Domini. Aug. *de Doct. Chr.* 3. 9.

Dominus noster Jesus Christus leni jugo nos subdidit, & sarcinæ levi; unde sacramentis numero paucissimis, significatione præstantissimis societatem novi populi colligavit; sicuti est Baptismus Trinitatis nomine consecratus, communicatio corporis & sanguinis ipsius, & siquid aliud in Scripturis canonicis commendatur. Aug. *Ep.* 118. *ad* Januar.

ctice of most wholesome duties: which consideration sheweth this doctrine to be complete, suitable to the most adult age, and best constitution, to the most ripe and improved capacities of man. But farther.

5. Our Religion hath also this especial advantage; that it setteth before us a living copy, and visible standard of good practice; wherein we have all its precepts compacted as it were into one body, and at once exposed to our view. Example yieldeth the most compendious instruction, together with the most efficacious incitement to action; but never was there, or could be any example in either respect comparable to this; never was any so thoroughly perfect in it self, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for imitation, or so forcibly engaging thereto, as this: there is not one flaw, one spot, one false or uneven stroke in all this copy, so that we are secure from doing amiss in transcribing any part thereof; it was intended to conduct us through all the parts of duty, especially those which are most high and difficult to our frail and decayed nature, general charity, self-denial, humility and patience: it was admirably squared for the imitation of all men, the person in whom it shined being as it were indefinite, and unrestrained to any single condition; he being in right and power superiour to the greatest Princes though according to choice and in outward parts inferiour to the meanest subjects; having under his command the largest wealth, although enjoying none; being able readily to procure to himself what glory and respect he pleased, yet pleasing to pass obscure and disregarded; so teaching those of highest rank to be sober and condescensive, those of lowest degree to be patient and content in their respective states; teaching all men not to rest in, nor much to regard these present things, but singly in all their doings above all things to seek God's honour, with main resolution and diligence to prosecute his service: and as to all degrees, so to all capacities was his practice suited, being neither austere nor remiss, formal nor singular, careless nor boisterous; but in a moderate, even and uniform course so tempered, that persons of all callings, and all complexions easily might follow him in the practice of all true righteousness, in the performance of all substantial duties toward God, and toward man. It is also an example attended with the greatest obligations and inducements to follow it; the great excellency and high dignity of the person, being the most holy, first-born Son of God, heir of eternal Majesty; our manifold relations to him, being our Lord and Master, our best friend, our most gracious Redeemer; the many inestimable benefits received by us from him, all that redemption from extreme misery, and capacity of perfect happiness do import, are so many potent arguments engaging us to imitate him.

Longum est iter per præcepta, breve & efficax per exempla. Sen.

6. Farther, Our Religion doth not onely thus truly and fully acquaint us with our duty; but, which is another peculiar vertue thereof, it buildeth our duty upon most solid grounds, presseth it with most valid inducements, draweth it from the best principles, and driveth it to the best ends: No philosophy can in any measure represent vertue so truly estimable and eligible, can assign so evident and cogent reason why we should embrace it and strictly adhere thereto, can so well discover or describe the excellent fruits that grow upon it, as doth this Philosophy of ours, as the ancient Fathers are wont to call it. Other Philosophies have indeed highly commended vertue, and vehemently exorted thereto; but the grounds on which they laid its praise, are very sandy, the arguments by which they enforced its practice are very feeble, the principles

principles from which they deduced it, and the ends which they propounded thereto, are very poor and mean, if we diſcuſs them; at leaſt if they be compared with ours: Vertue, ſaid they, is a thing of it ſelf, upon account of its own native beauty and worth, abſtracting from all reward or profit ſpringing from it, very admirable and deſirable; it is beſide a very pleaſant, and very uſefull thing, begetting tranquility and ſatisfaction of mind; yielding health, ſafety, reputation, pleaſure, quiet, and other manifold conveniences of life: but can ſo magnificent and ſo maſſy a fabrick of commendation ſtand firm upon ſuch foundations as theſe? are theſe principles of love and admiration toward we know not what, theſe ends of temporal advantage and convenience, ſo noble or worthy? are the accommodations of this ſhort and uncertain life a proper encouragement, or a juſt recompence for the laborious atchievements of true vertue? are theſe weapons ſufficient to fortifie men, or theſe diſcourſes able to animate them in reſiſting the temptations which avert from vertue, or avoiding the enchantments which allure to vice? Will men, I ſay, readily for the ſake of an imaginary or inſenſible thing (a goodly name onely, for all they ſee) which repreſenteth no more of benefit attending it, croſs the bent of their natural inclinations, forfeit their preſent eaſe, reject certain fruitions of pleaſure, wave occaſions of getting to themſelves profit, honour and power, goods ſo manifeſtly ſubſtantial, and gratefull to nature; will they undergo contentedly the difficulties, encounter the dangers, ſuſtain the pains, the diſgraces, the loſſes commonly incident to vertue? No ſurely, when it cometh to earneſt trial, it will hardly ſeem reaſon or wiſdom ſo to doe. But the Chriſtian Doctrine as it comprizeth, and in an inferiour order urgeth alſo ſuch grounds and arguments, ſo it doth exhibit others far more ſolid and forcible: it commendeth goodneſs to us, not onely as agreeable to man's imperfect and fallible reaſon, but as conformable to the perfect goodneſs of God, as the dictate of his infallible wiſdom, as the reſolution of his moſt holy will; as enjoyned by his unqueſtionable authority, as our indiſpenſible duty, and onely way to happineſs: the principles, from which it willeth us to act, are love, reverence and gratitude to God, hearty good-will toward men, and a ſober regard to our own true welfare; the ends which it preſcribeth, are God's honour, publick edification, and the ſalvation of our own ſouls: it ſtirreth us to good practice by minding us, that we ſhall thereby reſemble the ſupreme goodneſs, ſhall expreſs our gratitude toward that great benefactour, unto whom we owe all that we have; ſhall diſcharge our duty, pay due honour, perform faithfull ſervice to our Almighty Lord and King; that we ſhall thereby ſurely decline the wrath and diſpleaſure of God, ſhall ſurely obtain his favour and mercy, with all ſorts of bleſſings needfull or profitable for us; that we ſhall not onely avoid regrets and terrours of conſcience here, but eſcape endleſs miſeries and torments; we ſhall not onely procure preſent comfort and peace of mind, but ſhall acquire crowns of everlaſting glory and bliſs. Theſe ſurely are the trueſt and firmeſt grounds upon which a right eſtimation of vertue can ſubſiſt, theſe are motives incomparably moſt effectual to the embracing thereof; theſe are the pureſt fountains whence it can ſpring, the nobleſt marks whither it can aim; a vertue ſo grounded, ſo reared is certainly moſt ſound and genuine, moſt firm and ſtable, moſt infinitely beneficial. But farther

7. 'Tis a peculiar advantage of Chriſtianity (which no other Law or Doctrine ſo much as pretendeth to) that it not onely clearly teacheth us,

us, and strongly perſuadeth us to ſo excellent a way of life, but provideth alſo ſufficient help and ability to practiſe it; without which (ſuch is the frailty of our nature, as experience proveth, that) all inſtruction, all exhortation, all encouragement would avail little. Other laws for want of this are in effect *miniſteries of condemnation*, racks of conſcience, parents of guilt, and of regret; reading hard leſſons, but not aſſiſting to do after them, impoſing heavy burthens, but not enabling to bear them: Our Law is not ſuch; 'tis not *a dead letter*, but hath a *quickning ſpirit* accompanying it; it not onely ſoundeth through the ear, but ſtampeth it ſelf upon the heart of him that ſincerely doth embrace it; it always carrieth with it a ſure guide to all good, and a ſafe guard from all evil: If our mind be doubtful or dark, it directeth us to a faithfull Oracle, where we may receive counſel and information: If our paſſions are unruly, if our appetites are outragious, if temptations be violent and threaten to overbear us, it leadeth us to a full magazine, whence we may furniſh our ſelves with all manner of arms to withſtand and ſubdue them: If our condition, in reſpect to all other means, be diſconſolate or deſperate, it ſendeth us to a place, where we ſhall not fail of refreſhment and relief; it offereth, upon our earneſt ſeeking and asking, the wiſdom and ſtrength of God himſelf for our direction, our aid, our ſupport and comfort in all exigencies. To them, who with due fervency and conſtancy *ask it*, God hath in the Goſpel promiſed to *grant his holy Spirit*, to guide them in their ways, to admoniſh them of their duty, to ſtrengthen them in obedience, to guard them from ſurprizes, and aſſaults of temptation, to ſuſtain them, and cheer them in afflictions. This advantage, as it is proper to our Religion, ſo it is exceedingly conſiderable; for what would the moſt perfect rule or way ſignifie without as well a power to obſerve it, as a light to diſcern it? and how can man (ſo ignorant, ſo impotent, ſo inconſtant a creature; ſo eaſily deluded by falſe appearances, and tranſported with diſorderly paſſions; ſo eaſily ſhaken and unſettled by any ſmall aſſault) either alone without ſome guidance perceive, or by himſelf without ſome aſſiſtance proſecute what is good for him, eſpecially in caſes of intricacy and difficulty? how ſhould he who hath frequent experience of his own weakneſs, not be utterly diſheartned and caſt into deſpair either of ſtanding faſt in a good ſtate, or of recovering himſelf from a bad one; of reſcuing himſelf from any vicious inclination, or attaining any vertuous habit, if he did not apprehend ſuch a friendly power vigilantly guarding him, ready upon all occaſions to ſuccour and abett him? this conſideration it is, which only can nouriſh our hope, can excite our courage, can quicken and ſupport our endeavour in religious practice, by aſſuring us, that there is no duty ſo hard, which by the grace vouchſafed us, we may not atchieve; that there is no enemy ſo mighty, which by the help afforded us we cannot maſter; ſo that, although we find our ſelves *able to doe nothing of our ſelves*, yet *we can do all things by Chriſt that ſtrengtheneth us*.

2 Cor. 3. 7, 9. Rom. 5. 20. Aug. *de Spir. & lit.*

Τοῖς εὖ βίον ἐπαναμημένοις τὸ λοιπὸν σωτηρίαν ἐπαγγέλλει. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 6. p. 523.

Luke 11. 13.

Phil. 4. 13.

8. Another peculiar excellency of our Religion is this, that it alone can appeaſe and ſatisfie a man's conſcience, breeding therein a well grounded hope, and a ſolid comfort; healing the wounds of bitter remorſe, and anxious fear, which the ſenſe of guilt doth inflict: *There is no man* (as King *Solomon* ſaid, and all men know) *who ſinneth not*; who doth not find himſelf in thought, word and deed frequently thwarting the dictates of reaſon, violating the laws of piety and juſtice, tranſgreſſing the bounds of ſobriety; who conſequently doth not in his own judgment

2 Chr. 6. 36. Eccleſ. 7. 20.

condemn himself of disorder, and of offence committed against the worlds great Lawgiver and Governour, the just Patron of right and goodness; who thence doth not deem himself obnoxious to God's wrath, and is not fearfull of deserved punishment from him: which fear must needs be ostered and augmented by considering, that as past facts are irrevocable, so guilt is indelible, and punishment, except by the voluntary remission of him that is offended, inevitable; as also that there are no visible means of removing or abating such guilt by any reparation or amends that he can make, who is more apt to accumulate new offences, than able to compensate for what he hath committed: Now in such a case, some man indeed may frame to himself hopes of mercy; may from the experience of God's forbearance to punish, and continuance of his bounty to sinners, presume that God is placable, and will not be rigorous in his proceedings with him, may hopefully guess; that in favour God will admit his endeavours at repentance, will accept the compensations he offereth in lieu of his duty, may suffer his guilt to be attoned by the sacrifices he presenteth; Yet can no man upon such presumptions ground a full confidence that he shall find mercy; he cannot however be satisfied upon what terms mercy will be granted, in what manner it shall be dispensed, or how far it shall extend; God never having exhibited any express declarations or promises to those purposes; no man therefore can otherwise than suspect himself to be in a bad state, or esteem himself secure from the pursuits of justice and wrath; as he knoweth that *sin lieth at the door*, so he cannot know but that vengeance may lie near it; hence common reason as well as the *Jewish* Law is a *ministry of death*, and *a killing letter*, carrying nothing in the looks or language thereof but death and ruine; hence is a man (if at least he be not besotted into a careless stupidity) shut up in an irksome bondage of spirit, under the grievous tyranny, if not of utter despair, yet, of restless suspicion about his condition; which as it quencheth in his mind all steady peace and joy, so it dampeth his courage and alacrity, it enervateth his care and industry to doe well, he doubting what success and what acceptance his undertakings may find; it also cooleth in him good affections towards God, whom that he hath offended he knoweth, and questioneth whether he can be able to reconcile.

Pœna potest demi, culpa perennis erit. Ovid.

Sap. 12. 19.

Gen. 4. 7.

2 Cor. 3. 6.

Rom. 8. 15.

From this unhappy plight our Religion thoroughly doth rescue us, assuring us, that God Almighty is not only reconcileable, but desirous upon good terms to become our friend, himself most frankly proposing overtures of grace, and soliciting us to close with them; it upon our compliance tendereth, under God's own hand and seal, a full discharge of all guilts and debts however contracted; it receiveth a man into perfect favour and friendship, if he doth not himself wilfully reject them, or resolve to continue at distance, in estrangement and enmity toward God. It proclaimeth, that if we be carefull to amend, God will not be *extreme to mark what we doe amiss*: that iniquity, if we do not incorrigibly affect and cherish it, *shall not be our ruine*; that although by our infirmity we fall often, yet by our repentance we may rise again, and by our sincerity shall stand upright; that our endeavours to serve and please God (although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere) will be accepted by him: this is the tenour of that great covenant between heaven and earth, which the Son of God did procure by his intercession, did purchase by his merits of wonderful obedience and patience, did ratifie and seal by his blood; did publish to mankind, did confirm by miraculous works, did solemnize by holy institutions, doth by the Evangelical ministery

Psal. 130. 3, 4.
Ezek. 18. 30.

ministery continually recommend to all men; so that we can no-wise doubt of its full accomplishment on God's part, if we be not deficient on ours: so to our inestimable benefit and unspeakable comfort doth our Religion ease their conscience, and encourage them in the practice of their duty, who do sincerely embrace it, and firmly adhere thereto.

9. The last advantage which I shall mention of this doctrine, is this, that it propoundeth and asserteth it self in a manner very convincing and satisfactory: it propoundeth it self in a style and garb of speech as accommodate to the general capacity of its hearers, so proper to the authority which it claimeth, becoming the Majesty and sincerity of divine truth; it expresseth it self plainly and simply, without any affectation or artifice, without ostentation of wit or eloquence, such as men study to insinuate and impress their devices by: It also speaketh with an imperious and awfull confidence, such as argueth the speaker satisfied both of his own wisdom and authority; that he doubteth not of what he saith himself, that he knoweth his hearers obliged to believe him; its words are not like the words of a wise man, who is wary and carefull that he slip not into mistake (interposing therefore now and then his may-be's and perchances) nor like the words of a learned Scribe grounded on semblances of reason, and backed with testimonies; nor as the words of a crafty Sophister, who by long circuits, subtile fetches, and sly trains of discourse doth inveagle men to his opinion; but like the words of a King, carrying with them authority and power uncontrolable, commanding forthwith attention, assent and obedience; this you are to believe, this you are to doe, upon pain of our high displeasure, at your utmost peril be it; your life, your salvation dependeth thereon: such is the style and tenour thereof, plainly such as becometh the Sovereign Lord of all to use, when he shall please to proclaim his mind and will unto us. It freeth us from laborious and anxious inquiries, from endless disputes and janglings, from urging ineffectual arguments, and answering cross difficulties, *&c.* It doth also assert it self and approve its truth to the reason of man the most advantageously that can be; with proofs most suitable to it self, and in themselves most effectual; waving those inferiour methods of subtile argumentation and plausible language with which men are wont to confirm, or set off their conceits; which how weak they are, how unfit to maintain truth, their unsuccessfulness doth evince; seeing by those means scarce any man hath been able thoroughly either to settle himself in, or to draw others to a full persuasion concerning any important truth, discosted from sense: such methods therefore the Christian doctrine hath waved (or rather slighted, as beneath it self) applying arguments to the demonstration of its truth, far more potent, more sublime, and indeed truly divine; besides its intrinsick worth, or the excellency shining in its self (which speaketh it worthy of God, and goeth more than half way in proving it to proceed from him) there is no kind of attestation needful or proper, which God hath not afforded thereto; God is in himself invisible and undiscernible to any sense of ours, neither could we endure the lustre and glory of his immediate presence; it must be therefore by effects of his incommunicable power, by works extraordinary

1 Cor. 1. 17. 2. 2. Ἁπλῶς ὁ μῦθος θεᾶς ἔφυ. Eurip. *Vid.* Orig. *in* Celf *lib.* 6. Lact. 3. 1. Matt. 7. 29.

Οὐ γὰρ πτύπον ῥημάτων, οὐδὲ λέξεως κόμπον, οὐδὲ ὀνομάτων ἡδυσμάτων κόσμον καὶ συνθήκας ἐπιδεικνύμεθα φιλοσοφίας (πόρρω γὰρ ταῦτα τῆς φιλοσοφίας ἀπέστηκε) ἀλλὰ ἰσχὺν ἄμαχον καὶ θείαν, καὶ δογμάτων ὀρθῶν ἀμήχανον δύναμιν, καὶ μυείων χορηγίαν ἀγαθῶν. Chrys. *proœm. in* Joh.

Eccles. 8. 4.

Quæ quidem tradita sunt breviter, ac nude, nec enim decebat aliter, ut cùm Deus ad hominem loqueretur, argumentis assereret suas voces, tanquam fides ei non haberetur, sed ut oportuit est locutus, quasi rerum omnium maximus judex, cujus non est argumentari, sed pronunciare verum. Lact. 3. 1.

Legant nostra —— quàm excellenter, quàm divinè non tanquam ex philosophorum concertationibus strepere, sed tanquam ex oraculis & Dei nubibus intonare. Aug. *de Civ. Dei* 2. 19.

traordinary and supernatural (such as no creature can perform or counterfeit) that he must, if ever convincingly signifie his purpose or pleasure to us; and such innumerable hath God vouchsafed to yield in favour and countenance of our Religion; by clearly predicting and presignifying the future revelation of this doctrine by expres voices, and manifest apparitions from heaven, by suspending and thwarting the course of natural causes in many ways and instances, by miracles of providence no less remarkable than those of nature, by internal attestations to the minds and consciences of men; things too great slightly to be passed over, and the particular mention of which I must therefore now omit; by such wonderful means, I say, hath God taken care to convince us, that our Religion came from him, which is a peculiar advantage that it hath, such as no other Institution (except that of the *Jews*, which was a prelude thereto, and whose truth serveth to confirm it) can reasonably pretend unto; and a great perfection it is thereof, since as it is no small content to a traveller by a direction which he can fully confide in, to know that he is in the right way to his journeys end; so it cannot but prove an exceeding satisfaction and encouragement to us to be assured, by infallible testimony of God himself, that our Religion is the true and direct way unto eternal happiness.

These considerations may, I conceive, be sufficient, as to vindicate our Religion from all aspersions cast upon it either by inconsiderate and injudicious, or by vain and dissolute persons; so to confirm us all in the esteem, and incite us to the practice thereof; which use of them God in his mercy grant, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord; to whom for ever be all praise. *Amen.*

1 Pet. 4. 10. Now *the God of grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus —— Make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

2 Thes. 2. 16. *Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.*

And

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVII.

THAT

JESUS

IS THE

True MESSIAS.

ACTS IX. 22.

——Proving that this is the very Christ.

AS for the name of the *Messias*, there is evident reason, why it should not be openly expressed in the ancient predictions; it being an easy thing for any persons out of imposture, or wantonness to have assumed that name, and consequently it would not have suited so well the true person. It was therefore more expedient, that his name should rather only be covertly signified or intimated; it was sufficient that a name should be imposed on him well agreeing to his office and chief performances. There be indeed several names attributed to the *Messias*; *They shall call his name Emanuel* (said *Esay*) *This is his name, whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness (Jehovah tsidkenu)* And, *His name shall be called Wonderful, Councellour, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace*, said *Esaias* again; but it is apparent, that these were not intended to be so much his proper names, as attributes, or epithets congruous unto him in regard to the eminency of his person, and performances.

But Saul encreased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews, which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the very Christ. Euseb. *hist.* 1. 3.

Es. 7. 14. Jer. 23. 6. Is. 9. 6.

The Prophet *Zechary* seemeth also (insisting in the footsteps of *Esay* and *Jeremy*) to assign him the name *Netser* (or the Branch) *Behold the man whose name is the Branch*; but this onely denoted an appellation suiting him, as derived from the stock of *David*, and might beside mystically allude to some circumstance concerning him. It doth not therefore appear, that the one proper name, by which the *Messias*, as the son of Man should be known and called, is directly forementioned; yet it is reasonable to suppose, that God would have an especial care, that he should have one befitting him. It was one of the seven things, which

Zech. 6. 12. 3. 8. Is. 4. 2. 11. 1. Jer. 23. 5. 33. 15. Matt. 2. 23.

which the *Talmudists* say were constituted before the world: the *Law*, *Repentance*, *Paradise*, *Hell*, the *Throne of glory*, *the Sanctuary*, the *name* of the *Messias*; according to that in the seventy second *Psalm* (verse 17.) *Ante solem primum nomen ejus*; so it seems they read it: the LXX. have it, πρὸ τοῦ ἡλίου διαμενεῖ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ.

It was anciently a method of divine providence to impose upon persons (destinated by God to be special subjects of his favour, and eminent ministers of his glory) names answerable to the nature of their employment, or to the design, which was by their means and ministery to be accomplished. Whereby as God's care and providence over humane affairs was declared, so men upon the mention of such names were admonished to consider the divine benefits, and the duties correspondent to them. The particular reason of imposing such names is sometime expressly set down; as in the cases of *Seth*, *Abraham*, *Israel*, *Solomon*; Gen. 4. 25. 17. 5. 32. 28. 1 Chr. 22. 9. Gen. 13. 18. Heb. 7. 1. sometime it seems tacitly implied, the actions of the persons interpreting the reason of their names, as in *Melchisedeck*, *Joshua*, *Malachy*, and perhaps in many others.

This method with great reason we may suppose, that the same divine wisdom would use in assigning a name to that Person, whom from the Joh. 10. 36. beginning of things he had promised, and before the foundation of the world had designed to sanctify and send into the world, for atchieving the most high, and excellent design, that ever for the glory of God and the good of his creation, was to be undertaken in this world. Most fit it would be, that God himself should be his God-father; that he should have no ordinary, no casual, no insignificant name; but such an one, which being heard might instruct and admonish us, might raise in us a sense of God's infinite mercy and bounty toward us; might breed love in our hearts, and impress veneration on our minds toward him, who should bear that auspicious and comfortable name; that *name*, which as Cant. 1. 3. the spouse of the mystical *Solomon* in her mystical song did sing is *as an ointment poured forth*, full of most wholsome, and most pleasant fragrancy.

Now since of all the *Messias* his performances none was to be more Is. 25. 9. 35. 4. 49. 8, 26. 63. 1. 55. 5. 52. 7. 10. 61. 10. 59. 16. Hos. 1. 7. Zech. 9. 9. Joh. 4 42. signal, than that of saving; to publish, to purchase, to effect salvation were to be (according to what the Prophets expressly and frequently say) his peculiar works; to be the Saviour of the world was (as we before touched, according to the common opinion of the *Jews*) a proper attribute of his.

Wherefore the name *Jesus* (which we are told in the Gospel was by direction from God imparted by particular revelation, brought by an Archangel from heaven, imposed on our Lord) did very well suit the *Messias*. No other name could be more sweet, or acceptable; no other Mat. 1. 21. Luke 1. 32. 2. 21. name could better become him, who was to redeem men from all their enemies, their slaveries, their errours, their sins, their miseries.

It was indeed a name not in its immediate application altogether new, Col. 4. 11. for many others had born it; *Jesus*, *the son of Justus* we have mentioned in Saint *Paul*, *Jesus* the son of *Sirach*, that excellent writer we know; and divers others so named occur in *Josephus*; yet was it questionless by Gods providence, or by *Moses*, by divine instinct, first produced with relation to the *Messias*; *Moses called Oshea the son of Nun Je-* Basil. Iren. &c. Num. 13. 16. *hoshua*, saith the Text: being in a mysterious exchange from a former Ecclus. 46. 1. name assigned to the famous *Jesus* (as not onely *Ben-sirach*, but the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* write him) the son of *Nun*, who of all the ancient Heb. 4. 8. types did most exactly (in office and performance) represent and presignify

nify the *Messias*; being (as *Ben-sirach* speaks) *great for the saving of God's elect*; whose actions are wonderfully congruous to those, which we attribute to our *Jesus*. For, by the way to shew the resemblance (omitting less, and more nice congruities) as *Joshua* did bring the good report, and evangelized concerning the promised land (when other false or faint inquirers defamed it, and discouraged the people from entring) as he was educated under *Moses* and served him faithfully; as he succeeded in the administration and government of God's people, perfecting what *Moses* had begun of deliverance and settlement to them; As he brought the *Israelites* (not that old disbelieving, mutinous and repining generation, but a new progeny of better disposed people) finally out of the wilderness into *Canaan*, by God's miraculous assistance, subduing their Enemies, and establishing them in a quiet possession of the promised land, allotting unto each Tribe its inheritance; and as he did re-circumcise the children of *Israel*: so did our heavenly *Jesus* first make a true and faithful discovery concerning the mystical land of promise (that better country) flowing with spiritual milk and honey (abundant with all spiritual comforts and pleasures, for the food, sustenance and refreshment of our souls.) He was born under the Law and submitted to its injunctions, fulfilling all righteousness. He survived it (the part of it, which was purely *Mosaical* and arbitrary) and did complete it. He doth conduct God's regenerate People (such as believe, and willingly follow him) out of the desart state of errour, guilt and sin, into the superiour state of happy rest and joy, with miraculous power and efficacy; vanquishing all the spiritual *Amorites* (the *Devil*, *World* and *Flesh*) which infest, obstruct and oppose them; settling them in a perpetual undisturbed and immoveable enjoyment of that blissful region; having also by a spiritual circumcision prepared and consecrated them to God. Our Saviour therefore not only when he at last in fulness of truth did come into the world, but anciently in type and shadow may be supposed to have received this name *Jesus*, conferr'd upon him in the person of *Joshua*, his most illustrious representative. It certainly was most apposite to the *Messias*.

Numb. 14. 7.

Josh. 5. 2.

Heb. 11.

Gal. 4. 4. Matth. 3. 15. Matth. 5. 17.

Ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς, σωτηρίας, πίστεως.

That *Jesus* (that Person, whose birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension hence, are related in the Evangelical histories) is *the Christ*, is the principal Article of pure faith; the most peculiar doctrine of our Religion as such, and as distinct from all other Religions: it indeed virtually comprehends all other Doctrines of moment therein, regarding either faith or practice. For that our being persuaded that *Jesus* is *the Christ*, implies, that we apprehend our selves obliged to embrace for truth whatever was taught by him and his Apostles, to obey all his laws, to rely upon him for attainment of all the mercies and blessings, and rewards, which he promised to dispence, in that order and upon those terms, which the Gospel declareth. Whence to the hearty belief of this Point such great commendations are given, so high rewards are offered, so excellent privileges are annexed in the Scriptures. Whence also the declaring, proving and persuading this doctrine was the chief matter of the Apostles preaching, as both their profession and practice do shew. *The Jews* (saith Saint *Paul* to the *Corinthians*) *require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom, but we preach Christ, that was crucified.* And, *I determined* (saith he again of himself) *not to know any thing among you* (that is not to discover any other knowledge, not to insist on any other subject) *save Jesus Christ, even him that was crucified.* This Saint *John* tells us was the drift of his writing the Gospel (which is a more extensive, and durable way of preaching,

1 Cor. 1. 23. 2. 2. καὶ τοῦτον ἐσταυρωμένον.

Joh. 20. 31. preaching) *These things* (saith he) *were written, that ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ.* And their practice, suitable to such professions, is apparent in divers passages of this Book, wherein their acts, and their discourses are reported. This Text particularly represents the scope, to which Saint *Paul* mainly directed his Preaching, which was the maintenance and persuasion of this Point, that *Jesus is the Christ.*

It is therefore very requisite, that we should well understand the meaning thereof, and that we should firmly be persuaded of its truth. To which purpose I shall endeavour, by God's assistance, to imitate S. *Paul*'s practice here, who did συμβιβάζειν (that is the *Greek* word here, signifying primarily to put, or bring things together, and thence in a way of collection or argumentation to teach) who, I say, did instruct his auditours, collecting it from testimonies of ancient scripture, and confirming it by arguments grounded thereon. In performing which I shall observe this method.

1. I shall explain the notion and reason of this name, or title *Christ.*

2. I shall shew (that which is here tacitly supposed) that there was by God's appointment to be, or to come into the world from God one Person, signally that, which this name or title imports, ὁ χριστὸς, *the very Christ.*

3. I shall argue that *Jesus* was that Person.

4. I shall explain in what manner, in what respects, to what purposes *Jesus* in the *New Testament* is represented as *Christ.*

5. I shall make some practical application of the Point.

Joh. 1. 21. 4. 25. I. For the first particular. *Christ* is a name, or title importing office and dignity; being the same with *Messias*, that in *Greek*, this in *Hebrew* signifying, the Anointed; the which appellation we find attributed to several persons upon the following ground: Of ancient times in the *Eastern* Countries (abounding as with good oyl, so with many delicate odoriferous spices) it seems generally to have been the manner (as from 1 King. 19. 15. *Hazael* the *Syrian* his being anointed may probably be collected) it was however such among the *Jews*, to separate or consecrate persons (and things also I might add) designed to any great or extraordinary employment, by anointing them with ointments composed of those ingredients; they symbolizing, or denoting thereby (as it seems) both a plentiful effusion upon them of gifts and faculties qualifying them for such services; and also a comfortable and pleasant diffusion of good and grateful effects expected from them (from the use of things, the per- Cant. 1. 2. formances of persons thus sanctified) *Thy name*, saith the *spouse* in the *Canticles, is as an ointment poured forth*; that is, thy name is very de- Psal. 133. 1, 2. lightful, very acceptable. And, *Behold* (saith *David*, commending brotherly love and concord) *how good and pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity; it is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard*——so good and pleasant were those employments hoped to be, to which men were by such unction inaugurated. We find especially *three* sorts of Persons, to whom this consecration did, by divine appointment, belong; *Kings*, *Priests* and *Prophets*; persons by whose ministery God of old did manage his entercourse with men, in governing them and communicating his blessings to them, both in an ordinary way (so he used *Kings* and *Priests*) and in an extraordinary manner, therein he employed *Prophets*; which sorts of persons are therefore styled God's anointed; *Kings* and *Priests* more frequently, but sometimes also *Prophets*; as in that of the Psal. 105. 15. *Psalm: Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm*; where Prophets

phets and the Anointed of God do seem to denote the same thing, and one to expound the other; however they belong to the same persons: for *Abraham*, whom together with the other *Patriarchs* those words concern, is expressly called a Prophet. *(Now therefore,* saith the Text, *restore the man his wife, for he is a Prophet, and he shall pray for thee; and thou shalt live.)* And that *Isaac* was a Prophet the *Apostle*, to the *Hebrews* intimates, saying; *By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come*; The same is plain of *Jacob*, who before his death uttered many great and remarkable predictions. The *Patriarchs* therefore probably as Prophets were styled *God's anointed*. But to remark somewhat of these great offices, and their anointing singly:

1 Chron. 16. 22.

Gen. 20. 7.

Heb. 11. 20.

For *Priests*, although at first all the Sons of *Aaron* were thus consecrated, according to that Law in *Exodus*, *Thou shalt anoint Aaron, and his sons, that they may minister unto me in the Priests office*; Yet the *Jewish* Masters tell us, that afterward in all the course of times only the High-priest was so consecrated. Whence by the anointed, or the Priest that is anointed is, say they, meant the High-priest, in distinction from other inferiour Priests.

Exod. 30. 30. 40. 15. Χειροτονήσεις. Mac. 2. 1. 10. Selden. *de Succ.* 2. 9. Levit. 4. 3. 5. 16. 6. 22.

For Kings, the *Jewish* Doctors also (as Master *Selden* reports) do tell us, that such of them, who in a legal, orderly, and unquestioned course of right did succeed into the Kingdom, were not themselves in person anointed (they being conceived to derive a sufficient consecration from their Ancestours) but all those, who in an extraordinary way by special designation (as *Saul*, *David*, *Jehu*, *Hazael*) or upon a doubtfull, and controverted, or opposed title (as *Salomon* and *Joas*) did assume the royal charge, were thus initiated. (How ancient also the custom of anointing Princes was, may be seen from that expression in *Jotham*'s parable: *The trees went forth to anoint a King over them, and they said to the Olive-tree, Reign thou over us.*)

ὃς ἢ αὐτὸς πνεύματι θείῳ. Προφῆτα χειρονόησεν εἶναι. κάς τινας χειρὸς ἀπειρημένους. Euseb. *Hist.* 1. 3. 2 King. 9. 3. 11. 12. 1 King. 19. 15. 1. 39. Jud. 9. 8.

As for *Prophets*, we do not find that they were commonly, or according to ordinary rule anointed; but one plain instance we have of *Elisha*, substituted to *Eliah* (the chief of Prophets in his time) in this manner: *Elisha*, (it is said by God) *the son of Shaphat shalt thou anoint to be Prophet in thy room*; who was thus consecrated, probably, because he was to be a Prophet more than ordinary, endewed with higher gifts, and designed to greater actions, than common Prophets were then; or perhaps because he was to be the *Arch-prophet*, or head of the Prophets at that time.

1 King. 19. 16.

We may also farther observe, that some persons, who (in probability) did not partake any material unction, but were yet destinated by God, and qualified and employed as special instruments of his providence or grace, for producing effects sutable to any of those offices, have been therefore styled *God's anointed*. Upon which score the *Patriarchs* (by whom God's true Religion was maintained and conveyed) do seem to have been called God's Anointed. And King *Cyrus* (whose ministery God used in the re-edifying his Temple, and refreshing his People is therefore termed God's *Christ*, or *Anointed (Thus saith the Lord to his Anointed, to Cyrus my Christ*; τῷ Χριστῷ μου Κύρῳ) the name of the sign being imparted to persons, who were endewed with the qualities, or did perform the effects signified thereby.

1 Chron. 16. 22. Isa. 45. 1. 44. 28.

These things being considered, it appeareth that the name *Christ*, doth import a Person in a special and signal manner designed and ordained by God to one, or some, or all of these charges and functions; an extraordinary *King*, or a great *Priest*, or an eminent *Prophet*; or one,

in whom either more, or all of these did concur; so much may suffice for the notion and reason of this title, *Christ*.

II. Now that there was a person, supereminently endued with all these characters (a *Christ* in all these respects) decreed by God in due time to come into the world for accomplishment of the greatest purposes answerable to that Title (for the instruction and reformation of the world, for the erecting and managing an universal and perpetual Kingdom, for the reconciliation and benediction of mankind, for the reduction of all Nations to the acknowledgment of God, and obedience to his will, and hope in his mercy) many express passages in the ancient Scripture declare.

That such a Prophet should be sent *Moses* in express terms foretold: Deut. 18. 15. 18. *The Lord thy God* (saith he) *shall raise up unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren, like unto me, unto him shall ye hearken.* And, Joh. 1. 46. Act. 3. 22. 7. 37. *I will* (saith God himself) *raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee: And I will put my words into his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him*, &c. which words plainly describe a very extraordinary Prophet sometime to come, who was (signally and especially, beyond all other Prophets) to resemble *Moses*; who consequently was to accomplish high designs, and to atchieve Deut. 33. 10. wonderfull acts; to conduct and deliver God's people, to reveal God's mind and will, to promulge a new Law, and establish a new Covenant; so his resembling *Moses* doth imply, so his mission doth signify (for why, if he were not intended for the performance of somewhat great and new, even beyond what *Moses* did, should he be designed so formally; what need or reason had there been of his mission, after *Moses*?) and so the later Prophets do interpret the great Law-giver his words: Who largely predict concerning one, ordained by God to come, who should eminently discharge all parts of the prophetical function; who should disclose new truths to men, should proclaim a new law to Jer. 31. 33. Isa. 49. 8. the world, should *establish a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with all people*; who should propagate the knowledge and worship of God, enlightning the Gentiles, and converting them unto God; who should instruct the ignorant, strengthen the faint, comfort the afflicted; Es. 61. 1. according to divers passages concerning him; as for instance *that* in *Esay*, Luc. 4. 18. cited by S. *Luke*: *The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted* — and *that* in the same Prophet, alledged by Isa. 42. 1. Matt. 12. 18. S. *Matthew*: *Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my spirit upon him; he shall bring forth judgment unto the Gentiles, he shall not cry*, &c. which being anointed to preach tidings, and to bring forth judgment from God; being elected and inspired by God in order to such performances are peculiar marks of a Prophet; such promulgation of God's will, such ministration of direction and comfort from God are the proper employment of a Prophet, that is of an especial Agent sent and qualified by God to transact spiritual affairs with men, and to declare or denounce his pleasure to them.

The ancient Scriptures do also plainly signifie concerning the same Act. 2. 36. person, that he should be a great *Prince* constituted by God to govern his people for ever in righteousness, peace and prosperity; endewed Luc. 1. 71, 74. with power requisite for delivering them from oppression and slavery; for subduing their enemies, for reducing the nations under subjection Isa. 9. 6. 11. 1, 10. 16. 5. to God. So *Esay*: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the*

the government shall be upon his shoulders——*Of the encrease of his government and peace there shall be no end; upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom to order it, and to establish it, with judgment, and with justice for ever. Jeremy: Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a King shall reign, and prosper; and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth: in his days* Judah *shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. Ezekiel: I will save my flock, they shall be no more a prey*——*and I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them*——*they shall also walk in my statutes, and observe my statutes, and do them. Daniel: I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the ancient of days*——*And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, and nations, and languages shall serve him: His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. Hosea: The children of Israel shall return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their King; and shall fear the Lord, and his goodness in the latter days.* The *Psalmist: I have set my King upon my holy hill of Sion; ask of me, and I will give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.* In these, and in many other places do the Prophets speak (very perspicuously and magnificently) concerning the Kingdom, Royal state, and Princely atchievements of this great Personage who should come.

Jer. 23. 5. 33. 15. 30. 8. Ezek. 34. 22, &c. 36. 21, &c. 37. 21, &c. Dan. 7. 13. 7. 18. 2. 44, 45. Hos. 3. 5. Psal. 2. 6, 8. 72. 11, 17. 45. 6. 89. 3. 27, 36. 132. 17, 18.

That he also should assume and execute the *Priestly* function may also be learned from prophetical instruction. For of him *Zechary* thus spake: *Behold the man, whose name is the Branch*; (a name, which so often (in sense) is attributed to this Person as sprouting from the stock of *David*) *he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit, and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a Priest upon his throne; and the counsel of the Lord shall be between them both.* Of him also *David* spake: *The Lord hath sworn and will not repent; thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.* To *make reconciliation for iniquity* (which *Daniel* ascribes to him) to *bear the sins of the people*, and to *make intercession for the transgressours* (which are assigned to him by *Esay*) are also performances, from which his sacerdotal office may be collected.

Zech. 6. 12. ἀνατολὴ צֶמַח. Psal. 110. 4. Dan. 9. 24. Isa. 53. 12.

These things being considered, it is no wonder, that the ancient *Jews* (although the Text of Scripture doth seldom, perhaps not oftner than once (in the *ninth* of *Daniel*) explicitely and directly apply this name of *Christ*, or *Messias* to this illustrious Person, so prophecyed of, and promised to come) did especially assign this title unto him; it seeming of any most congruous, and most comprehensive of what appertained to him; most apt to denote all the prerogatives, the endowments, the atchievements, the effects which should belong to him, or proceed from him. Whence 'tis observed by the learned, that the *Chaldee* Paraphrases (composed, as they say, before *Jesus* our Lord his time, by the Priests, as an interpretation of the not so exactly understood *Hebrew* Scripture, for edification and instruction of the people) doth very often apply unto him this name of the *Messias*: according to whose exposition and style, together with tradition continually deduced down from the Prophets themselves (as is probable) we see plainly from the New Testament, and from other History conspiring therewith, that God's people unanimously did expect a Person under this name and notion, who should be endued with qualities and should perform actions conformable to the characters mentioned, to come in determinate time into the

Psal. 45. 7. Isa. 61. 1.

Luk. 2. 38. world. Of *Anna* the Propheteſs it is ſaid, that *ſhe gave thanks likewiſe to the Lord, and ſpake of him* πᾶσι τοῖς προσδεχομένοις λύτρωσιν. *to all that*
Luk. 3. 15. *expected redemption in Jeruſalem.* Hence when S. *John* the *Baptiſt* did live, and teach in a manner extraordinary, *the people did expect, and all men muſed in their hearts concerning him, whether he were the Chriſt.*
Joh. 1. 19. Yea *the Jews* (that is their Senate, or great *Synedrium*) *ſent Prieſts and Levites to inquire of him, whether he were the Chriſt or no:* And when *Jeſus* his admirable diſcourſes and works had convinced divers perſons,
Joh. 7. 31. they ſaid, *When Chriſt comes, ſhall he do greater miracles than this man*
Joh. 1. 46. *hath done*? and the report which *Philip* made to *Nathanael* concerning
Joh. 4. 42. *Jeſus* was this: *We have found him, of whom* Moſes *in the law and the prophets did write*; ſo at large did they preſume concerning *a Chriſt to come.* That they particularly did conceive he ſhould be a great Prophet who ſhould abundantly declare God's truth and will, may be gathered
Joh. 6. 12. from divers paſſages; as from that in S. *John: Men therefore ſeeing the miracle that Jeſus had done, ſaid, That this is in truth the prophet, who*
Luk. 7. 16. *was to come into the world.* Thus may that in S. *Luke* be taken: *And there came a fear upon all, and they glorifyed God, ſaying; that the great*
Joh. 4. 25. *prophet is riſen up among us, and that God hath viſited his people*; and this the *Samaritan* woman implied, when ſhe ſaid, *I know that the Meſſias comes, and when he ſhall come he will tell us all things.* That they ſuppoſed he ſhould be a King, who ſhould be furniſhed with mighty power, and ſhould perform wonderful acts,; who ſhould aſſume the government of God's people with royal Majeſty, and execute it with glorious ſucceſs, is moſt clear. It was no wonder to King *Herod* to hear the
Matt. 2. 2, 4. Wiſe-mens inquiry, *Where is he that is born King of the Jews?* upon it he immediately demands of the *Scribes where Chriſt is to be born.* Hence
Joh. 1. 50. no ſooner did *Nathanael* believe in *Chriſt*, but he cries out, *Maſter, thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of Iſrael.* It was upon this ſuppoſition that the Prieſts grounded their calumny: *We have found this man*
Luk. 23. 3. *perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæſar, ſaying that he himſelf is Chriſt, the King*; as alſo hence (upon information and by
Luk. 19. 38. inſtinct from them) *Pilate* asked him that queſtion, *Art thou the King of the Jews:* hence likewiſe proceeded that acclamation: Εὐλογημένος ὁ ἐρχόμενος βασιλεύς, *Bleſſed is the King, that is to come in the name of the Lord.* And it was from this ancient popular prejudice, that the A-
Act. 1. 6. poſtles asked *Jeſus* after his reſurrection: *Lord wilt thou at this time reſtore the Kingdom to Iſrael?* It is indeed the ordinary Title, which the *Talmudiſts* and ancient *Rabbins* give the *Meſſias Hammelech Meſſiah, Meſſias the King.*

That the *Meſſias* in their opinion was alſo to be a *Prieſt*, is not ſo clearly apparent; yet it may probably be inferred: That they underſtood the 110*th Pſalm* to reſpect the *Meſſias* is very likely, or rather
Matt. 22. 43. certain from that paſſage in the Goſpel; in which *Jeſus* asked the *Phariſees, What think ye of Chriſt, whoſe ſon is he?* and, they anſwering, *the Son of David*, he returned upon them this puzling queſtion: *How then doth David in the Spirit* (that is prophetically) *call him Lord, ſaying, The Lord ſaid unto my Lord, ſit thou on my right hand*; which queſtion confounded them, they not daring to deny that *Pſalm* to reſpect the *Meſſias* (it being the received opinion among the *Doctors*) nor yet ſeeing how the Relations of *Son* and *Lord* were reconcileable: And admitting
Pſal. 110. 4. that *Pſalm* was to be referr'd unto the *Meſſias*, they muſt conſequently acknowledge him to be a *Prieſt*; for it is there ſaid, *The Lord hath ſworn, and will not repent, Thou art a Prieſt for ever after the order of Melchizedek.*

Melchizedek. It was also an opinion passing among them, that the *Messias* should be the Saviour of the World, as may be collected from that saying of the *Samaritans: We have heard him our selves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world:* Which being their opinion, and toward the salvation of Men it being needful, that a reconciliation of them unto God, and an expiation of their sins (which are Sacerdotal acts) should be procured by him, it seems to follow, that they had some notion of his *Priesthood*. Indeed the persuasion concerning a *Messias* to come, about the time when our Lord appeared, became diffused over the whole *Eastern* parts; as even *Pagan* Historians (*Tacitus* and *Suetonius* do report.) And the conceit thereof was so vigorous in the *Jews*, that it excited them to rebellion, and encouraged them with great obstinacy to persist therein, as not only those *Historians*, but *Josephus* himself telleth us; he also together with them (which is somewhat strange) referring the intent of those Prophecies, and the verifying of that opinion to the person of the Emperour *Vespasian*. The same conceit did then likewise occasion many Pretenders and Impostours (such as *Theudas*, and *Judas* the *Galilæan*) to arise, disposing also the People so easily to be deluded by them, and so readily to run after them, as they did to their own harm.

Joh. 4. 42. Luk. 2. 38.

Percrebuerat oriente toto vetus & constans opinio esse in fatis, ut eo tempore Judææ profecti rerum potirentur. Suet. *in* Vesp.

Pluribus persuasio inerat antiquis sacerdotum literis contineri, eo ipso tempore fore ut valescerent Orientis, profectique Judæa rerum potirentur. Tacitus Hist. *V.*

Τὸ δ' ἐπέφηνε αὐτὸς μάλιστα πρὸς τὸ πόλεμον ἐπὶ χρησμὸς ἀμφίβολος ὁμοίως ἐν τοῖς ἱεροῖς εὑρημένος γράμμασιν, ὡς κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον ἀπὸ τῆς χώρας τις αὐτῶν ἄρξει τῆς οἰκουμένης. --- ἔδηλε δ' ἅμα τῶν πρὸς Οὐεσπασιανὸν τὸ λόγιον ἡγεμονίαν, ἀποδεικνύντων ὅτι Ἰουδαίας αὐτοκράτορος. Jos. *de bello* 6. 31.

Thus according to the ancient Scriptures, interpreted, and backed by the current Tradition, and general consent of God's People, it is sufficiently apparent, that a *Messias* (according to the notion premised) was to come into the world.

III. Now farther, that *Jesus*, whom we acknowledge, was indeed that *Messias* may appear plainly from the perfect correspondency of all circumstances belonging to the *Messias* his appearance, and of all characters suting his Person, and of all things to be performed by him; together with whatever was to be consequent upon his presence and performances; according to ancient presignifications and predictions, and according to the passable opinions of God's People concerning him; the which (as they cannot possibly sute with any other person, that hath yet appeared, or may reasonably be expected to come hereafter, so) they exactly agree to the coming, and person, and practice, and success of *Jesus*.

Among circumstances the most considerable is the time; the which (both when it was said that he should come, and when it was fit that he should come) did very well agree to *Jesus*. *But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son*, &c. *Fulness* in regard to ancient prediction, in regard to fitness of season. For as the *Messias* was to be *the desire of all Nations*, so *Jesus* did come then, when by special instinct a general expectation and desire of his coming was raised in the world; at the time, when the Patriarch *Jacob* foretold that *Shiloh would come*, viz. *when the sceptre was* just *departed from Judah, and a Law-giver from his feet*; *Judæa* being brought under the dominion of strangers (such were the *Romans*, such was King *Herod*.) About the expiration of *Daniel's* weeks (however commenced, or computed) *the time determined to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to introduce everlasting righteousness; to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy* (as the *Prophet* speaks.) Shortly before the

Gal. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 10. Act. 14. 16. 17. 30.

Gen. 49. 8. 10

Dan. 9. 24.

Dan. 9. 26. the destruction of *Hierusalem*, according to that of *Daniel*: *And after sixty and two weeks shall Messias be cut off, but not for himself, and the people of the Prince that shall come shall destroy the city, and the sanctuary.* When that *Sion, out of which* (as *Esay* tells *us*) *the law was to go forth*; Is. 2. 3. 59. 20. *and out of which the Redeemer should come, and turn ungodliness from Jacob*, did stand and flourish. When the Temple did stand, which the Prophets *Malachi* and *Haggai* did predict should be illustrated by the Mal. 3. 1. presence of the *Messiah*: *The Lord, whom ye seek*, saith *Malachi*, *shall suddenly come to his Temple*; *even the messenger of the Covenant in whom ye* Hag. 2. 6, 7, 9. *delight*: and, *I will* (saith *Haggai*) *shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come*; *and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord*; *the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the glory of the former, saith the Lord of hosts.* Before *Jewry* was desolated, *Jerusalem* destroyed, the *Tribes* and *Families* of *Israel* confounded, all that People wofully Isa. 2. 4. 11. 6. 65. 25. 66. 12. Psal. 72. 7. dispersed, and in a palpable manner deserted by God. When the *Jewish* Religion (which the *Messias* was to complete) was by a numerous accession of *Proselytes* disseminated, and diffused through many Provinces of that one vast Empire, under which a great part of the world was united and settled durably in a calm state of peace and order: when one or two Languages were commonly understood by all, and men thereby more easily conversed together; and when the ancient Scriptures being Dan. 12. 4. translated into *Greek* were so widely intelligible. When mankind was become generally civilized and cultivated with laws, and policy, and learning; with knowledge of Arts and Philosophy; the world then beginning of it self to open its eyes, so as to discern the errours and deceits, by which it long had been abused; and was thence well prepared to learn, and rendred very susceptive of divine truth; when all things thus conspired with good advantage to entertain the *Christ*, then *in the fulness of time*, in the right, and *proper season* (καιροῖς ἰδίοις, as S. *Paul* speaketh) καιρῷ δεκτῷ, *in an acceptable time*, as *Esay* propheſyed, did *Jesus* come, to instruct and reform the world, as he professed. It was *Porphyry*'s objection against *Christianity*, and an obvious one, why *Christ* did not come before, but in the latter days; to which the particular fitness of this time is an answer.

Gal. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 10. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Isa. 49. 8. 2 Cor. 6. 2.

The other circumstances; the Family out of which, the place where, the manner in which *Jesus* was born, did also punctually correspond. He was to be an *Israelite*, according to the promise made of old to *Abraham*, that *in his Seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed*; and Gen. 22. 18. Deut. 18. 15. according to *Moses* his Prophecy: *The Lord thy God shall raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee of thy brethren.* He was to come Gen. 49. 7. &c. out of the Tribe of *Judah*; as the Patriarch *Jacob* in his last prophetical rapture did by various expressions intimate and signifie. Particularly he Rev. 5. 5. 22. 16. was to rise out of the Family of *David*, as the Prophets frequently and Isa. 11. 1, 10. clearly did avouch; for he was (as *Esay* said) *to be a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch going out of his roots*; *a righteous branch* (according Jer. 23. 5. 33. 15. to *Jeremy*) *whom God would raise to David.* He whom *Solomon* (that most wise, peaceable and prosperous Prince, who raised that glorious Temple, the emblem of God's Church) did presignifie; and in whom the promises made to *David*, concerning the perpetuity of his throne should be made good; *There shall not fail thee a man*, &c. — *Thine* 1 King. 8. 25. 2 Sam. 7. 16. *house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee*; *thy throne* 2 Chr. 6. 16. *shall be established for ever*; especially that absolute and irrevocable Psal. 89. 3. 132. 11. promise ratified by God's oath: *I have made a covenant with my chosen, I* Luc. 1. 32. 69. *have sworn unto David, my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever, and*

build

build up thy throne unto all generations: who consequently by reason of conjunction in bloud, and mutual representation, *David* prefiguring him, and he by succession into the imperial right expressing *David*, is by several of the Prophets (by *Jeremy*, by *Ezekiel*, by *Hoshea*) called *David*, whence the learned among the *Jews* did consent, that the *Messias* was to be the Son of *David*: *How say the Scribes that Christ is the Son of David?* and, *What think ye of Christ, whose Son is he?* ('tis our *Lord*'s question to the *Pharisees*) *they say unto him, The Son of David.* Yea the people were generally informed herein, and possessed with this sentiment: *Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David?* was a popular speech in S. *John*. *And all the people were amazed, and said, is not this the Son of David?* Now accordingly that *Jesus* came out of this Country, Tribe and Family (that he was, as S. *Luke* speaketh, *of the house and lineage of David*, both according to natural and legal succession) the express affirmation of Angels, the positive attestation of his Parents and Kindred (who best knew) the genealogies (according to the manner of those times, and that Nation) carefully preserved, and produced by the *Evangelists*, do assure us; neither doth it appear that *Jesus* his Adversaries did ever contest this point, but seem by their silence to have granted it, as easily and evidently proveable by authentick records and testimonies.

Act. 2. 30. Jer. 33. 17. 21, 22, 26. Jer. 30. 9. Hos. 3. 5. Ezek. 34. 23. 24. 37. 24, 25. Marc. 12. 35. Matt. 22. 42. (Mat. 21. 9. Mar. 12. 23.) Joh. 7. 42. Matt. 12. 23.

More precisely yet for the *place* of the *Messias* his birth, it was to be the Town of *Bethlehem*; so the Prophet *Micah* foretold; thus cited by S. *Matthew*: *Thou Bethlehem in the land of* Judah, *art not the least among the Princes of* Judah; *for out of thee shall come a Governour, that shall rule my people Israel.* So from hence did the learned judge; for being consulted by King *Herod, where Christ was to be born*, they answered *that in Bethlehem*: and so also did the people commonly believe, as appears by the foresaid passage in S. *John*: *Hath not the Scripture said, that Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the Town of Bethlehem, where David was?* Now that *Jesus* should be there born God himself took especial care, ordering it by his providence, that by imperial edict the world should be taxed, or registred; and that in order thereto the Parents of *Jesus* should be forced to go from a distant place of their habitation unto *Bethlehem*, the place of their stock and family; that so both *Jesus* might be born there, and that good circumstance might appear certain by the unquestionable testimony of the *Censual Tables*, unto which (extant even in their times) *Justin Martyr*, *Tertullian* and Saint *Chrysostome* refer those, who would be certified in that particular.

Mich. 5. 2. Matt. 2. 7. Matt. 2. 5. Joh. 7. 42.

Κώμη τίς ἐστιν ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ Ἰουδαίων σφόδρα ἀπ' Ἱερουσαλήμ, ἐν ᾗ ἐγεννήθη Ἰησοῦς Χριστός, ὡς καὶ μαθεῖν δύνασθε ἐκ τῶν ἀπογραφῶν, &c. Just. Martyr. *Apol.* 2. Tertull. *in* Marc. 4. 19.

That place also of his Parents abode in *Nazareth* of *Galilee*, upon which was consequent his first appearance in way of action, was so ordered, as to answer ancient predictions; according to which it was said, that *in the land of Zebulon and Nephthali, by the way of the Sea beyond Jordan in Galilee of the nations, the people that walked in darkness did see a great light, and they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them the light shined.*

Es. 1. 2. Mat. 4. 15.

The manner also of the *Messias* his birth, was as became such a Person, to be very extraordinary, and different from the common generation of men: for he was not only to be *One like the Son of man* (as the Prophet *Daniel* terms him) and indeed *the Son of David*, as all the Prophecies declare of him, but the *Son of God* also: for, *Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee* saith God of him in the second *Psalm*.

Dan. 7. 13. Psal. 2. 7, 12.

And

And that which in the first less perfect sense was said of *Solomon* (who prefigured him) was according to a more sublime meaning, and more
1 Chr. 22. 10. 2 Sam. 7. 13. Psal. 89. 27. exactly to agree unto him: *He shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever: Also I will make him my first-born higher than the kings of the earth:* And accordingly we see, that the *Jews* (both the wiser, and the vulgar sort) did suppose that he should be *the Son of God*? So S. *John* the *Baptist*, so
John 1. 34. 49. 11. 27. 6. 69. *Nathanael*, so *Martha*, so S. *Peter*, and the other *Apostles*, when they became persuaded that *Jesus* was the *Christ*, did presently, according to
Matt. 16. 16. anticipation of judgment common to them with the people, confess him to be *the Son of God*; the *High-priest* himself intimated the same,
Mark 14. 61. when he asked *Jesus: Art thou the Christ, the Son of the blessed?* Yea,
Matt. 26. 63. the Devils themselves were learned and orthodox in this point; who
Matt. 8. 29. Mark 1. 24. cried out, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of God.* Now that, according to
Luc. 4. 34. those Prophecies and those Traditions, the *Messias* should be in a more than ordinary way, and (for the justifying of God's truth together with the satisfying men) should evidently appear to be the son of God, it was requisite (at least convenient) that his birth should be procured by divine operation, without concurrence of a humane father (how otherwise, at least how better, could it be apparent that he was both the *Son of God*, and *of man*?) It was consequently either necessary, or fit that he should be born of a Virgin: And that he should indeed be so born, the Prophet *Esay* did signifie, when he said, *The Lord himself shall give you a sign*; that is, shall perform somewhat very remarkable and strange: what was that? *Behold a*
Isa. 7. 14. Matt. 1. 12. *Virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Emanuel*; which Prophecy that it belonged to the *Messias* appears from the report and description, which follows in the continuation of this particular
Isa. 9. 6. Prophecy concerning this child: *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders, and his name shall be called wonderful*, &c. which description questionless appertaineth to the *Messias*. The same Prophet signifies the same concerning
Isa. 49. 5. him, when he introduceth him speaking thus: *And now, saith the Lord, that formed me from the womb to be his servant*, &c. Now that Jesus in correspondence to this admirable character was born of a Virgin, his Parents (persons of unblameable integrity and innocence; so that even the adversaries of *Jesus* appear not ever to have offered to impeach them of imposture, or to have troubled them about this report coming from them) did constantly averr, Angels did attest to their report, and God himself at several times by audible voices from heaven declared *Jesus* to be *his beloved son.*

—— Εἰ δὲ σημεῖον ἔδει τὸ δηδόμενον, παρθένον ἔχω καὶ οὐ γεννήσας. εἰ δὲ καινὸς ὁ τρόπος τῆς γεννήσεως τοῦ παιδίου, μᾶλλον σημεῖον λεγέσθω. Bas. *in* Isa. 7.

The state and condition also, in which the *Messias* was first to appear was described to be a state of external meanness and obscurity, of poverty and wretchedness in the eye of man: A state indeed most convenient and proper for a spiritual King, a most holy Priest, and absolute Prophet; who was to teach, exercise and exemplifie the most rough and harsh pieces of righteousness and piety (contempt of worldly vanities and pleasures; all sorts of self-denial, and abstinence; the vertues of meekness, humility and patience) who was to manage and execute his great undertakings not by natural or humane force, but by a vertue supernatural and divine; whose power consequently would be more conspicuous in a state of visible meanness and impotency, than in a condition of worldly splendour and strength; that also which he was to merit from

from God, and to undergo for the sake of men doth argue the same: that such the *Messias* his state was to be, there are divers mystical intimations in the ancient Scripture; but the Prophet *Esay* speaks it out most plainly: *He shall grow up* (says he, describing that state) *before the Lord like a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground; He hath no form or comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.* And again: *Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, and his holy one; To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of Rulers, Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship.* Isa. 53. 2. Isa. 49. 7.

Now that *Jesus* appeared thus in a poor, servile and despicable condition, we need not for to prove; for as his Followers avow it, so his Adversaries are most ready to grant it, in the haughtiness of their conceit taking it for an advantage against him, it proves a scandal to them. *Is not this the Carpenter's son? Is not this the Carpenter the son of Mary? said they, and they were offended at him.* Hence was it, that as the Prophet foretold, *He was despised and rejected of men, and they esteemed him not.* Thus all the circumstances of the *Messias* his coming were answered by those of *Jesus*. Phil. 2. 7. 2 Cor. 8. 9. Matt. 13. 55. Mark 6. 3. Isa. 53. 3.

Now concerning the qualities and endowments of the *Messias*, which constitute his personal character, they are, as was expedient, such as should dispose and fit him for the discharge of his great employment and duty with utmost advantage, and especial decency; in general, he was to be endewed with supereminent piety and sanctity, with perfect innocence and integrity; so it is implied in all the descriptions of his person, and performances: *The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre; thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity, wherefore God even thy God hath anointed thee with the oyl of gladness above thy fellows*, said the *Psalmist* of him; and *Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins*, said *Esay* of him; (denoting the ready disposition of his mind to doe whatever was good:) and, *He had done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his lips*, saith the same Prophet of him again. Psal. 45. 6, 7. Isa. 11. 5. Isa. 53. 8, 9.

Some particular vertues and abilities are also ascribed to him in an eminent degree: Excellent wisdom and knowledge in spiritual matters thus represented by *Esay: The spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom, and understanding; the spirit of counsel, and might; the spirit of knowledge, and fear of the Lord; and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord.* Eloquence also, skill and aptitude to instruct men; which that most Evangelical Prophet thus sets forth; *The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary* ——. That he should be meek, and gentle, and compassionate toward men, in regard to their infirmities and afflictions; mild, and lowly in his conversation, the Prophets also signifie: *He shall* (saith *Esay*) *feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom; and shall gently lead those that are with young. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoaking flax shall he not quench:* and, *Behold,* saith *Zachary, thy King cometh unto thee; he is just and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass.* That he should be of a quiet and peaceable disposition, no-wise fierce or contentious, turbulent or clamorous, *Esay* declares, thus saying of him (as S. *Matthew* cites him:) *He shall not strive, nor cry, neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets.* To his admirable patience in bearing afflictions and contumelies, *Esay* thus renders express testimony; *He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,* Isa. 11. 2. 53. 11. Isa. 50. 4. Isa. 40. 11. Isa. 42. 3. Matt. 12. 20. Zach. 9. 9. Matt. 21. 5. Isa. 42. 2. Matt. 12. 19. Isa. 53. 7.

yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearer is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth.
Isa. 50. 6. And, *I gave my back to the smiter, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, I hid not my face from shame, and spitting.* His invincible courage and resolution in God's service, together with his strong confidence in God, and entire submission to God's will, is thus described by
Isa. 50. 7, 5. the same Prophet: *The Lord God* (saith he) *will help me, therefore I shall not be confounded, therefore have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed.* — *The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.* His general goodness and boundless charity toward men, the nature of his office and design, together with the whole course and tenour of his practice, such as they are represented, do suppose and imply.

Now that *Jesus* (our Lord) did in his person fully correspond, and did by his practice thoroughly make good this moral high character; the story of his life with admirable simplicity and sincerity, without any semblance of disguise or artifice, represented by persons, who most intimately were acquainted and long conversed with him (or by persons immediately informed by them) and with greatest constancy attested
Matt. 3. 15. Heb. 10. 7. Joh. 18. 11. 12. 27. Matt. 26. 39. Matt. 14. 23. 19. 13. 21. 22. 11. 25. 9. 14, 21. 17. 4. Luk. 6. 12. 22. 32, 41, 42. 23. 34. to and maintained by them, doth plainly shew; wherein his incomparable piety toward God, his readiness to fulfill all righteousness, his entire submission and resignation of himself, to God's will, the continual fervency (devotion of all kinds, prayer, thanksgiving, fasting, practised in the most intense degree, and in the most reverent manner) his pure and ardent zeal for God's glory, his stedfast resolution, and indefatigable industry in God's service (making it his meat to do the will of him that sent him, and to perform his work.)

Joh. 17. 1, 6, 11. 7. 11, 41. 6. 11. Joh. 4. 34. 6. 31. 8. 29. 5. 30. 9. 4. 15. 10. 17. 4. * Matt. 8. 20. 2 Cor. 8. 9. Luk. 2. 40, 52. Matt. 9. 4. 12. 10, 25. 22. 18. 16. 1. 19. 3. 22. 18, 35, 46. Joh. 8. 6. Matt. 21. 27. 22. 18, 34. Joh. 6. 1. 8. 6. 10. 39. Luk. 20. 3. 22. 4. 30. 12, 24. Matt. 12. 14. Matt. 19. 5. Mark 8. 30. Luk 12. 14. 13. 2. 14. 7. 12. 18. 17. 19. 11. Joh. 7. 6. 16. 4. 12. 11. 54. 16. 27. 4. 10. † Mat. 13. 54. Mark 7. 37. Joh. 12. 42. 7. 45. 7. 46. Matt. 7. 28. Luk. 2. 47. 4. 42.
Wherein an unspotted innocence, not only exempted from the vices and defilements, but raised above the vanities and impertinences of the world; secured by a magnanimous contempt, or * neglect and abstinence from all worldly grandeur and splendour; all secular wealth and profit, all bodily delight and ease, wherein an admirable wisdom and prudence, expressed in all his demeanour, and his discourse; in his discerning the secret thoughts and dissembled intentions of men; in his declaring and defending truth, detecting and confuting errours; in baffling learned and wily opposers; in eluding captious questions, and evading treacherous designs; in not meddling with the secular affairs and interests of men; in not encumbring himself with the needless cares and occupations of this life, nor entangling himself in the snares of this world; in dexterously accommodating his behaviour and his speech to the dispositions, the capacities, the needs of men; to the circumstances of things, and exigencies of occasion, so as did best conduce to the promoting his great design and undertaking; so that the people, observing his proceedings, could not but be astonished, and ask, † *Whence hath this man this wisdom?* so that they could not but acknowledge, *He hath done all things well.*

Wherein particularly an excellent faculty of speaking and teaching, of interpreting and applying the Holy Scriptures, of proving and persuading God's truth, whereby he drew the people after him, converted many of them to amendment of life, convinced the most averse and incredulous; so that *all that heard him were amazed at his understanding, and answers*; so that *all bare witness, and wondred at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth*: so that the Officers sent to apprehend him did confess, *Never man spake like this man.*

Wherein an invincible fortitude and gallantry, expressed in his most constant profession and undaunted maintenance of truth and goodness; in his encountring the prejudices, detecting the frauds, reproving the vices of the Age, though upheld by the greatest persons and by prevalent Factions; in his plain dealing and free speaking with all sincerity and all authority, in his zealous checking and chastising profane abuses; in his disregarding the rash and fond opinions of men, their spiteful obloquies, harsh censures, slanderous imputations, and unjust reproaches; in his foreseeing the greatest of dangers, and worst of mischiefs that could arrive to man, yet chearfully encountring and firmly sustaining them; sustaining all the violent oppositions and assaults which the most virulent malice and envy enflamed with superstition and blind zeal could set against him. Joh. 8. 40. 7. 25. 26. 7. Luk. 20. 46. 13. 52. 16. 15. Matt. 12. 14. 15. 13. 23. 19. 15. 6, 14. 8. 24. Luk. 19. 45. Joh. 2. 15. Luk. 9. 22, 51. 18. 32. 22. 15. Matt. 16. 21. 20. 17. Mark. 10. 33.

Wherein a most quiet and peaceable dispositon, apparent from his never attempting any resistence, or any revenge upon provocation of frequent great affronts and injuries; from his never raising any tumults, nor fomenting any quarrels, nor meddling with any litigious matters, nor encroaching upon any man's right or office; by his ready compliance with received customs, by his paying tribute, although not due from him, to prevent offence; by his frequent instructions and exhortations to peace, to innocence, to patience, to due obedience, to performing due respect to superiours, and paying customs to governours; to the yielding a docile ear, and an observance to those who *sate in Moses his chair*. Matt. 26. 52. Luc. 12. 14. Matt. 8 4. Luc. 17. 14. Matt. 17. 27. Matt. 9. 23. 10. 16. Matt. 22. 21. Matt. 23. 2.

Wherein an exceeding meekness and gentleness, demonstrated in all his conversation; in resenting very moderately, or rather not resenting at all most unjust hatreds, outragious calumnies, bitter reproaches and contumelies from his adversaries; very perverse neglects and ingratitudes from multitudes of people; many infirmities, stupidities, distrusts, baseness and treacheries from his own neerest friends and followers. In his passing over and easily pardoning the greatest offences committed against him, yea sometime extenuating and excusing them. In the mildness of his censures, expostulations and reproofs; in his tempering the fierce zeal, hard censure, and rigorous proceeding against persons unhappy, or faulty; in his tender pity of all persons in any want, distress or trouble; in his earnest commiseration and bewailing the vengeance he foresaw impendent on his persecutors, and in his praying for their pardon. Matt. 11. 29. Matt. 9. 4. 34. 12. 25. 10, 23. 12. 24. Joh. 15. 19. 10. 32. Luk. 4. 24. Matt. 26. 50. 12. 25. 14. 31. Joh. 7. 12. 7. 20. 8. 48. 10. 20. Matt. 17. 17. 26. 56. Luk. 22. 46. 23. 34. 22. 51. Luk. 9. 55. Joh. 8. 7. Matt. 9. 36. 14. 14. 15. 32.

Wherein a marvellous humility and lowliness of mind expressed by his not seeking * honour or applause from men, but shunning and rejecting it; his not assuming to himself, but ascribing all to God, and referring all to his glory; by his making no ostentation of his miraculous power and high endowments, but, so far as would comport with the prosecution of his main purpose (the glory and service of God, the good and welfare of men) carefully suppressing and concealing them; in his without dissatisfaction or discouragement bearing scorn, and contempt, and obloquy; in his willing condescension to the meanest offices and employments; in his free and familiar conversation with all sorts of people, with the lowest and most despicable, with the worst and most odious, for their good; he not despising the poorest or vilest wretch, who seemed capable of receiving any benefit from him; in his easiness to be entreated, and readiness to comply with the desires of any man imploring succour or relief from him; in his being ready not only to oblige, but to be obliged and receive courtesies from any man; to answer the Luk. 7. 13. Luk. 9. 41. 13. 34. Joh. 13. 21. Luk. 23. 34. * Joh. 5. 41. 8. 50, 54. 6. 15. 8. 28. 11. 4. 17. 4. Luk. 7. 16, 29. 9. 43. 8. 56. 8. 39. 17, 18. 18. 43. Matt. 8 4. 9. 30. 12. 16. 19. 17. Mark. 5. 43. 8. 23. Matt. 9. 24. Joh. 13. 4. Matt. 9. 10. 8. 3, 19. Luk. 5. 29. 15. 2. 19. 5. 7. 36. 11. 37.

Joh. 12. 7. Matt. 26. 10. Matt. 9. 2, 22. Luk. 12. 4. Joh. 15. 14. 13. 33.

invitation of a *Pharisee*, or of a *Publican*; to accept favourably the well intended respect of a poor woman; in the softness and sweetness of his language to all men, particularly to his disciples; *(Be of good courage Daughter; Son be of good cheer; I say unto you my friends; little children, I am a little while with you*; such was his style, and conversation toward his inferiours.)

Joh. 18. 11. 12. 27. Matt. 26. 39. Matt. 8. 20. (2 Cor. 8. 9.)

Wherein an unparallell'd patience in contentedly and chearfully, through all the course of his life, undertaking and undergoing whatever by God's will and providence was imposed on him, how grievous and distastful soever to humane apprehension or sense; the extremest penury, the hardest toil, the vilest disgraces, the most bitter pains and anguishes incident to body or mind, the most horrid and most sorrowful of deaths, all these aggravated by the conscience of his own clearest innocence, by the extreme ingratitude of those who misused him, by the sense of God's displeasure for the sin of man, by all the embittering considerations which a most lively piety and tender charity suggested; in submitting to all this most freely and most calmly, without any regret, any disturbance.

Eph. 3. 19. Act. 10. 38. Matt. 4. 23. 9. 35.

Wherein an unexpressible and unconceivable charity (*a charity indeed which surpasseth knowledge*, as S. *Paul* speaketh) evidenced in the constant strain and tenour of his whole life, passing through all his designs, all his words, and all his actions; for διῆλθεν εὐεργετῶν (as S. *Peter* says in the *Acts*) *he did* nothing else, but *go about doing good*, and benefitting men; curing their diseases, relieving their wants, instructing their minds, reforming their manners, drawing them to God and goodness, disposing them to the attainment of everlasting bliss and salvation. 'Tis love, we may observe, which was the soul that animated and actuated him in all things; which carried him with unwearied resolution and alacrity through all the cruel hardships and toils, through all the dismal crosses and ignominies he endured: His life was in effect but one continual expression of charity, (differently exerting it self according to various opportunities, and circumstances, and needs of men) the which was consummated, and sealed by his death; the highest instance of charity that could be; for, *Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend.*

Joh. 15. 13.

Wherein finally (in which life, I say, of *Jesus*) all holiness, all vertue, all goodness (suitable to him, who was to be not only the teacher, and the persuader of the best life, but a living standard and pattern thereof; who was to merit of God in man's behalf, to conciliate God's favour towards us, and appease his anger against us) do shine and sparkle with a beauty, and a lustre transcending all expression. All which particulars might, were it now proper and seasonable, be thoroughly declared by instances extant in the Evangelical history. So that the characteristical qualities of the *Messias* do clearly and abundantly agree to *Jesus* our *Lord.*

His performances should next be considered and compared; but the time doth not admit that we should now proceed any farther.

Now, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XVIII.

THAT JESUS IS THE True MESSIAS.

ACTS IX. 22.

But Saul encreased more in strength, and confounded the Jews, which dwelt at Damascus — Proving that this is the very Christ.

IN conformity to S. *Paul*'s design and practice implied here, I have formerly propounded to explain, and perswade these particulars. 1. What is the right notion and reason of this name or title *Christ*. 2. That there was destinated to come into the world, a Person, who signally according to that right notion, shouldbe *the Christ*. 3. That *Jesus*, whom we avow, is that Person, *the very Christ*. 4. In what manner, and upon what accounts the New Testament represenеth *Jesus* to be the *Christ*. 5. What application the Point requireth.

In prosecution of which particulars, having dispatched the *first* and *second*, I did enter into the *third*, which is of highest consequence, beginning to declare that *Jesus*, our Lord, is the *Christ*, from the circumstances of his coming into the world, and from his personal qualifications; which having in some measure performed, I shall now proceed to declare the same from the exact correspondency of his undertakings and performances to those, which, according to ancient presignifications, and prophecies, the *Messias* was designed to undertake and accomplish; together with the consequences of what the *Messias* was to doe, and what answerably *Jesus* did effect.

1. One great performance of the *Messias*, was by inspiration, and in the name of God to make a complete discovery of divine truth; to publish a Law of universal and perpetual obligation; to institute a Religion consummate in all respects, which should correct the faults, and supply the defects of all precedent dispensations, which should therefore be, as it were, God's last will and testament, after which no other revelation

was

Deut. 18. 18, 19. was to be expected: *I will* (said *Moses* of him) *put words into his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I command him, and it shall come to pass, that whoever will not hearken unto my words, which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him:* By him *Esay* foretold, that *God shall teach us of his ways, and we shall walk in his paths, for out of Sion shall go forth the law, and the word of God from Jerusalem:* By him *Jeremy* signified, that *God would put his law into the inward parts of men, and write it in their hearts*; it was, as it is said in *Daniel*, part of his work *to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision, and prophecy*; and his days in the Prophets are commonly styled *the last days*, because it seemeth, of the perfection of his doctrine, and immutability of his law; where such an entire instruction, and final resolution in all points was commonly expected by the *Jews*, as the *Samaritan* woman did intimate; *I know* (said she, according to the current persuasions then) *that the Messias cometh, and when he shall come, he will tell us all things.*

Isa. 2. 2. Jer. 31. 34. Ezek. 36. 27. Dan. 9. 24. Joh. 4. 25.

1 Tim. 1. 1. Now accordingly *Jesus (our hope,* and *Author of our faith)* hath taught a Doctrine, hath proclaimed a Law, hath instituted a Religion, which upon strict and careful examination will be found most perfect in all respects; such in its nature as cannot but indispensibly oblige all that understand it, such as is worthy of God, and suitable to his designs of glorifying himself, and obliging his creature; in short, he hath been Author of such an Institution, as may be demonstrated the most excellent and complete that can be. For, (briefly to shew this by considering the main, if not all imaginable excellencies of any Religion, Law or Doctrine) it is impossible that any Doctrine should assign a more true, proper, complete notion or character of God himself, more congruous to what reason dictateth, the works of nature declare, the purest tradition attesteth, or common experience doth intimate concerning God; more apt to breed in our hearts the highest affection and reverence toward him, or to engage us in the strictest practice of duty and obedience to him; none can ascribe unto God higher perfections of nature, can more assert unto him all his due rights and prerogatives, can better commend and justify to us all his actions and proceedings, can represent him more amiable in his goodness, more terrible in his justice, more glorious and venerable in all his ways of providence; can consequently better direct or dispose us to render unto him a worship worthy of him, and acceptable to him; can also therefore with more security and advantage commend unto us the imitation of him in our disposition and demeanour.

Nor could any doctrine more clearly and fully inform us concerning our selves; concerning our nature, our original, our end, all our state, past, present, final; what the dignity of our nature is, for what purposes we were designed and framed, wherein our happiness doth consist, what shall be our state after death, how we shall be judged, and dealt with then; the knowledge of which particulars is of so immense consequence for the satisfaction of our minds, and direction of our lives; concerning which therefore men in all times have so earnestly inquired and disputed, without any sure resolution but from hence.

Nor could a more accurate rule of life (more congruous to reason, and suitable to our nature, or perfective thereof; more conducible to our welfare, and our content; more apt to procure each man's private good, and to promote the publick benefit of all) have been prescribed; nothing can be more just, or comely, or pleasant, or beneficial to us, than are the duties of piety (consisting in love, reverence, gratitude,

tude, devotion, obedience, faith and repentance toward God) which Christianism doth require. No directions concerning our deportment toward our neighbours and brethren can be imagined comparable to those (those of hearty love, good-will, beneficence, compassion, readiness to forgive, meekness, peaceableness, and the like) which the Christian law enjoineth. No precepts or advices concerning the management of our selves (the ordering our souls and our bodies in their respective functions and fruitions) can be devised more agreeable to sound reason, more productive of true welfare, and real delight unto us, than are those of being humble and modest in our conceits, calm and composed in our passions, sober and temperate in our enjoyments, patient and contented in our state, with the like, which the Christian Doctrine doth inculcate. No other method can raise us up so near to heaven and happiness as that which we here learn, of abstracting and elevating our minds above the fading glories, the unstable possessions, the vanishing delights of this world; the fixing our thoughts, affections and hopes upon the concernments of a better future state.

No Religion also can be purer from superstitious alloys, or freer from useless encumbrances (or from, as *Tertullian* calleth them, *busie scrupulosities*) than is this, (such as it is in its native simplicity, and as it came from its Authour, before the pragmatical curiosity, or domineering humour, or covetous designings of men had tampered with it) it onely requiring a rational and spiritual service, consisting in performance of substantial duties plainly necessary or profitable; the ritual observances it enjoineth, being as very few in number, in nature simple and easie to observe, so evidently reasonable, very decent and very usefull, able to instruct us in, apt to excite us to the practice of most wholesome duties. *Negotiosæ scrupulositates* Tert. *in* Marc. *lib.* 2.

No Religion also can have the like advantage of setting before us a living copy, and visible standard of good practice, affording so compendious an instruction, and so efficacious an incitement to all piety and vertue: so absolutely perfect, so purposely designed, so fitly accommodated for our imitation, and withall so strongly engaging us thereto, as the example of *Jesus*, our Lord, such as it is in the *Gospels* represented to us.

Neither can any Religion build our duty upon more solid grounds, or draw it from better principles, or drive it to better ends, or press it with more valid inducements than ours; which builds it upon conformity to the perfect nature of God, and to the dictates of his infallible wisdom, upon the holy will, and most just authority of our natural Lord, and Maker; which draweth it from love, reverence and gratitude to God, from a hearty good-will to men, and from a sober regard to our own true welfare; which propoundeth God's honour, our neighbour's edification, and our own salvation as the principal ends of action; which stirreth up good practice by minding us, that we shall thereby resemble God, express our thankfulness, and discharge our duty to him, obtain his mercy and favour, acquire present comfort of mind, and future bliss, avoid regrets of conscience here, and endless torments hereafter.

Neither can any Doctrine afford more encouragements to the endeavours of practising it than doth this, which tendereth sufficient help and ability toward the performance of whatever it enjoineth; offering (upon our seeking them, or asking for them) God's infallible wisdom to direct us in our darknesses and doubts, God's almighty strength to assist us in our temptations and combats, God's loving Spirit to comfort us in our afflictions and distresses.

Nor

Nor can any Doctrine in a more sure, or kindly manner appease and satisfy a man's conscience, so as to produce therein a well-grounded hope, and solid comfort; to heal the wounds of bitter remorse and anxious fear, which the sense of guilt doth inflict, than doth this, which assureth us, that God Almighty, notwithstanding all our offences committed against him, is not only reconcileable to us, but desirous to become our friend; that he doth upon our repentance, and compliance with his gentle terms, receive us unto perfect grace and favour, discharging all our guilts and debts however contracted; that our endeavours to serve and please God, although imperfect and defective, if serious and sincere shall be accepted and rewarded by him.

Such is the Doctrine, Law and Religion of *Jesus*; expressed in a most uneffected and perspicuous way, with all the gravity and simplicity of speech, with all the majesty and authority of proposal becoming divine truth; so excellent, and so complete in all respects, that it is beyond the imagination of man to conceive any thing better, yea, I dare say, repugnant to the nature of things that there should be any other way of Religion (different substantially from it) so very good. God himself, we may presume to say, cannot infuse truer notions concerning himself, or concerning us, cannot reveal more noble, or more usefull truths; cannot prescribe better laws or rules, cannot afford more proper means and aids, cannot propound more equal and reasonable terms, cannot offer higher encouragements and rewards, cannot discover his mind in a more excellent way than he hath done by *Jesus*, for his own glory and service, for our benefit and happiness: So that hence we may reasonably infer, that the Doctrine taught, the Law promulgated, the Religion instituted by *Jesus* in God's name, are the very same which the predictions concerning the *Messias* do refer unto, as the last, which should ever come from God, most full and perfect, universally and perpetually obliging.

2. Thus in general the Prophets spake concerning the *Messias* his doctrine, and so that of *Jesus* correspondeth thereto: but of that Doctrine particularly it was signified, that it should be very comfortable, joyfull and acceptable to mankind; as containing a declaration (peculiar thereto) of God's kind and gracious intentions toward us, overtures of especial mercy and love, dispensations of all sorts of spiritual blessings; the pardon and abolition of sins committed, peace and satisfaction of conscience, deliverance from spiritual slaveries and captivities: *Rejoyce greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout O daughter of Jerusalem; behold thy King cometh unto thee*; So *Zachary* speaketh of his coming, and implieth the joyfull purport of his message: and, *How beautiful* (saith *Esay*) *upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that sayeth unto Sion, thy God reigneth?* and, *The spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance* (or of recompence, as the LXX render it) *of our God; to comfort all that mourn, to give unto them that mourn in Sion beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.* It is a part of what God in *Jeremy* promised to dispense by him: *I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.* It is one of the *Messias* his performances —— *to finish transgression, and to make an end of sins, and*

Zech. 9. 9.
Isa. 52. 7.
Isa. 61. 1. 42. 1. 3.
ἀντὶ τοῦ δόξης.
Jer. 31. 34.
Dan. 9. 24.

to

to make reconciliation for iniquity; to sprinkle clean water on God's people, and *to save them from their uncleannesses.* In fine, the Prophet *Zechary* 25. 29. Isa. 44. 3. faith of his time, that *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the* 43. 25. *house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin, and for un-* Zech. 13. 1. *cleanness.*

Now to all this the preaching of *Jesus* did exactly correspond; it being indeed, as it was named, a *Gospel*, or Message of good and joy; declaring the special good-will of God, and his mercifull willingness to be reconciled to mankind; offering peace and pardon to all that are sensible of their guilt, and penitent for their sin; imparting rest, comfort and liberty to all that are weary and afflicted with spiritual burthens, grievances and slaveries; taking off all grievous yokes of superstition, servility and sin; and in their stead imposing a no less sweet and pleasant, than just and reasonable obedience; ministring all sorts of blessings needfull for our succour, relief, ease, content and welfare; wholly breathing sweetest love (all kinds of love; love between God and man, between Act. 15. 32. man and man, between man and his own conscience) filling the hearts Rom. 5. 13. Rom. 14. 17. of those who sincerely embrace and comply with it, with present joy, Gal. 5. 22. and raising in them gladsome hopes of future bliss. It was indeed the most joyous sound that ever entred into man's ears, the most welcome news that ever was reported upon earth; news of a certain and perfect salvation from all the enemies of our welfare, from all the causes of mischief and misery to us; well therefore deserving that auspicious gratulation from the Angel: *Behold I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall* Luc. 2. 10. *be to all people.*

3. Collateral unto, or coincident with those performances (the teaching such a doctrine, publishing such a law, dispensing such blessings) was the formal institution, and establishment of a new everlasting covenant (different from all precedent covenants, and swallowing them up in its perfection) a covenant between God and man, wherein God, entring into a most strict alliance and relation with us, should be pleased to dispense the blessings of spiritual illumination and assistance, of mercy and favour, of salvation and felicity; wherein we in way of condition, according to obligations of justice and gratitude, should engage to return unto God by hearty repentance, and to persist in faithfull obedience to him: Of such a Covenant the *Messias* was to be the Messenger and Mediatour, or *the Angel* thereof (as the Prophet *Malachy*, speaketh alluding it seems to that Angel of God's presence, who ordained the *Jewish* Law, and conducted the *Israelites* toward the promised land) of which Covenant and its Mediatour God in *Esay* thus spake: *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and I will hold thine hand; and I will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison-house* — and of the same he again: *Incline your ear, and come unto me; hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David — Behold I have given him a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people:* So in general he speaketh thereof, and inviteth thereto; then a special part thereof he expresseth thus: *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.* Of the same Covenant God in *Ezekiel* speaketh thus: *I will set up one shepherd over them — and I will make with them a covenant of peace, and it shall be an everlasting covenant with them — and* Ezek. 34. 23. 25. 37. 26. 36. 26, &c.

Ἄγγελος τῆς διαθήκης. Mal. 3. 1. Exod. 23. 10. Isa. 63. 9. Act. 7. 35, 38, 53. Gal. 3. 19. Isa. 42. 6. 49. 8. 55. 3. Isa. 55. 3, 4, 7.

I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore —— they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and doe them. Of the same God thus declareth in *Jeremy*, most fully and plainly reckoning
Jer. 31. 31, &c. the particular blessings tendered therein: *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah; not according to the covenant, that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; but this shall be the covenant, that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my Law into their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people: And they shall teach no more every man his brother, saying, know the Lord; for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest, saith the Lord; for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more*; which words signify the tenour of that Covenant on God's part to import, that God would impart a full and clear discovery of his will unto them, whom it should concern; that he would afford to them all requisite means and helps qualifying them for the performance of their duty; that he would bestow on them (complying with the terms of this Covenant, and performing their duty) an entire remission of all their sins, with an assurance of his constant and perpetual favour.

Now that *Jesus* did institute such a Covenant, wherein all the benefits promised on God's part, and all the duties required on our parts, do punctually correspond to the terms of that predesigned by the Prophets, is apparent by the whole tenour of the Christian Gospel; wherein a full declaration of God's will is held forth, so that no man (except
Luc. 24. 47. Act. 5. 31. 2. 38. Heb. 10. 29. out of wilfulness or negligence) can be ignorant thereof; wherein, upon condition of faith and repentance, God's mercy and pardon are exhibited and offered to all; wherein the communication of God's holy Spirit of grace (for directing and assisting the embracers of this Covenant in the practice of their duty) is promised and dispensed; wherein on our part faith in God (or heartily returning to him) and faithfull observance of God's laws are required; wherein God declareth a most favourable regard and love (together with very near and endearing relations) to those who undertake and conform to his terms; of which new
Heb. 9. 15. 12. 24. 7. 22. 8. 6. 1 Tim. 2. 5. Covenant *Jesus* is represented the *Angel*, the *Mediatour*, the *Sponsor*; having by his preaching declared it, by his merits and intercessions purchased and procured it, by his blood ratified, and assured it to us.

4. In coincidence also with those performances, it is declared that the *Messias* should erect a Kingdom spiritual in nature, universal in extent, and perpetual in duration; by the power and virtue whereof the enemies of God's people should be curb'd and quell'd; the subjects of which should live together in amity and peace, in safety and prosperity; wherein truth and righteousness should gloriously flourish. The chief testimonies of ancient Scripture predicting this Kingdom I had occasion before to mention, and shall not repeat them now; only concerning the nature and extent thereof I shall add somewhat, serving for illustration and proof of our main purpose.

That it was to be a spiritual Kingdom (not a visible dominion over the bodies and estates of men, managed by external force and co-action, but a government of mens hearts and consciences by secret inspirations, and moral instructions or persuasions) may be several ways collected, and argued; it appeareth from the temper and disposition of its Founder,

der, who was to be *a Prince of Peace*; of a peaceable, meek, patient and humble disposition; it may be inferred from his condition, which was not to be a state of external grandeur and magnificence, but of poverty and affliction; for he was to be as he is described, mean and despicable in appearance; having *no form or comeliness, no beauty, that when we should see him, we should desire him*; being *a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief*; it also followeth from the events happening to him, which were not to conquer and triumph openly in view of carnal eyes; but to be despised and rejected, to be afflicted, oppressed and slaughtered by men; the same we may learn from the manner of its establishment and propagation; which was not to be effected by force and violence, but by virtue of a quiet and gentle instruction; by reasonable words, not by hard blows: So doth the Prophet signifie, when he saith of the *Messias*, that, *With righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall slay the wicked:* not by force of hands, or terrour of arms, not in furious and bloody combats, but by the spiritual *rod of his mouth*; with the soft *breath of his lips* he was *to slay the wicked*, converting them unto righteousness: So doth *Daniel* also imply when he saith, that *a stone cut out of the mountains without hands, should break in pieces, and consume all other Kingdoms.* Yea the nature thereof it self doth argue the same; for the laws injoined, and duties required, the blessings ministred, and rewards propounded therein are purely spiritual, not relating to a temporal state, yea hardly consisting with secular domination; as may appear by attending to its fundamental constitution, or to the covenant settled between the Prince and subjects thereof; wherein the divine spirit and grace, light and knowledge, mercy and pardon for sins, comfort of mind, and peace of conscience, God's especial love and favour, things merely spiritual, are expresly promised; but worldly power, wealth and prosperity are pretermitted; and thence may justly be presumed no ingredients, or appurtenances thereof. Indeed the constitution of a temporal, or worldly Kingdom, with visible pomp and lustre, such as the *Jews* (a grosly conceited, and sensually affected people) did, mistaking the Prophets, desire and expect, had been a thing, as very agreeable to the carnal or childish opinions of men, so in reasonable esteem of no considerable value, benefit or use to mankind: such a domination could only have concerned the mortal part, and temporal state of man; it could only have procured some trivial conveniences for our bodies, or gratifications to our sense: the settlement also, and preservation of such a Kingdom (according to that vast extent, and long duration which the Prophets imply) seemeth, without quite altering the whole frame of humane nature, scarce possible; and reasons there are obvious enough, why it would not be expedient, or beneficial for men: But the founding and upholding a spiritual Kingdom (such as we described) is evidently of inestimable benefit to the nobler and more divine part of men, may serve to promote the eternal welfare of our souls; may easily without changing the natural appetites of men, or disturbing the world, be carried on any where, and subsist for ever by the occult influences of divine grace; it consequently is most worthy of God to design and accomplish. Such a Kingdom therefore was meant by the Prophets, being indeed no other than a Church, or society of persons, with unanimous consent, heartily acknowledging the One true God of *Israel*, Maker of heaven and earth, for their Sovereign Prince and Law-giver;

Isa. 9. 6.

Isa. 53. 2, 3, 4, 7. 49. 7. 50. 6.

Isa. 11. 4.

Dan. 2. 44, 45.

submitting themselves in all their actions to his laws and commands, expecting protection and recompence of their obedience from him.

As for the general extent of this Kingdom, and the *Messias* his proceedings in settling and propagating it, that is also very perspicuously and copiously represented in the ancient Prophets, who declare that by him mankind (then immersed in deep ignorance and errour, in wretched impiety and wickedness, in utter estrangement and aversation from God and goodness) should be reduced to the knowledge, worship and obedience of God; that they should be received into God's protection, and should partake of his special favour; that all nations of men should by the *Messias* be enlightned with saving knowledge, and converted to the practice of true righteousness; that all men every where (all that would regard and observe his word, all in God's design and desire, in effect a numerous company of men) should by his means be aggregated to God's Church, and rendred God's people; enjoying the benefits and privileges suitable to that state or relation: In expressing these things the ancient Scriptures are very pregnant and copious: *Moses*, in that most divine Song (endited by God himself, and uttered in his name) which seemeth to contain the history, and the continual fate of the Jewish people doth foretell this, and concludeth his Song therewith; as with the last matter, which should happen during God's special relation to that people, importing the period of *Judaism*, or of the *Israelitish* Theocracy. *Rejoyce* (saith he) *O ye nations with his people.* God in the second *Psalm* thus speaketh to the *Messias*: *Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for thy possession*: and in the 72. *Psalm*; *His name* ('tis said) *shall endure for ever*; *his name shall be continued as long as the sun, and men shall be blessed in him*; *all nations shall call him blessed*; *he shall have dominion also from sea, to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth*: and otherwhere; *All the ends of the earth shall remember, and turn unto the Lord, and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee*: and, *I will* (saith God in *Esay* concerning him) *give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation to the ends of the earth*: and, *The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it*; *The Lord hath made bare his holy arm, in the eyes of all nations*; *and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God*: and, *He shall not fail, nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth, and the Isles* (that is the *European* Nations) *shall wait for his law*: and, *In this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wine on the lees well refined*; *and he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil that is spread over all nations*: and, *In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people, to it shall the Gentiles seek, and its rest shall be glorious*: and, *I am sought of them that asked not for me, I am found of them that sought me not*; *I said, behold me, behold me unto a nation, that was not called by my name*: and, *It shall come to pass in the last days* (saith both *Esay* and *Micah* in the same words) *that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it*: *From the rising of the Sun* (saith God in *Malachy*) *even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering*: and, *I* (saith God in *Hosea*) *will have mercy upon her that had not obtained*

Deut. 32. 43. Rom. 15. 10. Psal. 2. 8.
Psal. 72. 17. 8. 1.
Psal. 22. 27. 86. 9.
Isa. 46. 9. Act. 13. 47.
Isa. 40. 5. 52. 10. Luc. 3. 6.
Isa. 42. 4. Rom. 15. 2.
Isa. 25. 6, 7.
Isa. 11. 10.
Isa. 65. 1. Rom. 9. 24.
Isa. 2. 2. Mic. 4. 1.
Mal. 1. 11.
Hos. 1. 10. 2. 23.

tained mercy; and I will say unto them, which were not my people, Thou art my people; and they shall say, Thou art my God: In the place where it was said unto them, ye are not my people, it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God: and, *The abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee* (saith God to his Church) *the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee: Fear not, for I am with thee, I will bring thy seed from the East, and gather thee from the West; I will say to the North give up, and to the South keep not back; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth:* and, *Sing, O barren, that thou didst not bear* ('tis said to the *Gentile* Church) *break forth into singing, and cry aloud thou that didst not travail with child; for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord; Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations —— for thou shalt break forth on the right hand, and on the left, and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles —— For thy Maker is thine husband (the Lord of hosts is his name) and thy Redeemer, the Holy one of Israel; The Lord of the whole earth shall he be called —— The wilderness, and the solitary place shall be glad for them; the desart shall rejoyce and blossome as the rose,* &c.

Ro. 9. 25, 26. Isa. 60. 5. Isa. 43. 5. Isa. 54. 1. Gal. 4. 26. *Vid.* Amos 9. 11, 12, Act. 15. 15, &c. Isa. 35. 1.

Such is the nature, and such the extent of the *Messias* his Kingdom; now that *Jesus* hath erected and settled a Kingdom of a spiritual and heavenly nature (the which is therefore in his Gospel styled the *Kingdom of Heaven*, the *Kingdom of God*, the *Kingdom of Christ*, the *Kingdom that was to come*) whereof God is the absolute Sovereign; the throne whereof is in heaven above, which beareth sway in the souls of men; wherein God governeth in effectual manner (most righteously and sweetly, with admirable wisdom, justice and clemency; with mighty power also, and awfull authority) according to most excellent laws, by his holy word, and powerfull spirit; proposing most precious rewards to the obedient subjects thereof, and threatning dreadfull punishments to the rebellious; protecting and saving the faithfull people from all their enemies (from the powers of darkness, from the temptations, allurements, menaces of the flesh and the world here, from death and hell hereafter) that also *Jesus* (who as Mediatour between God and man, doth according to the Gospel, by authority derived from God, and in God's name, administer the government hereof) hath in effect been avowed as Lord and King; that his authority hath had great efficacy upon the minds and consciences of men; what noble trophies over sin and wickedness his word hath raised; in what glory and majesty through many ages he hath reigned; is evident from obvious records of history, and from plain experience.

The extent of this spiritual Empire raised by our Lord (of that doctrine which he taught, of that reformation which he introduced, of that Church, or spiritual society, knit together in faith and charity, which he founded of that whole dispensation, which he managed) is also thoroughly commensurate to the extent of whatever in these kinds the *Messias* was to atchieve: The Empire of *Jesus* in its nature and design, according to right and obligation, is declared universal and boundless, co-extended, with the world it self, and comprehending all generations of men; all nations being summoned to come under the wings of its jurisdiction; all persons being invited to partake the benefits, and enjoy the privileges thereof: *The Lord*, and *Judge of all men*; the *Saviour*, and *Redeemer of the world*; the common *light of men*, and *Captain of* humane *life*; are titles, which *Jesus* assumed to himself: *All things*

Act. 10. 36.

Matt. 11. 27. Joh. 17. 2. 5. 22. 3. 35. Matt. 28. 18. Mark 16. 15. Matt. 28. 19. Luc. 24. 46. Tit. 2. 11. Act. 17. 30. 2 Cor. 5. 19. 1 Tim. 2. 4. Colos. 1. 23.

things are delivered to me of my Father; Thou hast given him power over all flesh; All judgment is committed to the Son; yea, *All power is given unto me in heaven and earth*, such is the authority he claimeth, and asserteth to himself: *Going into the World preach the Gospel to every creature: Go, and discipline all nations, baptising them* ——— such was the commission and charge delivered by *Jesus* to his Officers, and Ministers: *The grace of God which bringeth salvation, hath appeared to all men; The times of ignorance God having winked at, doth now invite all men every where to repent; God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their sins; God our Saviour will have all men to be saved, and to come to the acknowledgment of the truth* —— *The Gospel hath been preached to every creature under heaven*; so do the Apostles declare the latitude of the Evangelical dispensation according to its nature and design: So that well may we cry out with *Clem. Alex. Hearken ye that are far off, hearken ye that are near; the word is not hid from any, 'tis a common light, it shineth to all men; there is no Cimmerian in respect to the Gospel.* So in design, and of right is *Jesus* his doctrine and dispensation common to all Nations, and to all persons; all in duty are obliged to entertain it; all may have the benefit thereof, who are fit, and willing to embrace it; it doth not indeed obtrude its benefits upon unwilling, and thence unworthy persons; it useth no unkindly violence, or rude compulsion; but it alloweth, it inviteth, it entreateth, it engageth all men to come, excluding only those from a participation therein, who will not hear its call; who do not like, or love it.

Ἀκούσατε ἐν οἱ μακρὰν, ἀκούσατε οἱ ἐγγὺς δὲ ἀπεκρύβη τινὶ ὁ λόγος· φῶς ἔδη κοινὸν, ἐπιλάμπει πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· ἐδεὶς Κιμμέριος ἐν λόγῳ. Cl Al. Protrept.

In effect also this Kingdom hath been very large and vast, a considerable part of the world having very soon been subjugated by its virtue, and having submitted thereto. *As the lightning cometh out of the East, and shineth even unto the West, so shall the coming* (or presence) *of the Son of man be*; said He concerning the sudden, and effectual spreading of his doctrine; and the event answered his prediction: for the Evangelical light did in an instant dart it self all about, so as in many places to dispell the night of ignorance, and to dissipate the fogs of wickedness: so that *the utmost ends of the earth* (of which according to the most literal sense we our selves are a most proper instance) are come under the possession and government of *Jesus*; are reduced to the acknowledgment and veneration of the only true God; do partake of God's favour, and hope in his mercy; do with good conscience (in that measure, which is expectable from the natural infirmity and pravity of man, in various degrees, some more, some less strictly) serve God, and obey his laws: A Church, and spiritual *Sion* (spread over divers regions and countries, consisting of several nations and languages) compacted in good order, and sweet communion, hath through a long course of times visibly flourished in competent degrees of peace, prosperity and glory; commending and cherishing true religion, charity and sobriety; offering continual sacrifices of holy devotion unto God, celebrating the divine name and praises; producing many noble examples of all piety and vertue; a Church in all regards adequate to the prophetical expressions concerning that which was out of the whole world to be collected, and constituted by the *Messias*.

Matt. 24. 27.

Chrys. Tom. 6. Orat. 61. pag. 634.

5. If we do singly compare the particular consequences and successes of the *Messias* his performances, expressed by the Prophets; we shall find an exact correspondence to what hath followed the undertakings and performances of our Lord.

They

They tell us, that great opposition should be made against it by the *Jews*, and by the * *Gentiles*. * Psal. 2. 1. *vid.* Chrys. *Tom.* 7. *Orat.* 61. p. 637.

They tell us, that the *Messias* his person should be acknowledged, worshipped, and blessed all over the world: —— *All nations* (say they) *shall serve him*, —— *all nations shall call him blessed*: This we see for almost 1700 years abundantly performed in respect to *Jesus*, by the daily services of praise and thanksgiving yielded to him in the Universal Church. Ps. 72. 11, 17

They say, that the knowledge of God shall be far extended, and diffused over the world; *The earth*, say they, *shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*; this we see fulfilled by the large propagation of Christian doctrine. Isa. 11. 9.

They affirm, that righteousness in the times of the *Messias* should commonly prosper, and be in high request, according to that: *In his days shall the righteous flourish*: so we see, that vertue and piety have ever since *Jesus* commended them to the world, enjoyed much repute having been practised among the professours of his Religion in such degrees, and according to such manner as the condition of this world, the humours of men, and the nature of humane affairs do admit; nor reasonably can any prophecies be understood to mean farther. Psal. 72. 7. 85. 11.

They farther intimate, that upon the entertainment of the *Messias* his doctrine and law, abundance of peace and concord, of love and charity, of innocence and justice should ensue; so that the fellow-subjects of this Kingdom, although of different states and complexions (the *wolf and the lamb, the leopard and the kid, the lion and the oxe, the asp and the young child*; that is the rich and the poor, the mighty and the weak, the fierce and the gentle, the crafty and the simple sorts of men) should live and converse together amicably, safely and pleasantly, without molesting, wronging, oppressing and devouring; but rather helping, and benefiting each other: *They shall not* (saith the prophet) *hurt or destroy in all my holy mountain*: To the making good of which particular, the doctrine of *Jesus* doth temper and compose the minds of those who do truly understand and embrace it: Such as are Christians indeed (careful followers of *Jesus* his rules and example) are thereby disposed to maintain peace and amity between themselves, yea to perform all offices of charity and kindness to one another, although their conditions in the world, their complexions, their endowments and abilities be however different; for the Christian doctrine representeth all that embrace it as fellow-servants of the same Lord, as brethren and children of the same Father, as members of the same body, as objects of the same divine regard and love, as partakers of the same privileges, professours of the same truth, consorts of the same hope, co-heirs of the same glory and happiness, as thence united and allied to one another by the strictest bands, and most endearing relations; hence it suppleth the stoutest heart, and sweetneth the fiercest tempers; it inclineth persons of highest state, power, wealth, knowledge to condescensive humility, and meekness toward the meanest; this reason presently occurring to every Christian mind, that no Christian brother is indeed contemptible, can without folly, may without sin be contemned: whence although *Jesus* his doctrine hath not quite removed wars and contentions out of the world, yea not out of that part thereof, which doth acknowledge him) for that were a thing impossible, without a total alteration of humane nature, or rooting out of it those appetites of pride, voluptuousness, self-love, and covetousness, which are the seeds of strife; the effecting which it cannot Psal. 72. 7. 85. 10. Is. 11. 6. 65. 25. 2. 4. 66. 12. Isa. 5. 65. 25.

not be supposed that the Prophets did intend) yet hath it done considerably toward it; it hath disposed many persons (many great and considerable in the world) to a very just, innocent and peaceable conversation; it hath kindled ardent love and compassion toward all mankind in many hearts, it hath produced great fruits of charity and bounty in persons of all sorts, it hath had no small influence upon the common state of things, causing humane affairs to be managed with much equity and gentleness, restraining outragious iniquity and oppression.

It was also farther particularly foretold, that great Princes and Potentates should submit to the *Messias*, seriously avowing his authority over them, yielding veneration to his name, and obedience to his laws; with their power and wealth promoting and encouraging the Religion instituted by him, defending and cherishing his faithful people: *All Kings* (said the *Psalmist* of him) *shall fall before him*; *all nations shall doe him service: To a servant of rulers* (said *Esaias* also of him) *Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall doe worship:* And the same Prophet concerning his Church; *Kings* (saith he) *shall be thy nursing fathers, and Queens thy nursing mothers*; *they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet*; — *The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and Kings to the brightness of thy rising*; —— *The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their Kings shall minister unto thee*; —— *Thou shalt suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breasts of Kings*; —— *The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all Kings thy glory.* All this we see plainly to have been accomplished, for that soon the highest of earthly powers did submit and stoop thereto; that many great Princes (great and glorious as even the world hath known any; such as *Constantine*, *Theodosius*, *Charlemagne*, and others of like illustrious renown) have willingly entertained *Jesus* his doctrine and gladly undergone his yoke; that long successions of Emperours and Kings through the best frequented, and most civilized part of the world have seriously professed themselves the subjects and servants of *Jesus*; expressing humble adoration of his person, and yielding observance to his laws; maintaining the profession of his Religion by their power, supporting the Ministers of it by their bounty, cherishing the practice thereof by manifold helps and encouragements; they have seemed ambitious of titles drawn from performances of this nature, affecting and glorying to be styled *most Christian Kings*, *Catholick Kings*, *Defenders of the Faith*, and *Sons of the Church*.

Psal. 72. 11. Isa. 49. 7, 23. 52. 15. Isa. 60. 3. 11, 16. 62. 2.

Οὐ γὰρ ἀρνησαίμην ἄν, ἐφ' ᾧ μάλιστα χαίρω σωτῆρός ὑμᾶς τεφυκέναι. Const. *apud* Eus. *de Vit.* Const. 3.

Ἐγὼ δὲ σωτῆρα ὑμᾶς τε καὶ θεὸν ἐπιβολῇ τῇ χαίρων. Constant. *apud* Socr. 1. 9. *in Epist. ad Eccl.* Alexandr.

It was also to be a particular consequence of what the *Messias* should doe, that by virtue of his performances Idolatry (that is the worship of wicked Spirits, or of fictitious Deities) should in a conspicuous manner be vanquished, driven away, and destroyed; the worship of the only true God being substituted in its room: *The Lord alone* (saith *Esay* concerning his time) *shall be exalted in that day, and the Idols he shall utterly abolish*: and, *It shall come to pass* (saith *Zachary*) *in that day, saith the Lord of hosts, I will cut off the name of the Idols out of the land, and they shall be no more remembred*; *and also I will call the Prophets, and the unclean spirits to pass out of the land.* Now this we know was soon effected by the doctrine of our Lord, in a most remarkable manner: Idolatry in all places where it came, did flee and vanish before it; the Devil's frauds (whereby he so long had abused and befooled mankind) being detected,

Isa. 2. 17, 18. Ezek. 36. 25. Zech. 13. 2.

tected, and that authority, which he had usurped over the world, being utterly disavowed; all the pack of infernal Apostate Spirits being not onely rejected and disclaimed, but scorned and detested. *Jesus* (as the *Gospel* telleth us, and as experience confirmeth) did combat the *strong one*, did baffle and bind him, he disarmed and rifled him, he triumphed over him, and exposed him to shame; he cast him out, and dissolved all his works. At the appearance of *Jesus* his doctrine, and the sound of his name his altars were deserted, his temples fell down, his oracles were struck dumb, his arts were supplanted, all his worship and kingdom were quite subverted. The sottish adoration of creatures (by the suggestion also of Satan, and by man's vain fancy advanced to a participation of divine honour) was also presently banished, and thrown away; the onely true God (the Maker and Lord of all things) being thenceforth acknowledged and adored as the onely fountain of good, and the sole object of worship. Joh. 12. 31. 16. 11. Eph. 2. 2. 2 Cor. 4. 8. Col. 1. 13. Act. 26. 18. Matt. 12. 29. Luc. 11. 21. Col. 2. 15. Joh. 12. 31. 16. 11. 1 Joh. 3. 8.

Again whereas in regard to all these performances, the state of things constituted by the *Messias* is described so different from the former state of mankind, that it is called the creation of a new world: *For behold* (saith God in *Esay* concerning the *Messias* his times) *I create new heavens, and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembred, nor come into mind* (whence the *Jews* commonly before our Lord's time were used to call the *Messias* his time *the world to come*, *the future age*; It is plain that *Jesus* may well be esteemed to have accomplished the intent of those expressions; he (as the ἐπανορθωτὴς τȣ̃ κόσμȣ, the rectifier and rearer of the world, as *Origen* calleth him) having wrought so huge alterations in the minds, and hearts, and lives of men, in their principles and opinions, in their dispositions, and in their practices; having so changed the face of affairs, and reformed the course of things in the world; bringing men out of lamentable darkness and errour into clear light and knowledge, rescuing them from superstition, impiety and wickedness, and engaging them into ways of true religion, holiness and righteousness; so many persons being apparently *renewed in the spirit of their minds*; being made *new creatures*, *created according to God in righteousness, and true holiness*; so that (as the *Apostle* speaks) *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*; so that what the contumacious *Jews*, in anger and ill-will did call *Jesus* his instruments, had a true sense; they were οἱ τὴν οἰκȣμένην ἀναστατȣ́σαντες, they *who had turned the world upside down*; they did so indeed, but so as to settle it in a better posture. Καινὴς διαθήκης. Heb. 9. 10. Isa. 65. 17. 66. 22. 43. 18. Οἰκȣμένη μέλλȣσα. Heb. 2. 5. Ὁ μέλλων αἰὼν. Heb. 6. 5. Orig. *in* Celf. 3. Ep. 4. 23, 24. 2 Cor. 15. 17. Act. 17. 6.

Concerning which good effects of Christian Religion the ancient Christians had good reason to glory, and to say with *Origen*; *The adversaries of Christianism do not discern, how many mens diseases of soul, and how many floods of vices have been restrained; and how many mens savage manners have been tamed by reason of the Christian doctrine; wherefore being satisfied with the publick beneficialness thereof, which by a new method doth free men from many mischiefs, they ought willingly to render thanks thereto, and to yield testimony, if not to the truth of it, yet to its profitableness to mankind.* Οἱ δὲ κατήγοροι ἐκ τȣ̃ χειστιανισμȣ̃ ȣ̓χ ὁρȣ̃σιν, &c. Orig. *in* Celf. *lib.* 1. *p.* 50. *Vid.* Chrys. in 1 Cor. 1.

There remain behind several important considerations appertaining to this purpose, concerning the performances of the *Messias*, and events about him; His being to suffer grievous things from men, and for men; his performing miraculous works; the yielding various attestations from heaven to his person and doctrine; from the congruity of which particulars to what *Jesus* did endure, and act; and to what God hath done

in regard to him, the truth of our Conclusion, That *Jesus is the Christ*, will be manifest: but time now forbiddeth the prosecution of those matters; and I must therefore reserve it to an other occasion.

* offending. *Now, To him that is able to keep us from* * *falling, and to present us blameless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the onely*
Jud. 24, 25. *wise God our Saviour be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now, and for ever.*

* of ages. *Unto the King* * *eternal, immortal, invisible, the onely wise God, be ho-*
1 Tim. 1. 17. *nour and glory for ever and ever.* Amen.

Revel. 5. 13. *Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.*

Apoc. 7. 10. *Salvation be unto our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

Apoc. 7. 12. *Amen; Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might be unto our God for ever and ever.* Amen.

Apoc. 5. 12. *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

Apoc. 1. 5. *Unto him, that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XIX.

THAT JESUS IS THE True MESSIAS.

ACTS IX. 22.

— Proving that Jesus is the Christ.

WHAT is the true notion of the name or Title *Christ*, we (in discoursing formerly upon this Text) did explain. That one Person, to whom that notion signally doth agree, was by God's especial determination to come into the world, we did also

also in the next place, from prophetical instruction (back'd with the common tradition, and current opinion of God's people) declare. We farther in the sequel did propound to shew, that *Jesus* (whom we acknowledge) was that very Person; the *Messias* predicted by the Prophets, and expected by the *Jews*. This we have already (in the foregoing discourses, proved from several circumstances of his birth and coming among men; from his personal qualification, and from divers illustrious performances managed by him, in correspondency to what the Prophets foretold concerning the *Messias*. The same we now proceed to confirm from other very considerable particulars foretold by them, and suting to him; and *first* from those things, which the *Messias* was to undergo, and suffer. Act. 3. 17. Luk. 18. 31.

That the *Messias* was to come in an humble and homely manner (without appearances of worldly splendour or grandeur) that he was to converse among men in a state of external poverty and meanness; that he was to be disregarded and despised by men; that he was to cause offences, and to find oppositions in his proceedings; that he was to be repulsed and rejected, to be scorned and hated, to be disgracefully and hardly treated, to be grievously persecuted and afflicted; yea that at last he was to be persecuted, condemned and executed as a malefactour, is a truth which the *Jews* (although they firmly believed, and earnestly expected the coming of a *Messias*) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits, yea inconsistent with the nature and drift of their Religion, as they understood it. For their Religion in its surface (deeper than which their gross fancy could not penetrate) did represent earthly wealth, dignity and prosperity as things highly valuable; did propound them as very proper (if not as the sole) rewards of piety and obedience; did imply consequently the possession of them to be certain arguments of the divine good-will and regard; they could not therefore but esteem poverty, affliction and disgrace, as curses from heaven, and plain indications of God's disfavour toward those on whom they fell: They particularly did conceit, that to be rich was a necessary qualification to a Prophet (no less necessary, than to be of a good complexion, of a good capacity, of a good life) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem*; *the Spirit of God rests not upon a poor man* (that is, no special communications of grace, wisdom, goodness are ever by God afforded to persons of a low or afflicted condition) was a Rule they had framed, and which passed among them. That *He* therefore, who was designed to be so notable a Prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory; who therefore must be so highly favoured by God, should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd, could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had also (in congruity to those prejudices, abetted by that extream self-love and self-flattery, which were peculiar to that Nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the *Messias* was to come in a great visible state and power; to doe acts of great prowess and renown, to bring the Nations of the world into subjection under him, and so to reign among them in glorious majesty and prosperity. When *Jesus* therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications and performances to the prophetical characters of the *Messias*) did appear, such as he did, with pretences (or intimations rather) that he was the *Messias*, their stomach rose at it, they were hugely offended at him, they deemed Matt. 16. 20.

him not only a madman (one possessed or distracted) and an impo-
Matt. 13. 57. Matt. 26. 65. stour, but a blasphemer; for to be no less than blasphemy they took it, for so pitifull a wretch to arrogate unto himself so high a dignity, so near a relation to God, as the being the *Messias* did import. We see even the Disciples of our Lord so deeply tainted with this National pre-
Matt. 16. 22. 17. 2. Joh. 16. 12. judice, that (even after they had acknowledged him to be the *Christ*) they could not with patience hear him foretelling what should befall him (S. *Peter*, upon that occasion, even just after he had confessed him to be *the Christ*, did, as the Text says, take him and began to rebuke
Matt. 20. 21, 25. him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord) Yea presently after that he most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of Kingdoms, and being Grandees in them; yea, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possest them;
Act. 1. 6. for even then they demand of him, whether he would *at that time restore the Kingdom unto Israel* (meaning such an external visible Kingdom.)

This hence of all *things notifying* the *Messias* seems to be the only particular, which in general the *Jews* did not, or would not see and acknowledge: and this caused them to oversee all *the rest*, how clearly soever shining in, and about the Person of *Jesus*. This cloud hindred
Nisi enim ignoratus nihil patì posset Tert. *in* Marc. 3. 6. them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being affected with the wonderfulness of his works; from minding or crediting all the testimonies ministred from
1 Cor. 1. 23. heaven unto him. This (as S. *Paul* tells us) was the great scandal which obstructed their embracing the Gospel. We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars, alledge the general consent of God's peo-
Vid. Tert. *ibid.* Isa. 6. 9. Ezek. 12. 2. Matt. 13. 13. Act. 28. 26. Isa. 53. 1. ple, in expounding the Prophets according to our sense; this being one of those Points, in respect to which the Prophets did foresee and foretell their perverse stupidity and incredulity; that they should *look and not see, hear and not understand*; yielding herein special occasion to that complaint; *Who hath believed our report?*

Yet notwithstanding their (affected) blindness, there is no particular concerning the *Messias*, in the ancient Scripture, either more frequently (in way of mystical insinuation, or adumbration) glanced at; or more clearly (in direct and plain language) expressed; or which also by rea-
Act. 3. 18. sonable deductions thence may be inferr'd more strongly than this. S. *Peter* affirms that *God had foreshewed it by the mouth of all his Prophets* (not only of some, but *of all his Prophets*:) The same our Lord
Luk. 24. 44. himself did signifie before his departure to his Disciples out of *Moses*, the *Prophets* and *Psalms* shewing them this particular, and opening their minds to understand the Scriptures concerning it; concluding his discourse to them thus, ὅτι οὕτω γέγραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν, *Thus it was written, and thus ought Christ* (according to the prophetical presignifications and predictions) *to suffer.*

For the explaining and confirming of which truth, let us presume here to make a preparatory discourse or digression (not unseasonable perhaps, or improper to our purpose) concerning the nature of divine presignifications, which may serve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the ancient Scripture in the *New Testament* (the which, together with others connected to them, or bearing analogy to them, we also, being assured of their design by the authority of our Lord and his Apostles, may safely presume after them to apply to
Eph. 1. 11. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 1. 2. the same purposes.) We may then consider, that the All-wise God, (who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and to whom all

all things are present) having before eternal times (as S. *Paul* speaketh) determined in due time to send the *Messias* for accomplishing the greatest design, that ever was to be managed in this world (which should bring the highest glory to himself, and procure the greatest benefit to the principal of his creatures here) did by his incomprehensible providence so order things, that all the special dispensations preceding it should have a fit tendency, and advantageous reference thereto; so that when it came upon the stage, it might appear, that the main of the plot consisted therein, and that whatever before was acted, had a principal respect thereto. As therefore from the beginning of things God did in a gradual method make real preparations toward it, by steps imparting discoveries of his mind about it, or in order to it (somewhat to *Adam* himself, more to *Abraham* and the *Patriarchs*, somewhat farther to *Moses*, much more yet to divers of the Prophets among his chosen people, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered several instructions conformable to it, and nearly conducing to the promoting thereof) So he did also take especial care by many apposite *resemblances*, handsomely inserted into all his dispensations, to set it out, and to insinuate his meaning about it; that so at length it might shew it self with more solemnity, and less surprise. The most eminent persons therefore, whom he raised up and employ'd in his affairs tending to that end, as they did resemble the *Messias* in being instruments of his particular grace and providence (being indeed inferiour Christs, and Mediatours, and partial Saviours of his people, as they are sometimes called) so they were ordered in several circumstances of their persons, in divers actions they did, in the principal accidents befalling them to represent him; as also the rites and services instituted by them were adapted to the same purpose; they and all things about them being * fitted by God's especial wise care so as to be congruous emblems and shadows presignifying the Christ, and what appertained to him; his circumstances and accidents, his performances, his institutions. Thus was *Adam* (as S. *Paul* calls him) a type of *Christ*; *Abel*, *Melchizedek*, *Isaac*, *Moses*, *Joshua*, *David*, *Solomon*, *Zorobabel* are also intimated to have been such; the most signal things done by them, or befalling them, having been suted to answer somewhat that was remarkable concerning him; We may say of them all, as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* says of the *Jewish* Priests. *They served to the* subindication and *shadowing of heavenly things* (οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσι τῶν ἐπουρανίων.) In *David* particularly this relation is so plain, that because thereof often (as we before noted) in the Prophets, (*Jeremy*, *Ezekiel*, *Hosea*) the *Messias* is called by his Name. It indeed well suted the dignity of this great Person, and the importance of his business, that he should have such notable ushers, heralds and harbingers *going before his face*; furnished with conspicuous badges and ensigns denoting their relation to him; It was proper, that God should appear always to have had an express care, and especial regard toward him. It consequently serves for our edification; for that we duely comparing things, and discerning this admirable correspondence, may be somewhat instructed thereby, and somewhat confirmed in our faith, may be excited to the admiration of God's wisdom and goodness (so provident for our good) may also be induced thereby the more highly to adore the *Messias*, and to esteem his design. *All these things* (saith S. *Paul*, having compared divers things concerning *Moses* to things concerning *Christ*) *happened*

1 Cor. 2. 7. Eph. 1. 3. 3. 9. Rom. 16. 25. Col. 1. 26.

Νοητὰ σχήματα Eusebius *calls them.* *Eccl. H.* 1. 3.

Heb. 8. 6. Gal. 3. 19. Neh. 9. 27. Act. 7. 35.

Εἰκονικοὶ Χριστοὶ (*Christs in effigie*) Eusebius *calls them. Eccl. H.* 1. 4.

* Heb. 8. 5. Exod. 25. 40. Rom. 5. 14.

Heb. 8. 5.

Heb. 8. 5. 10. 1. 9. 23. Gal. 4. 24. Col. 2. 17.

Ὅτι δὲ μὴ καθ' αὐτοὶ ἦν τοῦ μόνου καὶ ἀληθοῦς Χριστοῦ τοῦ κατὰ πάντων βασιλεύοντος Θεοῦ λόγου βασιλικῆς καὶ ἀρχικῆς ἐξουσίας τύπος δὲ ἑαυτοῦ ἔφερεν (Euseb. 16, &c.) 1 Cor. 10, 11, 6.

pened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come. It is also (for illustration, and also for proof of these things) to be observed, that because those eminent servants of God were representatives of Christ, many things are spoken of them as such; many things are ascribed to them, which only or chiefly were intended of him; their names are used as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it seemed not to divine wisdom convenient or seasonable in a more open and clear manner to disclose promiscuously to all men (Why God should chuse to express things of this nature in such a manner, we need not to determine; it may be perhaps for reasons best known to himself, and above our ken or cognizance; yet probable reasons may be assigned for it, yea some more than probable being hinted in Scripture; it may be for a decent and harmonious distinction of times, of dispensations, of persons; it may be from the depth of things to conciliate a reverence to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of doing so; it may be to exercise and improve mens understanding to enflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them humble; it may be to reward an honest and diligent study of God's word; it may be for occasion of freely conveying special gifts of interpretation; it may be to conceal some things from some persons unfit, or unworthy to know them, especially from persons haughty and self-conceited; it may be to use the ignorance of some as a means to produce some great event (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*) it cannot be supposed necessary that all things should be plainly discovered to all persons; it is evident that some things are purposely couched in parabolical and mysterious expression; it is particularly the manner of prophetical instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every season and every capacity; but to return from out of this *parenthesis* to our case.) That under the names of Persons representing Christ (or of things we may add adumbrating his things) many things are intimated concerning him and his dispensations, may be collected and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to persons (and to things also) which do not agree to them; many things were promised, which appear never accomplished, except after a very improper and hyperbolical manner of expression, or according to an enormous wideness of interpretation; such as doth not well sute to the nature of true histories, and serious promises. Thus (for instance) are many things foretold concerning the large extent and prosperous estate of the *Jewish* Church, which history and experience testifie never (according to strictness of literal acception, yea not in any tolerable degree near the height of what the words import) to have happened. Thus also (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* well argueth) effects are attributed to the *Jewish* rites and sacrifices, which according to the nature of the thing cannot belong to them, otherwise than as shadows and substitutes of higher things. Thus also, what is, with solemn oath, promised to *Solomon* (concerning the vast extent, and endless duration of his empire in righteousness, peace and prosperity; together with his mighty acts and victorious atchievements) doth not appear directly in any competent measure to have been performed. Thus also *David* (as S. *Peter* observes and argues in the second of the *Acts*) speaketh many things of himself, which cannot be conceived properly and literally agreeable to him. Such things therefore are reasonably supposed to be intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future most perfect state of things

Vid. de Script. Obs. & Proph. Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *pag.* 649 &c. & 658, &c.

Apoc. 2. 7, &c. 13. 18. 17. 9. Matt. 13. 9. 24. 15. Dan. 9. 1. Joh. 5. 39. Luc. 24. 45. 1 Cor. 12. 10. 14. 26. Eph. 1. 9, 10.

Matt. 13. 13. 11. 25. 7. 6.

Act. 3. 17. 1 Cor. 2. 8.

Isa. 25. 8.

Heb. 10. 4.

Psal. 45. 72, 83, &c.

Act. 2. 29.

things under the *Messias*; to concern him (who was to be the end of the Law) and his dispensation, which was to contain the accomplishment of all things predicted and presignified. This is that which Saint *Austin* signifies when he says, *Which Christ* (saith he, *and what concerns him*) —— *all the promises of that nation, all their prophecies, priesthood, sacrifices, their temple, and altogether all their sacraments did resound, or express.* Rom. 10. 4. 2 Cor. 3. 13. Luc. 22. 37.

Quem Christum —— omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetæ, sacerdotia, sacrificia, templum, & cuncta omnino sacramenta sonuerunt. Aug. *ad* Volus. *Ep.* 3.

Neither are these things only said according to suppositions assumed in the *New Testament*, but they agree (as to their general importance) to the sense of the ancient *Jews*, who did conceive such mysterious references often to lie couched under the letter of Scriptures. They supposed a *Midrash* or mystical sense of Scripture, which they very studiously (even to excess commonly) did search after. It was (as *Lud. Capellus* affirms) a confident and constant opinion of their Doctors, that all things in *Moses* his Law were typical, and capable of mystical exposition. And *Philo*'s Writings (composed in, or immediately after our Saviour's times) are a plain confirmation of what he saith; we have also several instances and intimations thereof in the *New Testament*. Neither probably would the Apostles in their discourses and disputations with the *Jews* have used this way of interpreting and citing passages of Scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it. *In Exerc. ad* Zohar. Matth. 21. 9. 42. 22. 32. 42.

Now these things being (cursorily) premised, we return into our way, and say, that the *Messias* his being to suffer was in divers passages of the ancient Scripture prefigured. Supposing the thing it self should be, there is a peculiar reason, why it should be so represented, thus expressed by *Tertullian*: *The Sacrament indeed* (saith he) *of Christ's passion ought to have been figured in the* (ancient) *predication*; *forasmuch as that the more incredible it was, if it should have been preached nakedly, the more offensive it would have been*; *and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be shaded, that the difficulty of understanding it might cause the seeking of God's grace.*

Utique Sacramentum passionis ipsius figurari in prædicationibus oportuerat; quantoque incredibile, tanto magis scandalum futurum; quantoque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum, ut difficultas intellectus gratiam Dei quæreret. Tertull. *in* Judæos. *cap.* 10.

Supposing also it should be, the passages about *Abel*, *Isaac*, *Josias*, *Jeremy* (and the like) may congruously be applied thereto; The elevation of the Brazen Serpent, and the killing of the Paschal Lamb may appositely represent it; the *Jewish* Priests, with all their Sacrifices, may also with reason be brought in and accommodated thereto: These things are not indeed by themselves alone apt peremptorily to evince, that it should be; yet do they handsomely suite it, and adorn the supposition thereof, according to the notion we touched about the typical relation between the matters of the Old World before the *Messias*, and those of the New one after him. But with a clearer evidence and stronger force we may affirm, that the *Messias* his sufferings were implied in the afflictions of his representative King *David*, such as he in several *Psalms* (the 35, 69, 109, 118, and especially in the 22. *Psalm*) describeth them; wherein divers passages (expressing the extreme sadness and forlornness of his condition) occur, which by the history of his life, do not so well, according to the literal signification of words, appear congruous to his Person; which therefore there is a necessity, or (at least) much reason that they should be applied to the *Messias*, whom *David* did represent.

Which being admitted, comparing then the passages we have there to what befel *Jesus*, we shall find an admirable harmony, there being scarce

scarce any part of his affliction in his life, or any circumstance thereof at his death, which is not in emphatical and expres terms there set out. There we have expressed his low and despicable estate *(I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men and despised of the people)* The causeless hatred and enmity of the populacy and of the Great ones toward him: *(They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head; they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: They compassed me about with words of hatred, and fought against me without a cause.)* The ingrateful requital made to him for all the good done by him, and intended by him *(They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love.)* Their rejecting him *(The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone in the corner:)* Their insidious and calumnious proceedings against him *(Without cause have they hid for me their net, in a pit which without cause they have digged for my soul:* and, *False witnesses did rise up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not:* and, *The mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me, they have spoken against me with a lying tongue.)* Their bitter insulting over him in his affliction *(But in mine adversity they rejoyced, and gathered themselves together, yea the abjects gathered themselves together against me —— They persecute him, whom thou hast smitten, and they talk to the grief of those, whom thou hast wounded:* καὶ ὅτι τὸ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσέθηκαν, *and to the smart of my wounds, they added,* say the LXX.) Their scornful reviling, flouting, and mocking him *(All they that see me laugh me to scorn, they shoot the lip; they shake the head (saying) He trusted in the Lord that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighteth in him. I became a reproach unto them, when they looked upon me, they shaked their heads. They opened their mouth wide against me, and said Aha, Aha; our eye hath seen it.* Ἐπείρασαν με, ἐξεμυκτήρισαν με μυκτερισμὸν ἔβρυξαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τοὺς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν *They tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnashed their teeth upon me.)* The cruel manner of their dealing with him *(Dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me; they pierced my hands and my feet; I may tell all my bones; they look and stare upon me.)* Their dealing with him, when in his distres he called for some refreshment *(They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink.)* Their disposal of his garments upon his suffering *(They parted my garments among them, and cast lots upon my vesture.)* His being deserted of his friends, and destitute of all consolation *(I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mothers children. — I am full of heavines, and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none, and for comforters, but I found none.)* The sense of God's withholding his favour and help *(My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me; why art thou so far from helping me? ——)* His charitable disposition and behaviour toward his persecutors *(But as for me when they were sick* (or as the LXX, *when they did trouble me,* Ἐν τῷ αὐτὸς παρενοχλεῖν μοι) *my cloathing was sackcloath, I humbled my self with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom; I behaved my self as though it had been my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily as one that mourneth for his mother)* which passages and the like, how patly and punctually they do square to respective passages in the *Gospels*, I need not to shew; we do all, I suppose, well enough remember that both most doleful and comfortable history, to be able our selves to make the application.

Psal. 22. 6. Psal. 69. 4. 35. 7. 109. 3. Psal. 35. 12. 109. 5. Psal. 118. 22. Psal. 35. 7, 11. 109. 2. Psal. 35. 15. 69. 26. Psal. 109. 25. 35. 22. 35. 16. 22. 6, 7. Psal. 22. 16. Psal. 69. 21. Psal. 22. 18. Psal. 69. 9, 20. Psal. 22. 1. 69. 17. Psal. 35. 13.

But there are not only such oblique intimations, shrowded under the coverture of other Persons and Names, but direct and immediate predictions

predictions concerning the *Messias* his being to suffer most clearly expressed. That whole famous *Chapter* in *Esay* (the 53*d Chapter*) doth most evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, causes, ends and consequences of his sufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically represented. His appearing meanness (*He hath no form or comeliness, and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.*) The disgrace, contempt, repulses and rejection he underwent (*He is despised, and rejected of men —— we hid our faces from him*; he was *despised, and we esteemed him not.*) His afflicted state (*He is a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*) The bitter and painful manner of his affliction (*He was stricken; bore stripes, was wounded, was bruised.*) His being accused, adjudged and condemned as a malefactor (*He was taken from prison, and from judgment —— he was numbred among the transgressors.*) His consequent death (*He poured out his soul unto death; He was cut out of the land of the living.*) The design and end of his sufferings; they were appointed and inflicted by Divine providence for our sake, and in our stead; for the expiation of our sins, and our salvation (*It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief —— when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin: — He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; —— the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed; —— Surely he hath born our griefs, and carried our sorrows —— For the transgression of my people he was smitten; —— The Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all.*) His sustaining all this with a willing patience and meekness (*He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before the shearer is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.*) His charitable praying for his persecutors; so that may be understood (*He made intercession for the transgressors.*) The consequence and success of his sufferings (*He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand: He shall see of the travel of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; —— and, I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong.*) Which passages as they most exactly sute to *Jesus*, and might in a manner constitute an historical narration of what he did endure, together with the opinions taught in the *Gospel* concerning the intent and effect of his sufferings; so that they did (according to the intention of the Divine Spirit) relate to the *Messias*, may from several considerations be apparent: The context and coherence of all this passage with the precedent and subsequent passages, which plainly respect the *Messias*, and his times: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings?* —— and, *Behold my servant shall deal prudently*, &c. are passages immediately going before, of which this 53*d Chapter* is but a continuation: and immediately after it followeth —— *Sing O barren, thou that didst not bear*, &c. being a very elegant, and perspicuous description of the Church augmented by accession of the *Gentiles*, which was to be brought to pass by the *Messias*. The general scope of this whole prophecy argues the same; And the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other Person imaginable beside the *Messias* doth farther evince it; so high are the things which are attributed to the Suffering Person; as that he should *bear the sins* of all God's people and heal them; that he should *by his knowledge justify many*; that *the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand*; that God would

v. 2. v. 3. v. 3, 4. v. 5, 8. v. 8. 12. v. 12, 8, 7. v. 10, 5, 4, 8, 6, 12. v. 7. v. 12. v. 10, 11, 12. Isa. 52. 7, 13.

divide him a portion with the great; and that he should *divide the spoil with the strong*——the magnificency and importance of which things do well agree to the *Messias*, but not to any other person: whence if the ancient *Jews* had reason to believe a *Messias*, they had as much reason to apply this place to him as any other, and to acknowledge he was to be a great sufferer; and indeed divers of the ancient *Targumists* and most learned *Rabbins* did expound this place of the one *Messias* that was to come, as the *Pugio Fidei*, and other learned Writers do by several testimonies shew. This place also discovers the vanity of that figment devised by some later *Jews*, who to evade and oppose *Jesus* affirmed there was to be a double *Messias* (one who should be much afflicted, the other who should greatly prosper) since we may observe that here both great afflictions, and glorious performances are ascribed to the same person.

The same things are also by parts clearly predicted in other places of
Isa. 52.13,14. this Prophet, and in other Scriptures: By *Esay* again in the *Chapter*, immediately foregoing: *Behold* (saith he) *my servant shall deal prudently; he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high* (there is God's servant (he that is in way of excellency such, that is, in this Prophet's style, the *Messias*) in his real glorious capacity; it follows, concerning his external appearance) *his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men*,—— and again (in the forty ninth *Chapter*) *Thus saith the Lord, the redeemer of Israel, and his Holy one:*
Isa. 49. 7. *To him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of Rulers, Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship:* What can be more express and clear, than that the *Messias*, who should subject the world, with its sovereign powers, to the acknowledgment, and adoration of himself, was to be despised by men; to be detested by the *Jews*, and to appear in a servile and base condition? The same Pro-
Isa. 50. 6. phet again brings him in speaking thus: *I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.* His offending the *Jews* and aggravating their sins is also
Isa. 8. 14. expressed by this same Prophet—— *And* (saith he) *He shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.* The opposition also he should receive is signified in the second *Psalm*——
Psal. 2. 2. *The Kings of the earth set themselves, and the Rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed.* The Prophet *Zachary* doth also in several places very roundly express his sufferings: His low con-
Zech. 9. 9. dition in those words: *Behold thy King cometh unto thee lowly (Pauper)*
Zech. 13. 7. *and riding upon an ass:* His manner of death in those: *Awake O sword against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow (saith the Lord of hosts) smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered:* and again—
Zech. 12. 10. *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn*, &c. The Prophet *Daniel* also in that place, from which probably the name *Messias* was taken, and
Dan. 9. which most expressly mentions him, saith, that *after threescore and two weeks the Messias shall be cut off, but not for himself*——. Now from these passages of Scripture we may well say with our Lord; Ὅτι οὕτω γέγρα-
Luke 24. 26. πται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστόν· *That thus it was written, and thus,* according to the Prophets foretelling, it was to happen, that the *Messias should suffer*; suffer in a life of penury and contempt, in a death of shame and sorrow.

That

That it was to be thus might also be inferred by reasons grounded on the qualities of the *Messias* his Person, and the nature of his performances, such as they are described in the Scripture. He was to be really and to appear plainly a person of most admirable vertue and good worth; but never was or can there be any such (as even *Pagan* Philosophers, *Plato*, *Seneca*, and others have observed) without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an universal pattern to men of all sorts (especially to the greatest part, that is to the poor) of all righteousness; to exemplify particularly the most difficult pieces of duty (Humility, Patience, Meekness, Charity, Self-denial, entire resignation to God's will) this he should not have opportunity or advantage of doing, if his condition had been high, wealthy, splendid and prosperous. He was to exercise pity and sympathy towards all mankind; the which to do it was requisite he should feel the inconveniences and miseries incident to mankind. He was to advance the repute of spiritual and eternal goods; and to depress the value of those corporeal and temporal things, which men vainly admire; the most ready and compendious way of doing this was by an exemplary neglecting and refusing worldly enjoyments (the honours, profits and pleasures here.) He was by gentle and peaceable means to erect a spiritual Kingdom, to subdue the hearts and consciences of men to the love and obedience of God, to raise in men the hopes of future rewards and blessings in heaven; to the accomplishment of which purposes temporal glory had been rather prejudicial, than conducible. He was to manage his great designs by means supernatural and divine, the which would be more conspicuous by the visible meanness and impotency of his state. He was to merit most highly from God for himself, and for men; this he could not do so well, as in enduring for God's sake and ours the hardest things. He was to save men and consequently to appease God's wrath, and satisfy his justice, by the expiation of our sins; this required that he should suffer what we had deserved. But reasons of this kind I partly before touched, and shall hereafter have occasion to prosecute more fully in treating upon the article of our Saviour's passion.

Now that *Jesus (our Lord)* did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared concerning the *Messias*, we need not by relating minutely the known history of his life and death make out farther; since the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adversary will deny it. I conclude this Point with St. *Peter*'s words (for the illustration and proof of which this discourse hath been made.) *But those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.* Acts 3. 18.

And in Jesus Christ, &c.

SERMON XX.

THAT JESUS IS THE True MESSIAS.

JOHN V. 37.

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath born witness of me.

JESUS, our Lord, here, and in the Context doth affirm, that Almighty God, his Father, had granted unto him several kinds of extraordinary attestation, sufficient to convince all well-disposed persons, unto whom they shall be discovered, that he truly was that *Messias*, whom God before all beginning of time had designed, and frequently by his Prophets had promised to send for the reformation of the world, and salvation of mankind: to represent those several ways of divine attestation with some reflections on them, serving both to the confirmation of our faith, and improving our affection, and our reverence thereto is my chief design at this time.

But *first* in preparation to what we shall say concerning those particulars, and for declaration of the divine wisdom in this manner of proceeding, I shall assign some reasons, why it was requisite, that such attestations should be afforded to our Lord.

1. The nature of the *Messias* his Office required such attestations; for since he was designed to the most eminent employment that ever was, or could be committed to any person; since he was to reveal things no less great and important, than new and strange; since he was to assume a most high authority unto himself; since he was to speak, and act all in the name of God; since also all men under great penalties were obliged to yield credit and obedience to him, there was great reason that God should appear to authorize him; that he should be able to produce God's hand and seal to his commission; for that otherwise he might have been suspected of imposture; his doctrine might have been rejected,

Deut. 18. 19. Act. 3. 23.

ed, his authority disclaimed, and his design frustrated, without great blame, or however without mens being convincible of blame: for well might the people suspect that person, who, professing to come in such a capacity an extraordinary *Agent* from heaven, brought no *Credentials* thence, (no evidence of God's especial favour and assistance;) well might they reject that new doctrine, which God vouchsafed not by any signal testimony to countenance; well might they disclaim that authority, which offering to introduce so great innovations (to repeal old laws, to cancel settled obligations, to abolish ancient customs; to enact new laws and rules, exacting obedience to them from all men) should not be able to exhibit its warrant, and shew its derivation from heaven: well might such peremptory assertions, and so confident pretences, without confirmations answerable in weight, beget even in wise men distrust and aversation. The reasonableness and excellency of his doctrine, the innocence and sanctity of his life, the wisdom and persuasiveness of his discourse would not, if nothing more divine should attend them, be thoroughly able to procure faith and submission; they would at best have made his precepts to pass for the devices of a wise man, or the dictates of a good Philosopher. They were therefore no unreasonable desires or demands (if they had proceeded from a good meaning, and had been joined with a docile and tractable disposition) which the *Jews* did make to our Lord; *Master we would see a sign from thee*; *what sign therefore dost thou doe, that we may see, and believe thee*; *what dost thou work? what sign dost thou shew to us, that thou doest things?* that is, how dost thou prove thy doctrine credible, or thy authority valid by God's testimony and warrant? This challenge our Lord himself acknowledged somewhat reasonable; for he not only asserts the truth of his doctrine, and validity of his commission by divine attestation (in words and works) nor only exhorts them to credit him upon that account, but he also plainly signifies that his bare affirmation did not require credit, and that if he could produce no better proof, they were excusable for disbelieving him: *If* (saith he) *I witness of my self my witness is not true*; not true, that is, not credible; or not so true, as to oblige to belief: and, *If I doe not the works of my father*, (that is, works only imputable to God's extraordinary power,) *believe me not*, that is, I require no belief from you: Yea, he farther adds, *If I had not done the works among them, which no man else had done*; *they* (the incredulous people then) *had not had any sin*; that is, had not been culpable for unbelief. It was then from the nature of the *Messias* his Office, and undertaking very necessary, that he should have attestations of this kind; and our Lord himself, we see, declines not, but aggravateth his pretences with this necessity.

Joh. 6. 27. Joh. 2. 18. 6. 30. Matt. 12. 38. 16. 1. Mark 8. 11. Joh. 8. 16, 29. 10. 25. 5. 32, 36. Joh. 5. 31. 10. 37. 15. 24.

2. The Effects which the *Messias* was to produce did require extraordinary attestations and assistances from God. He was to atchieve exploits of the greatest difficulty conceivable; far surpassing all that ever was by any person undertaken in the world before: he was to vanquish all the powers, and to confound all the policies of hell; he was to subdue, and subjugate all the world; to make the greatest Princes to stoop, and to submit their Sceptres to his will; to bring down the most haughty conceits, and to break down the most stubborn spirits, and to tame the wildest passions of men; he was to expell from their minds most deeply rooted prejudices, to banish from their practice most inveterate customs, to cross their most violent humours, to thwart their interests, to bear down their ambitions, to restrain their covetous desires, and their voluptuous appetites; he was to perswade a Doctrine, and to impose a

Ἀνάπλεξον τῇ διανοίᾳ, καὶ ἐννόησον ἡλίκον ἐστὶ τὸ ὑφ' ἡλίῳ κεκρᾶσθαι ἅπασιν, &c. Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 61. *p.* 634.

Law

Law very opposite to the natural inclinations, to the current notions, to the worldly advantages, the liberties, emoluments and enjoyments of all, or of most, or of many people; he was, in short, so to reform the world as in a manner quite to alter the whole frame of it, and all the course of affairs therein; things which surely it were a madness to enterprise, and an impossibility to accomplish without remarkable testimonies of the divine presence, especial aids of the divine power, and large influences of the divine spirit communicated to him; without (as S. *Peter* phraseth it) *God were with him*; these things were not effectible by means natural and ordinary, by humane wit or eloquence, by good behaviour or example, by the bare reason or plausibility of doctrine, by the wise conduct or industrious management of the design; no, such means have by many experiments appeared insufficient to bring about much lesser matters; nothing under the wisdom of God directing, the power of God assisting, the authority of God establishing, and gracing his endeavours in an eminent and evident manner could enable the *Messias* to bring these mighty things to pass.

Act. 10. 38. Joh. 3. 2.

3. We may farther consider, that *the Christ* was designed to present himself first to the *Jews* (in the first place imparting the declarations of God's will, and gracious intentions to them, his ancient friends and favourites) that is to a people wholly addicted to this sort of proof, and uncapable of conviction by any other: they did not, as did *the Greeks*, *seek wisdom*, but *required a sign*, as S. *Paul* observed of them; they were not so apt to enquire after the intrinsick reasons of things, as to expect testimonies from heaven; nothing else was able to persuade them; so our Lord expressly saith; *Jesus said unto them, if you do not see signs and prodigies, you will no-wise believe*: In consequence of which disposition in them, we see by passages in the *New Testament*, that they expected and believed the *Messias* should come with such attestations, and performances; so their importunate demanding of signs upon all occasions from our Lord doth signifie, and so those words in S. *John* do imply: *And many of the people believed on him, and said; when Christ cometh, will he doe more miracles than these, which this man doeth?* where we may observe both their expectation of miraculous works from the *Messias*, and the efficacy which such works had upon them. The condition also of the *Gentiles* unto whom his design in the next place did extend, seemed to require the same proceedings: for all other methods of instruction and perswasion had before often been applied to them by Philosophers, and by Politicians for instilling their notions, and recommending their laws; they had been so inured to subtile argumentations, and plausible discourses, that the bare use of them was not likely to have any extraordinary effect upon them: If the *Messias* therefore should bring no other confirmation with him unto them, he would seem to deserve no higher regard or credit, than other Doctors or Law-givers, which had appeared among them; and as easily would he be declined, and put off by them: whence reasonably it may be supposed, that for accommodation to the *genius*, and the capacities of those, upon whose hearts he was to make impression, the *Messias* should come furnished with such special testimonials, and powers from God. Especially considering that.

1 Cor. 1. 22.

Joh. 4. 48.

Joh. 7. 31.

Orig. *cont.* Cels. 8. (*p.* 408.)

4. It was agreeable to God's usual method of proceeding in cases resembling this, although much unequal thereto in weight, and consequence. There was never any more than ordinary discovery made to men by God, never any very considerable business managed by divine providence;

providence; never hardly any eminent Person appeared with a pretence of coming from God for the prosecution of such purposes, without God's visible interposal and abetment. This hath always been the authentick *Seal*, whereby he hath wonted to authorize the messengers sent from himself for transacting affairs of an unusual, and very weighty nature; whereby his true Ambassadours have been distinguishable from ordinary persons, or from deceitfull pretenders, who have offered to impose their own devices upon men: to a person bringing with him this sort of assurance (except when his tale is evidently false and vain, or his design notoriously wicked and mischievous) God hath always required, that a ready credence and obedience should be yielded; taking it for a high affront to himself (no less, as S. *John* says, than *giving him the lye*) to disbelieve such a person, and for a heinous contumacy to disobey him: that it hath been God's ordinary method, the course of divine History shews. When God separated the *Patriarchs* for the preservation and propagation of his true Religion, he manifested an especial presence with them, frequently appearing to them, visibly assisting and blessing them in a more than ordinary manner, endewing them with a prophetical discretion, and foresight of things: when he would rescue the seed of those his friends from cruel oppression and hard slavery (designing also by them to maintain, and convey down the sincere way of piety) he imparted also unto *Moses* the special instrument of those purposes, a power of doing wonders, thereby procuring authority to his person, and credit to his pretences. *Moses* did well perceive, and judge, that had he come without such attestation he should not have been received or regarded: But *Behold* (said he) *they will not believe me, nor hearken to my voice; for they will say, the Lord hath not appeared unto thee:* wherefore God furnished him with such a power of doing such things as should assure the truth of his message; the effect whereof is thus expressed; —— *Israel saw that great work, which the Lord did upon the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses:* To the promulgation of the Law, and establishment of that particular Covenant with the *Israelites* God did also exhibit significations of his presence in a most evident and affecting manner: *Loe* (said God to *Moses*, expressing that matter, and its design) *I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever.* And in the whole conduct of that People toward *Canaan*, God for those ends vouchsafed by *Moses* to perform very great and prodigious things; which we may see reckoned up in the 78*th* and 105*th Psalms*, and in the 9*th* of *Nehemiah*. So also when God employed *Elias* to sustain the remainders of decayed piety in *Israel* against the countenance of power given to wickedness, and against the stream of popular use, he endewed him with a liberal measure of his Spirit, and a power of doing great miracles: the like may be observed of all the *Prophets*, *Judges* and *Princes*, who upon special occasions were raised to perform considerable services for the glory of God, and the good of his People. This therefore being God's constant practice, it cannot but be well supposed, that in this case he would not withhold his attestation, but would afford it in a most plentiful measure to that person who was in dignity so far to excell all other his Envoys and Agents; whose undertaking should in importance so vastly transcend all others, that ever were set on foot in the world; to him, who was to free not one small people only, but all mankind, not from a temporal slavery in *Egypt*, but from eternal misery in Hell; to promulge not a pedago-

Joh. 6. 27.
1 Joh. 5. 10.
Joh. 3. 33.
Gen. 21. 22.
Exod. 4. 1.
Exod. 4. 5, 31. 14. 31.
Deut. 4. 34. 5. 15. 7. 19. 4. 35, 39.
Exod. 19. 9.
Neh. 9. 13.
Psal. 78. 14. 105. 39.
Neh. 9. 19.

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gy of ritual observances, but a law of spiritual righteousness; to establish not a temporal Covenant for a little spot of earth, but an everlasting Testament for all the World, importing endless beatitude in heaven. God therefore surely would not balk his road upon such an occasion, nor refuse his especial testimonials to so great a Personage, and to so good a Design.

5. If we consider the general reasons assignable, why God hath been wont to proceed in this manner, or why he should use it upon any occasion, they are with strongest force applicable to this case. The most general reasons why God doth ever interpose extraordinarily, or produce works supernatural, are to assert palpably his own Divinity and Providence; strongly to encourage devotion and piety in men: for he by suspending, or thwarting the course of nature plainly declareth himself the maker, and master thereof; that he freely made the world, and freely doth uphold it; that he hath not tied his own hands, nor confined his power within limits; but is superiour to, and free from all laws, excepting those of indefectible holiness and goodness; and consequently that all things do not proceed in a track of dead fatality. He thereby also assureth us, that he hath an especial regard unto, and a care over men, and wisely ordereth humane affairs by his providence, frequently (as wisedom directeth, and occasion requireth) interposing his hand for the succour, encouragement and reward of good men; that therefore it is not vain to hope and trust in him, that prayers and devotions are available to procure good from him; that repentance and obedience are no less profitable for us, than acceptable to him; that also he freely and justly dispenseth recompences suitable to mens actions voluntarily performed; that in fine there is a foundation of Religion, and a ground of justice between God and man: these things are most evidently, and effectually demonstrated by extraordinary attestations; and when therefore could they more seasonably be used, than when God by the *Messias* intended to call all the world to the acknowledgment and obedience of himself, to the practice of all piety and goodness, with assurances of fit reward, in regard to such practice? If farther to excite mens attention and regard, to breed awe and reverence in mens minds, to confound the impudence, and to bend or break the obstinacy of men are main ends, and proper effects of such testimonies; whether we consider the *Messias* his person, the nature of his undertaking, or the persons with whom he was to deal, 'tis plain (as we have shewed) that his business would best deserve, and most need them: no dispensation could better deserve them for worth and consequence; none could more need them for greatness and difficulty.

Such reasons may be assigned for the necessity and usefulness of divine attestations in this case: but in opposition to these discourses, and in derogation to this way of confirming any truth or authority, it may be said, that no such testifications can well serve to such purposes; for that the like have been, and may be applied to the persuasion of errour and impiety by *false Prophets*, and *Antichrists*; by *Magicians*, and *Wisards*; who not only have cunningly counterfeited, but really executed very prodigious and wondrous things, in a manner unaccountable to humane Philosophy. Since also there are wicked spirits, in subtilty and power far exceeding us, who are able easily to divert the natural course of things; and the limits of whose power in working so, it is hard for us to discern or define; how can we be assured, that what is done in this kind, doth not

Deut. 13. 3. Matt. 24. 24. 2 Thes. 2. 2.

Πῶς ἂν ὁ ἀέτλιον ὑπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἔργων ἢ μὴ θεὸν, τὰς δὲ χρήτας ἡγεῖσθε; — Cels. *apud Orig. lib.* 2. (*p.* 89.)

not proceed from them, but from a virtue divine? how can it be a certain and convincing argument of truth? may we not here object that of *Tertullian*, saying, that *Our Lord pronouncing that many impostors should come, and do miracles, shewed thereby the faith grounded on miracles to be temerarious.*

Siquidem edicens multos venturos, & signa facturos, temerariam planè signorum, & virtutum fidem ostendit, ut apud Pseudo-Christianos facillimarum. Tert. in Marc. 3. 2.

To this suggestion we may in general return, that seeing the doing such things is the chief and most effectual way, whereby God beyond the resistence of doubt or dispute can in some cases assure us concerning his mind, and will (whereby he can bestow honour and credit to any instrument employed by him, to any revelation proceeding from him) it cannot but (notwithstanding that cross instance) reasonably be supposed, that God however doth reserve the power thereof in some eminent and discernible manner peculiar to himself, for the promoting his own service. That also at least God, being the author and establisher of nature, and the continual sustainer of it by his free providence, it is not likely, that he will suffer the laws and course thereof to be much violated, except upon occasions very considerable, and for very good purposes; no inferior cause being able to determine his voluntary influence, or providential concourse to the accomplishment of designs contrary to his will and purpose. That also the natural goodness and justice of God, the constant care and providence he exerciseth over this world, the particular relations he beareth toward mankind (as the Maker and Father, the Lord and Governor thereof) the honour and interest of truth, of religion, of virtue (whose Protector and Patron he is, and declareth himself) the necessary regard he also, in connexion with the rest, doth bear to his own honour and glory do all conspire to persuade, that God will never endure such things to be performed in any high manner, so that good and well meaning people shall be very liable to be thereby extremely seduced into error; or that himself shall be intolerably mocked by the enemies of his glory, and our good. This may serve to render it probable, that the objection is capable of a solution. Aug. *de Civ. Dei* 10. 16.

But to answer more distinctly and particularly; we do grant, that God sometimes for special reasons (for wise probation of some persons, and just punishment of others; for to approve some mens sincerity and constancy, to detect other mens naughtiness and vanity) may permit such things (in some manner, in some degree such) to be effected by the influence of wicked spirits, or the fraud of wicked men; yet then it will never be very hard for moderately wise, and well disposed persons to distinguish such feats from those acts, which issue from the positive and direct efficacy of God, for authorizing his messengers, and confirming his truth: We may usually discern them to come from bad causes by their nature; we may certainly detect them by their design and influence. 1 Cor. 11 19. 2 Thess. 2. 9, 11. Deut. 13. 1, &c. Matt. 24. 24. Apoc. 13. 13.

There are some things so great, that it is not reasonable to conceive, that any such inferior power is able to do them; or if they were able, that God should permit their power actually to be exerted, and to succeed in doing them: such is the making any general or grand alteration in the course of nature; which being God's great work and establishment, the which he doth (as the Prophets speak) govern by a standing law, and preserve according to a perpetual decree, which cannot pass; yea according to a *Covenant*, which his faithfulness is in a manner engaged to observe; it is not probable that he will suffer any creature to disturb or disorder: this experience well confirmeth, for had bad spirits Jer. 5. 22. 33. 25. Psal. 148. 26.

a power of crossing nature so, such is their malice and proneness to do mischief, that the world would soon have been turned by them into confusion and ruin; that all things therein go in so kindly and steady a course, is an argument of their small power and influence upon things; that God holdeth the reigns fast in his own hands, reserving to himself only as Lord paramount of Nature a power to dispense with any of its main laws; that it is *he alone, who* (as the *Psalmist* saith) *doeth great wonders.* There are also some things, which although not of so great and general consequence, are yet of so difficult performance, that it is improbable any creature should effect them; such was the turning of dust into lice, which the Devils could not enable the *Egyptian* sorcerers to perform; to prepare or dispose so much dust for the reception of souls, and to furnish so many souls for the dust did it seems exceed their ability; whence they were forced to confess of that miracle done by *Moses*; *This is the finger of God.*

Psal. 136. 4. 72. 18. 86. 10. Deut. 3. 24. Exod. 8. 19.

There are also things so good, and so beneficial to mankind, that evil spirits may be deemed unable to do them (God the fountain of good retaining them as instruments of his glory, and arguments of his goodness, to his own dispensation) which also we may presume they would not be willing, were they able, to perform, it being against their disposition, or their interest to do it; such are to dispossess Devils (that is to divide and weaken their own Kingdom) to discover moral truths of consequence (that is to drive men from themselves) and even to free men from grievous diseases (that is, to starve their own βασκανία, and malignity) as is implied in that passage of the Gospel; where it is said, *These are not the words of him that hath a devil*; *can a devil open the eyes of the blind?* Extraordinary works then if they are very great, very hard, very good, do thence indicate their cause to be divine: wicked spirits deal only in petty, low and useless prestigiatory tricks, of small consequence, and no benefit.

John 10. 21.

But there are farther some things infallibly signifying a divine virtue, peculiar to God, and (either by their nature, or from the decree of God) incommunicable to any creature, otherwise than as acted by God, or immediately depending on him; such are, the knowledge of future contingent events declared by predicting, or presignifying them, according to that of the Prophet; *Shew* (said he, in way of challenge, and conviction to the objects of Heathen worship) *the things to come, that we may know ye are Gods*; such is the discerning mens secret thoughts and intentions, the which God assumeth as proper to himself; *I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins*; so that καρδιογνώστης is a characteristical attribute, or title proper to him. Such is the restitution of men from a state of death to life; a work not only in it self most difficult, in respect to the ordinary rule of nature, which it transgresseth, but impossible to any mere creature, without God's aid; for that the souls of men when they die return into God's hand, and enter into a state determined by his high sentence; whence no creature can fetch them down, or raise them up; most impossible also because God by especial degree hath reserved the power of doing it appropriate to himself; the power of life and death being his prerogative, who saith, *I am he, and there is no God* * *beside me*; *I kill, and I make alive*, of whom again it is said, *The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up:* He it is, that in his hand doth *hold the keys of hell, and of death.* The performing things also by mere word and will, without application of other force, or any preparation of the subject matter

Isa. 41. 23. Jer. 17. 10. 11. 20. 20. 12. 1 Chron. 28. 9. 1 Sam. 16. 7. Psalm 7. 9. Acts 1. 24. 15. 8.

Κεφ. ιε.

Deut. 32. 39. * Πλὴν ἐμοῦ. 1 Sam. 2. 6. Apoc. 1. 18.

matter (being equivalent to the work of creation) is peculiar unto God, the author of all being, or to such as act by the immediate help of his infinite power.

We may add, that there also seem to be some things, which infernal spirits (who continue under restraint and command, within a great awe and dread of their Judge) dare not so much as pretend to, or counterfeit; knowing that as presently they shall be checked in their attempt, so they shall be grievously chastised for their presumptions; such may be the assuming to themselves the special names of God, the directly withstanding the extraordinary messengers of God, and the like. Matt. 8. 29. Mark 1. 24. Luc. 8. 28.

So even considering the very nature of strange works may enable us to distinguish them; but the end and design of such works, together with the influences and effects of them will farther ascertain us of their original: If they are done to abett any gross error, or to promote any mischievous purpose; if they manifestly do seduce to Apostasy from God or goodness, if they naturally tend to the production of impiety, iniquity or impurity; if they do necessarily produce any great disorder or disturbance in the world, assuredly hell is the source of them; they derive from him, whose Kingdom and interest they advance; by their fruits we may know the tree from which they grow. If also they discover ostentation and vanity in the actors, or serve only to gratify idle humour and curiosity in the spectators of them, tending otherwise to no good purpose; it is easy to collect whence they spring; that they come from the father both of mischiefs and vanities, who not only delights to abuse us with villanies, but to amuse us also with trifles, and fond superstitions.

As (saith *Origen*) *the power of those enchantments in Egypt was not (in it self) like to that admirable power by God's grace vouchsafed to Moses; so the end did convince those Egyptian feats to be juglings, those of Moses to be divine.* The portentous things done *by the energy of Satan* are (as S. *Paul* calleth them) τέρατα ψεύδους, either 2 Thess. 2. 9. false prodigies, or prodigies abetting falshood and vanity.

Ὡς γὰρ ἐκ ὁμοία δυνάμις ἡ θεῖα ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ ἐπῳδῶν τῇ ἐν τῷ Μωυσῆ παραδόξῳ χάριτι· ἀλλὰ τὸ τέλος διέλεγχε τὰ μὲ θεῖα Αἰγυπτίων ὄντα μαγγανείας. Orig. *in* Cels. 2.

But the works of the most wise and good God, as they are commonly works of wonderful majesty and grandeur, incomparable and inimitable for difficulty; so they always are holy, always useful; they ever aim at good ends, and produce wholsome fruits; hence we may discern them, and hence we are obliged to acknowledge them; they afford us ground to say with the *Psalmist*; *Unto thee, O Lord, we do give thanks, for that thy name is near, thy wondrous works declare.* Such works as they can only be effects of God's power, so they are arguments of his truth; for that he cannot lend his hand, for that he will not prostitute his assistance to the maintenance of any thing, which is not perfectly true and good; he will *not so tempt any man* into error; *If I by the finger of God cast out Devils, then indeed is the Kingdom of God come unto you* (that is, If I perform works by the divine power, then assuredly is my doctrine true) was an irrefragable argument. Psalm 75. 1. James 1. 13. Luke 11. 20.

We may also observe, that those wicked spirits are themselves apprehensive how easily their feats are distinguished from the works of God; for, hence it seems they chose to utter them clancularly, in obscure corners, in blind times, among barbarous and silly people; judging that persons of any wisdom or goodness will be soon able to detect them, and ready to explode them; a little light dazles *the powers of darkness*, and scares away these spectres; a little goodness mates their force, enfeebleth and disheartenth them.

We may also add that the *Messias* his works by a peculiar character should be manifestly distinguishable from such as proceeded from infernal powers; for that it should be his business to impugn, defeat and overthrow the Devil's kingdom; all the falshoods and superstitions, all the immoralities and impieties which it consisted in, or which supported it: to this end all his doctrine, practice and performances would
Luke 10. 18. conspiringly tend, that *Satan like lightening should be thrown down from heaven*; which most evidently would evince, that what he should do should only come from heaven.

Having thus shewed reasons why, and signified to what purposes the *Messias* was to receive special testimonies from God; let us now survey those, which were indeed by him exhibited to *Jesus* our Lord. There is indeed no kind or degree of attestation needful or proper, which hath
John 5. 36, 37. not been largely from heaven afforded to him. God (so our Lord argueth) is in his own nature invisible, and indiscernible to any sense of ours; neither could we endure the lustre of his immediate presence
1 Tim. 6. 16. *(No man ever saw God, or can see him; there shall no man see him, and live.)*
Exod. 33. 20. It must be therefore by mediation of signs, and works supernatural; the causing of which can only be imputed to him, as beyond the power of any creature to effect, or counterfeit; that he can assuredly signify his mind unto us; such only in approbation of any Person, Law or Doctrine can be expected from him; and such in divers kinds, and in great measures God hath, we say, *furnished for the authorizing Jesus.*

1. God did attest to him long before his coming into the world, by presignifying and predicting concerning him, at several times, in several ways, by several persons (even by all the Prophets, and eminent Persons among his People of old) many things, even all things considerable about him; in exact congruity to the circumstances of his coming into the world (the *time* when, the *place* where, the *Family* whence, the *manner* how, the *condition* in which he was born) to the qualities of his Person, to the doctrine and law which he published, to all his undertakings, and performances, and sufferings, and to the successes consequent upon what he did. (This is a matter of very large consideration; which otherwhile we have insisted largely upon, and therefore shall now wave enlargement on it.)

2. God did in attestation to him immediately send before his face as his herald and harbinger a Prophet (or one for his admirable wisdom
Matt. 11. 10. and sanctity of life somewhat *more than a Prophet*; who indeed without
John 10. 41. doing any miracle, by the prodigious integrity and strictness of his life, by the wonderful efficacy of his doctrine and discourse procured unto himself a reputation equalling or exceeding that of any former Prophet; (whom even *Josephus*, an indifferent Historian, reporteth a man of singular goodness, and great authority) to predispose the minds of men to receive him; by converting men to a serious reflection upon their lives, and amendment of their manners to *prepare his way*; as also to point him out, to foretel of him as presently coming, to testify of him as being come. This was he, to whom it well agreed, and who plainly did
Mal. 1. 3. assume to himself that which was written by *Malachy: Behold I send my*
Matt. 11. 10. *angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee*; of whom
Isa. 40. 3. *Esay (John* himself being the avoucher and interpreter) said, *The voice*
John 1. 23. *of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make his*
Mal. 4. 6. *paths streight*; who was, as *Malachy* did again signify, *to come in the*
Luke 1. 17. *spirit, and power of Elias to convert the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people*

ple prepared for the Lord. This most extraordinary and excellent Person did at several times and occasions attest unto *Jesus*, not only that he was incomparably for the dignity of his Person, and worth of his performances to be preferred before himself, and consequently before all other Prophets, but that he was the *very Christ*, the *lamb of God*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the world: they sent to John*, saith the Text, *and he bare witness of the truth.* God by him also foretold divers things concerning our Lord, which did really come to pass; as those words; uttered occasionally by many persons, do imply: *John indeed did do no miracle; but all things which John spake of this man were true.* Joh. 1. 26. 15. 29, 34. Matt. 3. 11. Luk. 3. 16. Joh. 5. 33. Joh. 10. 41.

3. God attested unto our Lord by visible apparitions from heaven, at several times, in fit seasons, made in the sight and presence of very good witnesses: Angels appearing warned his good Father, and blessed Mother concerning the time and manner of his coming into the world; Angels again appearing uttered tidings of his birth, joined with acclamations of praise to God, and gratulations of joy to men; Angels were vigilant for his safety, ministred unto him in his temptations and needs, assisted and comforted him in the agonies of his passion, waited upon him at his resurrection; an extraordinary Star (like that of the morning before the Sun) officiously did usher him into the world; at his baptism the *Holy Ghost* (in the symbolical figure of a *Dove*) appeared *descending, and resting upon him*, in the presence of S. *John* the *Baptist* (that most just and holy person, so taken and acknowledged by all men, even by his enemies and murtherers; and a most competent witness, as who dared with utmost peril before the greatest persons to assert the truth, (*He testified thereof, and said, I saw the spirit of God descending from heaven as a Dove, and resting upon him. Moses* and *Elias* also (those most eminent instruments of God, and illustrious representatives of the *Messias*) did from heaven in a most glorious and splendid manner attend upon him, in the presence of three most credible witnesses, *Peter*, *James* and *John* the Apostles; one of whom doth himself thus, with the due confidence of an eye-witness, report the fact: *For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were spectatours of his Majesty — being with him in the holy mountain.* Matt. 1. 20, 24. Luk. 1. 26. Luk. 2. 9, &c. Matt. 2. 13. Matt. 4. 11. Luk. 22. 43. Matt. 3. 17. Luc. 3. 22. Joh. 1. 31. Matt. 17. 5. Luc. 9. 28, 31. 2 Pet. 1.

4. God also by vocal attestation did expressly at several times own and approve *Jesus*: at his Baptism in the audience of S. *John* the *Baptist*, and others present there: when, *Behold there was a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*; the like heavenly voice was heard at the transfiguration; *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear him:* So the *Gospels* report it; and thus S. *Peter* himself, a more immediate witness and attendant there; *He received from God the Father honour and glory, a voice being brought unto him from the magnificent glory; This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; and this voice, which came from heaven we heard, being with him in the holy mount.* Again, a little before his death, in presence of a multitude, upon *Jesus* his prayer, that God would by him glorify his name, an audible return was made from heaven: *There came* (saith the Text) *a voice from heaven*, (saying) *I have both glorified it, and will again glorify it.* Matt. 3. 17. Luc. 3. 22. Mar. 17. 5. Luc. 9. 35. Mar. 9. 7. 2 Pet. 1. 17. Joh. 12. 28.

5. God attested to our Lord in that he was endewed with a power constantly resident in him, of performing miraculous works, for nature and quality such, as could only proceed from a most divine power; not only thwarting the course of nature, but transcending the strength of any creature, and especially contrary to what any evil creature could,

or

or would perform; this was a testimony beyond any humane testimony,
Joh. 5. 36. 10. 25. 10. 38. 14. 11. and which our Lord insisted upon as such: *I* (saith he) *have a greater testimony than that of John, for the works, which the Father hath granted me, that I should perform them, those very works, which I doe, they testify about me, that the Father hath sent me.*

Works indeed he performed of a stupendious greatness and difficulty; all the creatures (the most unruly and boisterous, the most malignant and rebellious) beside their natures, and against their wills did obey his commands; In a tempest *he arose and rebuked the winds, and the sea, and*
Matt. 8. 25. Luc. 8. 25. *there became a great calm, so that men did marvel, saying, what manner*
Matt. 14. 26. Joh. 6. 19. *of man in this, for even the winds and the sea obey him?* the sea stood firm
Joh. 2. 9. for him and S. *Peter* to walk upon; he turned water into good wine;
Joh. 4. 52. 9. 1. he unconceivably so improved a few loaves and little fishes as to feed and
Mat. 8. 6. 9. 2. 20, 32. 8. 3. satisfy multitudes, leaving more behind, than there was at first; he cu-
12. 12. 15. 30. red the most incurable diseases, inveterate palsies, fluxes of blood, and
20. 34. leprosies; he restored senses, and limbs wanting from the birth, or for
Mar. 9. 5. a long time; innumerable persons blind, deaf, dumb, lame and maim-
ed he restored to the use of their faculties, and members respectively, without any medicinal applications, or any natural means conducible to those purposes; he restored lunatick persons to their right wits, and dispossessed evil spirits, they not daring to disobey him, and acknowledg-
Matt. 17. 5. Mar. 1. 27. ing his uncontrollable authority: *They were* (saith the Text) *amazed, insomuch that they questioned among themselves saying; What thing is this? what new doctrine is this; for with authority he commandeth even the unclean spirits, and they do obey him.* These were indeed works of excessive grandeur and difficulty, but he did others far more great and hard, and these were greater for the manner of performing them, than in their own nature; he did other acts so great, that they were only to be done by an infinite power; and most of these he performed in a manner which argued omnipotency present with the doer.

Works proper unto God he did many; such was discerning the
Matt. 9. 4. 12. 25. 22. 18. thoughts, reasonings, opinions and purposes of men, however concealed
Luc. 11. 17. 6. 8. or disguised, whereof we have many instances; and his intimate acquain-
Joh. 2. 25. tance, S. *John*, testifies of him generally, saying, *He needed not that any should witness about a man, for he knew himself what was in man.* Such was also to forgive sins (a privilege only belonging to the supreme Lord, and Law-giver, against whom sin is committed) the which he assumed to himself, and irreprovably maintained it by exerting a power
Matt. 9. 5. equivalent thereto: *For whether* (said he) *is it easier to say, thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, arise and walk? but that you may know, that the son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins: Then saith he to the sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed, and go to thine house; and he arose, and*
Matt. 17. 12. 16. 21. 20. 17. 24. 2, 9. 10. 17. 28. 20. Luc. 24. 27, 29. Joh. 6. 64. *departed to his house:* Such it was likewise to foretell future contingencies; this he often did; as concerning his own passion and resurrection, with all the circumstances of them; particularly the treason of *Judas*; *(He knew,* saith S. *John, from the beginning who they were that did not believe, and who it was that should betray him.)* Concerning S. *Peter's* lapse, repentance and suffering; concerning the destruction of *Jerusalem*, and utter demolishment of the temple; concerning the persecutions which his disciples should undergo; concerning the communication of the Holy Ghost after his decease, and the propagation of the Gospel
Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 61. *p.* 634. 638. in the world: Such was the foundation of the Church upon a rock, against which *the gates of hell should not prevail*: Such again it was to
Matt. 9. 25. raise the dead, which he often performed; he raised the Ruler's daugh-

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ter, and the Widows son of *Naim*, and his friend *Lazarus*, and *The dead are raised*, is reckoned among the ordinary miracles done by him, in the answer to S. *John* the *Baptist*'s disciples: These were acts of divine power, which no creature, unassisted by God, could perform. Luc. 7. 12. Joh. 11. 1, &c. Luc. 7. 22.

And considering the manner of performance such were both these, and most of the rest; they in that respect emulating God's inimitable work of creation, and in a manner seeming to exceed it; for that it seemeth harder to produce things out of matter indisposed and repugnant, than to bring them out of mere nothing; as God by mere word and will created things, when *He spake, and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast*; so did *Jesus* in like manner by the efficacy of his command, or by actions equipollent thereto, without predisposing the subjacent matter, or using any natural instrument, accomplish his great and strange works: *He rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, peace, be still*; so he quelled the storm: *I will, be thou cleansed*; so he cured the leper: *Young man, I say unto thee, arise*; so he revived the widows son: *O woman, great is thy faith, be it unto thee, as thou desirest*; so he cured the *Canaanitish* womans possessed daughter: *He cried out, Lazarus, come forth*; καὶ ἐξῆλθεν ὁ τεθνηκώς, so the *dead man* heard his voice, and presently *came forth* out of the grave: He said *ephatha, be opened*, to the deaf mans ears; they immediately heard, and obeyed: he said but one word, ἀνάβλεψον, *see again*, to the blind man; καὶ παραχρῆμα ἀνέβλεψε, *and without more adoe he saw again*: he did but *chide the* great *fever*, with which S. *Peter*'s mother-in-law was troubled, *and it left her*: he did but take the Ruler's daughter by the hand and, *the girl revived, and rose up*: he only touched the two blind mens eyes, and so *their sight was restored*: the woman, who had a flux of blood for 12 years, did but touch him, καὶ ἰάθη παραχρῆμα, *and she* thereupon *ipso facto, instantly was healed*: Yea multitudes of sick persons together did only endeavour *to touch the hem of his garment, and as many as touched it were healed*; *there went virtue out of him, and healed them all*. When he used any thing like means, he (as S. *Chrysostome* observeth) proceeded in ways not only preternatural, but contrary to nature; as when he cured the blind man in S. *John*'s Gospel, anointing his eyes with clay and spittle: δι' ἃ πέφυκεν ὁ βλεφαρισμὸν ποιῶν πῶμα ἀνεῖλε· *by a thing apt to encrease* (or strengthen) *blindness he took it away*. So great in nature, so high for manner of performance were the works of our Lord; they plainly were either the works, or they were done in the way of omnipotency. Luc. 4. 39. Matt. 5. 25. Matt. 9. 29. Luc. 8. 43, 47. Matt. 9. 22. Matt. 14. 26. Luc. 6. 19. Chrys. in 1 Cor. 1. 22. Joh. 9.

They had also no less of goodness, than of greatness, divine; they were all of them plainly works of piety, or works of charity and pity; of a holy nature, and beneficial use; they were generally performed upon evidently reasonable occasions, or needs; for the succour and comfort of persons in some want or distress; or for instruction of the minds, and reformation of the manners of men; for healing the sick, feeding the hungry, easing the afflicted, restoring men to their senses, freeing them from the Devil's tyranny; for helping men in disappointment and need, or for encouraging kindness and good neighbourhood among people (to which purpose his first miracle done at *Cana* served) for instilling or impressing some wholsome truth, as when the fig-tree withered at his command; for encouraging dutifull submission to Governours; as when the fish was brought up with a piece of money in his mouth, furnishing him and S. *Peter* to pay tribute: In fine, the nature and importance of his works, S. *Peter* thus well expressed, saying of him; Ὃς διῆλθεν εὐεργετῶν, Joh. 2. 3. Matt. 21. 19. Matt. 17. 27.

Act. 10. 38. ἐργετῶν, *Who went about doing good* (or benefiting men) *and healing all that were oppressed by the Devil; for God was with him*; and the Evangelist thus; *Jesus went about all the cities, teaching in their Synagogues,* Matt. 9. 35. 4. 23. 15. 30. *and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing every sickness, and every disease among the people.*

Considering which things, we may well discern by what power, and to what purpose *Jesus* did perform his admirable works; and may repel from our hearts all the cavils or calumnies forged by malicious and vain wits (such as those of *Celsus* and *Julian*) in derogation to them; we may particularly perceive how impudently false that suggestion was of the *Apostate* Emperour: who said that *Jesus, while he lived did nothing worthy hearing, except one suppose to heal cripples, and blind folk, and to exorcise Demoniacks in the villages Bethsaida, and Bethany, to be great works:* in opposition to which kind of

Ἐρασμίδρος παρ' ὃν ἔζη χρόνον οὐδὲν ἀκοῆς ἄξιον, εἰ μὴ τις οἴεται τοὺς κυλλοὺς, καὶ κωφοὺς ἰᾶσθαι, καὶ τοὺς δαιμονῶντας ἐξορκίζειν ἐν Βηθσαϊδᾷ, καὶ ἐν Βηθανίᾳ τοῖς κώμαις τῶν μειζόνων ἔργων ὄντα. Cyr. adv. Jul. lib. 6.

suggestion, and for abundant confirmation of our purpose, we may consider some advantageous circumstances, and concomitances of our Lord's performances.

They were, we may observe, not some few things done at one time, or in one place, among friends and partisans; but innumerably many and frequent (a world of things, more than well could be recited, as Saint Joh. 21. 25. *John* telleth us) done through a long course of time (for some years together) in several places, before all sorts of people, many of them very Act. 26. 26. ill affected towards him. They *were not done* clancularly *in a* blind *corner*, among rude and simple people, but openly and visibly every where about *Judæa*, the most lightsome place for knowledge and goodness in the world; where the best worship of God most flourished, and all Diabolical impostures were most detested, in the places there most publick Joh. 18. 20. and conspicuous; so he could affirm and admonish them; *I spake freely to the world, I always taught in the synagogues, and in the temple, where the Jews from all places resort, and in secret have I done nothing:* they were done so apparently, that the people generally saw them, and acknowledged them; that scarce any man could be ignorant of them; that the most learned and considerate men took it for granted, that they were done; that adversaries could not deny the performance of them, although out of envy and ill-will they were ready to impute it to the worst causes devisable; that many of all sorts were convinced, and divers converted by them: as for the people, *Great multitudes* (saith Matt. 15. 30. S. *Matthew*, one present, and a follower of our Lord) *came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus his feet, and he healed them; insomuch that the multitude wondred, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israel:* and, *The people marvelled, saying, It was never so seen in* Matt. 9. 32. *Israel; but the Pharisees said, He casteth out Devils by the Prince of the Devils*: the matter of fact they could not offer, against conviction of sense, to question, but malice prompted perversly, and foolishly to assign a bad cause thereof; the matter was so notorious, that S. *Peter* Act. 2. 22. could thus confidently appeal to the whole Nation: *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved* (or demonstrated) ἀποδεδειγμένον. *unto you by miracles, and wonders, and signs which God did by him in the midst of you, as you your selves know.* The adversaries (such whom superstitious prejudices, obstinate humors, or corrupt affections, envy, pride, ambition, avarice, or the like, had made adversaries to him) did not

not only see the thing, but were affrighted with its consequence: *The chief Priests* ('tis said) *and the Pharisees gathered a counsel together, and said; What shall we do, for this man doeth many wonders? if we let him alone, all men will believe on him:* Yes indeed notwithstanding all this watchful caution, and fine policy of theirs, notwithstanding all the opposition and discouragement they could interpose, all their struglings to smother his credit and doctrine, many were in their hearts convinced, even divers of such as were unwilling to believe; and ashamed, or afraid to avow their persuasion: *Also* ('tis said again) *of the rulers many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess it, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: Nicodemus*, an honest and ingenuous person, a man of honour, (but somewhat wary and timorous) came secretly, and in the name (it seemeth) of many persons alike disposed with himself thus spake: *Rabbi, we know that thou hast come a teacher from God; for no man can do those things which thou doest, except God be with him:* As for the generality of the people (the most unconcerned in such cases as to point of honour and interest, and thence the most impartial and sincere party) they following their senses were greatly affected, and astonished with what he did; taking him for a very extraordinary person; some in a gross and confused manner, others in a more distinct way of belief: *Some said he was John the Baptist, others that he was Elias; others Jeremias or one of the ancient Prophets risen up again; but many of the people* (more fully and exactly) *believed on him, saying; when Christ cometh will he do more miracles than this man hath done?*

John 11. 47.
John 12. 42.
John 3. 2.
Mark 16. 14. Luc. 9. 19. John 7. 31. 2. 23.
Matth.

We may also observe, that *Jesus* did not affect to perform wonders out of vanity, or to humour mens curiosity, but always upon inducements of piety and charity: most of them were performed occasionally at the desire of men, suggested by their needs; and all of them for their edification or comfort: that he therefore did not seek by them to acquire reputation, or applause to himself; nor by them designed to advance any private interest of his own, but singly aimed at the promotion of God's glory in them all: that in effect no secular advantage of dignity, or wealth, or pleasure did from them accrue to himself; but rather disgrace and obloquy, hatred and enmity, trouble and pain did from them befal him; all the glory of them purely coming to God, and all the benefit to men. As he charged his disciples, so he practised himself, doing all *gratis*, and freely without expecting or accepting any requital. He often studiously concealed his miracles, forbidding those who were concerned in them, or conscious of them to publish them; so striving to decline, or to stifle the honour, naturally emergent from them. When it was necessary or expedient they should appear, he disclaimed being the principal author of them, referring and ascribing them to God: *I can* (said he) *do nothing of my self*; and, *The word that I speak to you I speak not of my self; but the Father who abides in me, he doeth the works:* and, *I seek not mine own glory; I receive not glory of men*; thus he professed, and so he practised: consequently the effect was, that (as it is expressed in the Gospels) *Fear*, or a pious reverence, *did seize all men; and they glorified God, saying that a great Prophet is risen up among us, and that God hath visited his people: All the people seeing it gave praise to God: All men were amazed at the mighty power* (or majesty) *of God; when the multitude saw it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men*; And doth not so much glory from his performances resulting to God, so good an influence upon the hearts of men, evidently shew, whence the power effect-

Matt. 10. 18.
Matt. 8. 4. 12. 16. 9. 30. Mark 5. 43. 7. 36, 8. 26.
John 5. 41. 8. 49, 50, 54. 8. 24. 5. 30. 14. 10.
Luc. 7. 16. 9. 43. 18. 43. Matth. 9. 8. 15. 30.
Ἐπὶ τῇ μεγαλειότητι.

ing them was derived? would the Devil be such an instrument of God's praise?

Iren. 2, 58. We may also with S. *Irenæus* observe, that *Jesus* in performing his cures, and other miraculous works, did never use any profane, silly, phantastick ceremonies; any muttering of barbarous names, or insignificant phrases; any invocation of spirits, or inferior powers; any preparatory purgations, any mysterious circumstances of proceeding, apt to amuse people; any such unaccountable methods or instruments, as *Magicians*, *Inchanters*, *Diviners*, circulatorious *Juglers*, and such emissaries of the Devil, or self-seeking *Impostors* are wont to use; but did proceed altogether in a most innocent, simple and grave manner, with a majestick authority and clear sincerity, becoming such an Agent of God, as he professed himself to be.

That also the whole tenour of his proceedings was directly levelled against the kingdom of darkness; against all the impiety, all the malice, all the filthiness, and all the fallacy thereof; at the casting wicked and impure spirits not only from the bodies, but out of the souls of men; causing men not only to detest and defy them, but to loath their qualities, and to eschew their works: that is that binding, disarming, rifling Luk. 11. 21. and dispossessing *the strong one*, which *Jesus* alledged as an infallible ar- Matt. 12. 29. gument; that he was not only no friend, but a mighty enemy to the infernal powers; an enemy not only in disposition and design quite contrary, but in virtue and force highly superior to them: That we should worship God alone with most hearty reverence and love; that we should bear the same clear good will to all men, as we do to our selves; that we should be strictly just, veracious and sincere in our words and dealings, meek and humble in our spirits, pure and sober in all our enjoyments (things perfectly opposite to the temper and interests Tertull. *Apol.* of hell) were things, which as our Lord constantly in his doctrine did 23. inculcate, so he countenanced and furthered them by his works; from whence assuredly we may collect, that they came from heaven, and were intended for the promoting God's service: Hell would never contribute so much to its own disgrace and disadvantage, would never so industriously concur to defeat and destroy it self; God plainly reaped the benefit by *Jesus* his works, he therefore certainly did plant them, and bless them.

Upon these considerations it appeareth sufficiently, that in correspondence to the reason and exigency of the case, our Lord did perform innumerable works, which had impressed on them the truest and highest characters of Divinity; the most peculiar grandeur, and perfectest goodness; the purest holiness of design, and the beneficial tendency proper to the works issuing from divine power; so that supposing God should send the *Messias* into the world, or any great Ambassador from himself, he could scarce possibly, he should not at least, all things considered, need to furnish him with more convincing attestations, than he hath exhibited to our Lord. Whence we may well apprehend the validity of that argument, which our Lord himself suggested for assurance of S. *John* the *Baptist* in his opinion concerning him, or rather for the satisfaction of S. *John*'s Disciples; when *John* sent two of his Disciples, with this inquiry, *Art thou he, or look we for another? Jesus* thus repli- Matt. 11. 5. ed; *Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen, and heard; how* Luc. 7. 22. *that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached; And blessed is he, whoever shall not be offended in me.*

6. God

6. God most signally did attest to our Lord by miraculously raising him from the dead; or in that by a divine power he raised up himself from the grave; which work for the singular greatness, and high consequence thereof, together with the certain evidence that it was really performed, might alone suffice to confirm the verity of all our Lord's pretences; [that he was the true *Messias*, the *Son of God*, the *Saviour of the world*, the *Lord of all things*, the *Judge of all the world*;] most efficaciously to evince and persuade the most eminent and important parts of his doctrine (the immortality of our souls, the resurrection of our bodies, the just and wise providence of God over men, the dispensation of rewards and punishments hereafter, answerable to mens conversation and practice in this life.) This indeed is the point, which invincibly guardeth and fortifieth all other testimonies; but it is so pregnant of considerations belonging to it, that it deserveth more time and room than we now can yield it; wherefore we chuse rather at present to pass it over than slightly to touch it, reserving it for a peculiar subject of discourse.

7. A farther attestation was given to our Lord by the power of doing miracles in his name imparted to his Disciples; who by him were appointed and authorized to prosecute the great design commenced by himself: not only his Person, but even his Name did great wonders; it cured diseases, it cast out Devils, it surmounted nature, and subdued hell: whereby he indeed appears for especial favour with God, personal excellency, dignity of office, importance of undertaking incomparably to have surpassed all former Prophets, and commissioners of God, by whose ministry any Law, Covenant or Doctrine hath been conveyed to men; never by delegation, or independence upon any other person, never in any other person's Name were such works done. To the XII *Apostles* at their first mission he among other instructions injoined thus; *Cure the sick, cleanse the lepers, cast out Devils; Ye have freely received, freely give:* to the LXX *Disciples*, sent out by himself to instil the rudiments of his doctrine, and to admonish people of his approach, he gave this commission and charge; *In any city, into which you enter, heal those which are sick therein; and say unto them, the kingdom of heaven is come near unto you* —— he then adds; *Behold I give you power to tread upon serpents, and scorpions, and upon all the power of the enemy*; the success was, that *They returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the Devils are subject unto us through thy name.* At his departure he promised and foretold thus: *These signs shall follow them that believe; in my name they shall cast out Devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall * take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover*; all which things were abundantly fulfilled; for a liberal communication of divine power was granted to them, enabling them to perform the greatest works; so that (as S. *Luke* telleth us) *By the hands of the Apostles many wonders and signs were done among the people*; the performance of which was so notorious, that upon knowledge, and in confidence thereof, *There came* (saith the holy Historian) *a multitude out of the cities round about unto Jerusalem, bringing sick folkes, and them which were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed every one.* * The like power also was by the Apostles derived unto others, in such kind and measure, as the carrying on *Jesus* his great design (the propagation of God's truth, and the edification of his Church) did require; by succession it was transmitted through several ages, and visibly continued so long, as such extraordinary means

Omnis hæc nostra in illos dominatio & potestas de Christi nominatione valet, &c. Tertul. *Apol.* 23.

Acts 3. 16.

Matth. 10. 8.

Luc. 10. 9, 19.

Luc. 10. 17.

Mark 16. 17.

* Ἀφεῶν.

Acts 2. 4.

Acts 2. 43.

5. 12.

Acts 8. 17.

* Heb. 2. 4.

Rom. 15. 18.

were useful or expedient for the conviction and conversion of the world; Most of the first Fathers of the Church do expressly testify concerning remainders thereof in their times: *It is not possible* (saith S. *Irenæus* for one instance, among others innumerable) *to tell the number of the graces* (or special gifts) *which the Church through the whole world receiving from God doth in the name of Jesus Christ, crucified under* Pontius Pilate, *daily perform for the succour of the nations*, &c. And remarkable is the confidence of *Tertullian*, reporting the effects of this power in his time: he in his Apologetick speech for the Christians even dares to provoke the *Ethnick* Governors to trial, and to lay the issue concerning not only the truth of Christian doctrine, but the lives and safety of its professors thereon; *Let*, saith he, *any person, manifestly possessed with the Devil, or one who is deemed to be rapt with a divine fury, be set before your tribunals; that spirit, being commanded by a Christian to speak, shall as truly there confess himself to be a Devil, as otherwhere a God -- If he do not so confess, not daring to lye, even there spill the blood of that procacious Christian: What* (adds he) *is more manifest, than that work? what more faithful than that probation? Stand not to these sayings, if your eyes and ears will suffer you.* The like assertions and challenges might be produced out of divers other Fathers.

Iren. 2. 48.

Tertull. *Apol.* 23.

Τῆς δωδέκατος ἧδη σημείων ἐπ' ἴχνος ἐπιτελεσθέντος. Chrys. *de Sacerd.* 4. *in* Joh. *Or.* 24. *in* Psalm 142. Aug. *de Bapt.* 3. 16. Retract. 1. 13.

Neither perhaps is the communication of this divine virtue so ceased now, that it would be wanting upon any needful occasion; the frequent performance of such works among them in whom faith by abundance of other competent means may be produced and confirmed, unto whom also the first miracles are virtually present by the help of history and good reason, is indeed no-wise necessary, nor perhaps would be convenient; but did the same pious zeal for God's honour, and the same charitable earnestness for mens good excite any persons now to attempt the conversion of Infidels to the sincere Christian truth, I see no reason to doubt, but that such persons would be enabled to perform whatever miraculous works should conduce to that purpose; for *the Lord's hand is not shortned*, the grace of Christ is not straitned, the name of *Jesus* hath not lost its virtue.

Isa. 59. 1. 50. 2.

The spirit of God doth attest to him.

John 15. 26. Acts 5. 32. 1 John 5. 7, 8. 1 Cor. 12. * Acts 10. 45.

8. God did attest to our Lord by accompishing his prediction and promise, in a plentiful * effusion of the divine spirit upon his Church and Disciples, for their perfect instruction and guidance, for their support and comfort, for enabling them to convince and convert men to him; *When* (said our Lord to them before his decease, concerning this attestation) *the comforter is come, whom I will send to you from my Father, even the spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:* and, *Tarry ye* (said he again, after his resurrection) *in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endewed with power from on high.*

John 15. 26 1 John 5. 7, 8. Luc. 24. 49. Acts 1. 4. 2. 33.

Accordingly soon after our Lord's ascension, as the Holy Spirit was conspicuously dispensed, upon various occasions, in divers proportions, and in different ways, according to the exigencies of things for the edification and enlargement of the Church; so especially at *Pentecost* it was in a most solemn manner, and abundant measure poured forth upon the whole Church, and each member of it; *For then* (saith S. *Luke*) *the disciples (to the number of one hundred and twenty persons) being gathered together* —— *with one accord, in one place*; —— *suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind* (which was a most proper emblem of the Holy Spirits nature and powerful efficacy) *and it filled all the house where they were sitting* (which then typified the Catholick Church, through which the Holy Spirit was to be diffused, to animate and

Acts 4. 31. 8. 17. 10. 44. 11. 15. 13. 52. 19. 6. 1 Cor. 12 ----- Acts 1. 15. Acts 2. 1. ----

and actuate it) *And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire* (denoting the various gifts and graces, imparted for expression of God's praise and propagation of his truth, which were to be enlivened by fervent charity, zeal and devotion) *and it sate upon each of them*; implying that every faithful Christian constantly should partake of this heavenly benefit, according to his need: *And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance*: that is, they were perfectly inspired, so that each was endowed with the gift of speaking a language before unknown to him; which was a miracle very great, and most pertinent; to learn a strange tongue requiring much time and great pains; the speaking such tongues being then very serviceable to the promulgation of the Gospel:) All which event was very publick and notorious; for that at that Festival-time *There were* (saith the Divine Historian) *dwelling at Jerusalem, Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven: Now when this was noised about, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language,—— the wonderful things of God.*

Μεσιζόντως διὰ τὸ χαρισμάτων δηλοῦσθαι. Naz. Orat. 44.

This was therefore a general attestation to our Lord, pregnant and clear as could be, both for conviction of unbelievers, and confirmation of the faithful; the which effects it had, so that in virtue thereof, Saint *Peter* having explained the design of it, *Three thousand souls were added to the Church*; and all *did continue stedfastly in the Apostles doctrine and fellowship.* Act. 2. 41, 42.

Besides also it was an illustrious pledge of that inestimable gift, to be perpetually communicated to the Church for its edification; and to each Christian for his direction and assistance in religious practice, according to the Evangelical covenant; the which is a standing witness, attesting to our Lord, in the heart and conscience of every good man, according to that of S. *Peter*; *And we are his witnesses of these things*; *and so is the Holy Ghost whom God hath given to them that obey him*: He indeed keeping his residence, and exerting his power in all pious souls; shining into their minds with *the true heavenly light* (that *pure and perfect wisdom, which is from above*) kindling charity, devotion, comfort and joy in their hearts; supporting them in trials and temptations, raising their affections and desires above this present transitory world, disposing them to relish spiritual things, and to entertain themselves with the hopes of future blessedness, doth assure them, that *Jesus is the Lord*, doth *seal* to them the truth of his doctrine, the reality of his promises, the efficacy of his grace, the wonderful greatness of his love and goodness toward them; so that hence that is abundantly verified, which S. *John* telleth us, *He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself.* Act. 5. 32. Eph. 1. 18. 2 Cor. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 12. 3. Rom. 8. 16. Gal. 4. 6. 2 Cor. 1. 22. 4. 2. 5. 5. Eph. 1. 13. 4. 30. 1 Joh. 5. 10.

There are divers other considerable attestations to our Lord, such as the divine sublimity of his doctrine, discovering it self to enlightned minds to shine from heaven; the testimony of God's spirit to the hearts and consciences of good and faithful people, assuring them that *Jesus is the Lord*, and sealing to them the truth of his doctrine; the operation of God's grace in production of moral vertues, or the purgation of heart and amendment of life flowing from faith in him, the efficacy of prayers in his name offered to God; all the joys, and comforts, and happy fruits springing from Christian devotion; the good effects the Gospel hath had in reformation of the world inducing many great benefits, and preventing mischiefs therein: But these, and the like being not so Rom. 8. 16. Gal. 4. 6. 2 Cor. 1. 22. 5. 5. 4. 2. Eph. 1. 13. 4. 30. 1 Cor. 12. 3. 1 Joh. 5. 10. Ὁ πίστις ἐν ἑαυτῷ. εἰς ἃ ἔχει τὴν θεοῦ μαρτυρίαν ἐν

so publick, so distinctly observable, so easily drawn into argument apt to convince the incredulous, I shall pass over; adding but one more of a more general and conspicuous nature.

9. *Lastly*, God hath attested unto our Lord by the wonderful success which hath attended his Gospel in its conveyance and propagation: its, in so short a time, so generally prevailing in the hearts of men, triumphing over the mightiest oppositions, subduing the world to the faith and obedience of its self, accomplished by means to appearance so insufficient, and by ways so improbable, may seem to reason no less a miracle of providence against the course of humane affairs, than the rest performed by him, or for him, were miracles to sense, above the power of natural causes, both arguing the presence and assistance of omnipotency: the work was *a victory over the world*, and over hell atchieved *by the faith of Jesus*; and that a very strange one, whether we consider the combatants who fought for him, or the adversaries against whom, or the weapons by which, or the manner how they strove, or the very cause it self which they maintained for him.

They were *not many wise, not many mighty, not many noble, but a* very few, mean and poor, unlearned and simple men, whom no outward circumstances commended to humane regard, no worldly advantage furthered in pursuance of their design, who had nothing visible to rely on, to hearten, to support them in their endeavours: a few fishermen, publicans, tent-makers, and other persons of like quality, education, improvement and capacity, were the instruments of this great work; those brave souldiers of Christ, who boldly set themselves in array against all his adversaries; and what adversaries were they? who, but all the majesty and authority, all the force and violence, all the policy and craft, all the wit, learning, wisdom and eloquence, all the passion and rage of men, all the power, cunning and malice of the cursed spirits; in short all the forces and endeavours of earth and hell combined against them. They were to check and controll the ambitions, interests, pleasures of mighty Emperours and Potentates; whose assumed Divine honours they decried as vain and wicked, whose commands they reprehended as unjust and impious, to whose power and pleasure they prescribed restraints, declaring them obliged to contain their practice within bounds of piety, equity and temperance: they were to suppress the credit, and the gain of all Priests, or Ministers of Religion in the world, whose doctrines they condemned as vain and silly, whose practices they reproved as vile and damnable: they were to confute all the subtilty of Philosophers, all the eloquence of Oratours, all depths of learning, and improvements of reason or wit; impugning the opinions famous and current among men as false, or slighting them as frivolous: they were to overbear, and master the prejudices of all people, fortified by natural inclination and temper, by countenance of long tradition and custom; by education, by publick laws, and also mighty enforcements: they were to charge with reproach all ages past, and the Ancestours of all people in the world (those of one small people only in part excepted) of very gross ignorance and errour, of sottish folly, of heinous wickedness and impiety: they were to sustain all the slanders, reproaches and persecutions which the resolute opposing so many interests, humours and opinions inevitably would produce: they were beside vigorously to assault Satan,

2 Cor. 1. 26. Ἀγεγράμμενοι, καὶ ἰδιῶται. Act. 4. 13.

Clem. Alex. *well says that no Philosophy would have endured such a test, or endured such a shock of persecution.*

Καὶ τῶν μὲν φιλοσοφίαν τῶν ἑλληνικῶν ἐὰν ὁ τυχὼν ἄρχων κωλύσῃ, οἰκεῖται παραχρῆμα, τῶν δ' ἡμετέρων, &c. *Strom.* 6. (p. 502.)

Καίτοι γε μυρίων ὅσων κωλυμάτων γινομένων πρὸς τὸ μὴ ἐπιπαρῶσι τῶν Ἰησοῦ διδασκαλίαν τῇ οἰκουμένῃ. Orig. *cont.* Cels. 7. (p. 349.)

tan, and all his complices; to beat down his worship, and overturn his domination; to baffle all his craft and might, to stop his mouth, to bind his hands, to tread upon his neck.

All these great exploits they were to atchieve in a most quiet and peaceable manner, in a way most plain and simple, without any terrour or tumult, any slight or artifice, any plausibility of language, or subtilty of reasoning; without applying either any rude violence, or sly allurement: they were indeed little more than barely to report a story, and to affirm it true of their own knowledge, adjoining in connexion with that story some plain honest rules of life here in this world, and denouncing some consequences on the belief of their story, and the practice of their rules in another world hereafter. These things it was their business to tell simply, and to averr confidently, charging men at their utmost peril to believe them; boldly condemning whatever thing, and what person soever should oppose their report, or doctrine: they were not to assay the persuading this, or dissuading from the contrary by fine strains of speech, or with acute *enthymems*; but to propose it without care or circumstance, in such a homely dress, and naked plainness of speech, that even children and idiots might easily comprehend the main of their sense and drift: all the strength, the ornament, the charm of their discourse consisted in the clear sincerity shining through it; joined with a constant adherence to their doctrine, an earnest diligence in promoting it, an admirable patience in joyfully suffering all contumelies, and adversities incident to them for its sake; accompanied also with a blameless innocence and integrity of life, a sweet calmness of mind, and meekness of behaviour, together with a kind and charitable disposition toward all men: these were all the humane or natural *weapons of their warfare*; with which alone, God's help concurring, they did (to use S. *Paul*'s words) *pull down strong holds, and cast down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God; bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ*: in this strange manner did they maintain their cause.

1 Cor. 4. 5. 2 Cor. 4. 7. 12. 9. 1 Cor. 2. 4. 2 Cor. 10. 4.

A cause indeed, which of it self did not seem likely to prosper in the world, having in it self so little of plausibility, and affording to the embracers thereof so very small encouragement: which enjoined to its followers the worship and imitation of a person lying under extreme disadvantages in the eye of man; who had lived in a very mean condition, and had suffered a most ignominious death; who therefore to be obliged to adore and obey could not but to the ordinary sense of men appear very offensive: which again recommended a doctrine little grateful, or rather very cross to the natural propensions, to the current principles, to the secular advantages of men; which indulged men in nothing that they were apt to like, but greatly curb'd and check'd them in the use of their liberties, gratification of their fancies, and enjoyment of their pleasures; which much disparaged all the pleasing goods, and all the flattering glories of the world; charging men never much to affect, or seek them, sometimes utterly to quit and renounce them; freely chusing in their stead to undertake a cross with all its pains and disgraces, which propounded it as an essential ingredient of it self, or a condition necessary for all that should avow it, to *circumcise the heart*, to *mortifie the deeds of the body*, to *crucifie the flesh with its affections and lusts*; *to cut off right hands*, and *pull out right eyes*; to part with all their fortunes, to hate their relations, to sacrifice their lives, if they were thereto called, for its sake; which rendred men, as it

Vid. Chryf. *Tom.* 6. *Orat.* 61. *p.* 635.

Rom. 8. 13. Gal. 5. 24.

were

were dead to all present fruitions, and unconcerned in all hopes here; engaging them entirely to place their contents and happiness in a reversion of things invisible and future: they, in fine, did hold forth a doctrine to the sense of flesh and blood full of most rigid laws, severe rules, harsh conditions, and *hard sayings*, apt to choak the faith of men, and to obstruct its entertainment with them.

Τὸ ῥῆμα ἐκεῖνο, τὸ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, τοῦτο πάντα ἐνεργάσατο, τοιῶτοι γὰρ εἰσὶ τοῦ θεοῦ λόγοι ἔργων θαυμασίων καὶ παραδόξων, &c. Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *Orat.* 61. *p.* 636. Πῶς οὖν τοσούτων πραγμα μὴ τοιούτων κωλυμάτων καὶ πόρας ἔσχεν ὕστερον λαμπρὸν, καὶ ἔκβασιν μαρτυρᾶσαν τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, εἰ μὴ θεία τις καὶ ἄμαχος δύναμις ἦν τὰ ταῦτα ἀπόρθητος καὶ τελεσιουργοῦσα, &c. *Ibid. p.* 637.

Now that a handful of such persons, against such obstacles, in ways so prepostrous, and different from the course of humane proceedings, were able to render so unlikely a cause so absolutely victorious; so that suddenly all the might, wit and eloquence of men did stoop unto it, and serve under it; that the Majesty of the greatest Princes gladly veiled thereto, that the prudence of Statesmen cordially did approve it, that all the learning of the world yielded it self up captive and tributary thereto, that all superstition vanished before it, and all the force of hell sunk under it; is it not a huge argument, that God himself did in favour thereof interpose his omnipotent arm; that to the Lord of hosts (*Unto whom, as King Asa said, it is nothing to help whether with many, or with them that have no power*; to whom it is indifferent *to save by many or by few*) this glorious victory is to be ascribed, who thereby pleased to accomplish his ancient promises, to maintain his holy truth, to further the salvation of his creatures, to promote his own glory, and especially to magnifie the Name of his only beloved Son *Jesus*, our ever blessed Lord, to *whom for ever and ever be all praise*. Amen.

2 Chr. 14. 11.
1 Sam. 14. 6.
Rom. 15. 8.

Having thus largely endeavour'd to shew that *Jesus* our Lord is the *Messias*, and consequently supposing the truth of the Christian doctrine; let us now briefly recapitulate and explain in what manner, and in what respects the *New Testament* represents him as *Christ*; how according to that *Jesus* was signally chosen and consecrated by God, in a manner supereminent, to all the offices denoted by the title *Christ* (the office *Prophetical*, *Regal* and *Sacerdotal*) and how he effectually doth execute them.

Act. 10. 38. Him (saith S. *Peter* in general) God anointed with the Holy Spirit and Power: God anointed him not with an external affusion of material oil (as neither were the *Patriarchs*, nor King *Cyrus*, who are yet called *the Christs of God*) that was only a ritual and symbolical business; but with a real infusion of divine grace and power, qualifying and enabling him perfectly to execute all those great and extraordinary functions.

Psal. 45. 7. With this gladsome oil he was thoroughly anointed and repleniſh'd above
Luc. 4. 1. measure; with this he was *sanctified from the womb*; when the *power of*
John 3. 34. *the highest did overshadow him* at his Conception; with this at his Bap-
Matt. 3. 16. tism he was solemnly and visibly inaugurated; when *the heavens were*
Luc. 4. 22. *opened* unto him, and *the Spirit of God descended upon him as a Dove and came upon him*; with this in all the course of his life and ministery he was continually accompanied; the vertue of it being discovered and diffused in most sensible effects of wise and gracious discourse, holy and blameless conversation, wonderful and glorious performances, for the honour of God, and the benefit of mankind, to the delight and consolation of all well-disposed minds: *God anointed Jesus of Nazareth* (saith S. *Peter* in the *Acts*) *with the Holy Ghost*; *who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil*; *for God was with him.*

Acts 10. 38.

He was by this Spiritual unction constituted in right, and in effect a *Prophet*, a *King*, a *Priest*.

Joh. 6.

1. *First*

1. *First* a *Prophet*; For they were not mistaken, who, upon his raising the widows child, were *amazed, and glorified God, saying, that a Great Prophet was raised up among them*, and that *God had visited his people.* Nor they (in S. *John's Gospel*) who reflecting upon another great miracle (feeding multitudes with five loaves, and two little pickled fishes) brake into thisc onfession; *This is in truth that prophet, who was to come into the world.* And the disciples well described him, who styled him, *A Prophet mighty in word and deed, before God and all the people.* He was so, as having an extrordinary commission from God, declared by vocal attestation of God himself from heaven, by expres testimony of S. *John* the *Baptist (the Person of most remarkable sanctity and greatest authority in his time)* by the performance of innumerable and incomparable signs and works miraculous (*arguments in the highest degree, and to the utmost possibility sufficient to assert and confirm it.*) He was also in greatest perfection qualified for the exercise of that function, by inspiration complete and unlimited; by disposition of mind altogether pure and holy (expressed in a continual practice of life void of all sin and guile; by an insuperable courage and constancy, a transcendent wisdom and discretion, an incomparable meekness and patience, a most winning sweetness and goodness, a most powerful awfulness and majesty, shining in all his discourse and demeanour.) Sutable also to the authority of his commission and the qualifications of his person were the weight, and the extent of the doctrine he in God's name revealed; It concerning no less than the salvation of mankind, and reconciliation of the world to God; the entire will of God, and whole duty of man; with all the laws and precepts, the covenants and conditions, the promisings and threatnings relating to our future state. He did not (as other Prophets have done) prophecy about the constitution of one particular Law, Religion or Covenant; about the reproof or reformation of one state, the judgment or fate determined to one Nation, but his design reached to the instruction and conversion of all people, in all places, through all times, to the settling of a Law and Covenant absolutely universal and perpetual; Mysteries he brought forth never before revealed, and decrees never to be reversed; to the final doom of all the world did his prophetical denunciations extend. So is he a *Prophet.* Such he was in his temporal appearance, and administrations upon earth; and such he continues for ever in heaven; from thence upon all occasions by his Holy Spirit imparting to his faithful people all needful instruction in truth, direction in practice, admonition to duty, and comfort in trouble. He is also such by the ministery of his servants, whom he hath appointed, and whom he assists, to instruct and guide us.

Luc. 7. 16.
John 6. 14.
Luc. 24. 16.
Εἷς ἡμῶν κατ' ἐξοχήν.
Matt. 23. 8.
1 Pet. 2. 22.
2 Cor. 5. 21.
1 Joh. 3. 5.

2. He is also a *King*; by many unquestionable Titles; Of a great and extensive authority, exercising it to the best effects and purposes. He is a *King* by *nature* and *birth*: as *the only Son of God*, partaker of his eternal power and majesty; For therefore to him it was said; *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy Kingdom is a right sceptre*; and as *the son of David*; For of him the Angel said —— *The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his Father, and he shall reign over the house of David for ever; and of his Kingdom there shall be no end.* He is also a *King* by *divine designation* and appointment. For, *Let all the house of Israel* (saith S. *Peter*) *know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ*; and *The father hath given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the son of man* (or as such.) He is also *King* by

Heb. 1. 8.
Ps. 9. 5.
Luc. 1. 32.
Acts 2. 36.
John 5. 22, 27.
Hebrews 1. 2.

Heb. 2. 9. Phil. 2. 8. ὑπήκοος ἐγένετο Rom 14. 9. ἵνα κυριεύσῃ

merit and *purchase*; for, *He for the suffering of death was crowned with glory and honour*; *He was obedient to death, even the death of the cross*; *Therefore God super-exalted him, and bestowed on him a name above every name. To this end he both died and rose again, that he might Lord it over both the dead and living.* He is *King* also by *conquest*: having delivered

Col. 1. 13. Col. 2. 15. Luc. 1. 71, 74. Tit. 2. 14. Rom. 6. 22. John 8. 36.

us out of *the power of darkness*, and freed us from the vassalage of sin; *having spoiled principalities and powers, made a shew of them openly*, and triumphed over them; having *delivered us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us*; *that we being delivered from our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all*

Matt. 11. 29.

the days of our life. He is also a *King* by our *election* and free choice, we having voluntarily put our selves under his protection, and submitted to his command, and taken upon our selves his yoke, and vowed everlasting fealty to him in our *Baptism*. Such a right he hath of Governing.

As for the *extent* of his *Kingdom*, it is in all respects boundless, both for place and time; 'tis universal and perpetual. He is the *Eternal King* of all the world: God hath *so exalted him and given him a name above all names, That to the name of Jesus every knee should bend, whether of things in heaven, or things upon earth, or things under the earth. To him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb* by every creature *in heaven, and in the earth, and under the earth* are jointly to be ascribed *the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the power, for ever and for ever.*

Phil. 2. 8. Rev. 5. 13. 19. 16. 1. 5 27. 12.

Eph. 1. 21. Col. 2. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 15. Matt. 28. 18. 11. 27. John 3. 35. 13. 3. 17. 2. ----Eph. 1. 22. Acts 20. 28.

He is constituted ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς, *above all rule, and authority, and domination, and every name that is named not onely in this world, but in that which is to come*: 'tis his just title and proper badge, *The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*; to whom all Nations are vassals, yea all creatures are subject and tributary. But he in especial manner is *King* over his *Church*; that *peculiar people*, whom he hath especially purchased to himself by his merits and blood; whom he hath subdued to his obedience by the sword of his Word, and by the prevailing virtue of his Spirit; that mystical *Sion*, in which 'tis said that God *will place his reign and residence for ever*; that *heavenly city*, whereof all the Saints are *fellow-citizens*, and he the sovereign Head and Governour; *God hath* (saith S. *Paul*) *put all things under his feet, and hath given him head above all things to the Church.* In respect to which both the Evangelical dispensation here, and the future state of bliss hereafter are called the *Kingdom of heaven.* Over this he reigns, enjoying all Royal prerogatives, exercising all Royal administrations, and dispensing most Royal munificences. He hath in this his Kingdom established most righteous and wholsome laws; the which his subjects are by him obliged and enabled to obey. He constantly defendeth, and protecteth his subjects from all invasions and assaults of their enemies (intestine enemies, their own lusts; external enemies, the Devil and the World.) He provides for all their needs and wants; he supports them in all their distresses and troubles. He exercises judgment over them; distributing fit rewards and punishments with exquisite justice and equity (most liberal rewards to the loyal and obedient; most severe punishments upon obstinate offenders and rebels.) He lastly restrains and suppresses, defeats and destroys all the adversaries to his royal dignity, and to the welfare of his good subjects, both visible and invisible, temporal and spiritual. *Out of his mouth* (as it is in the *Apocalypse*) *there goeth a sharp sword that with it he should smite the nations*; *and he shall rule them with a rod of iron. These mine enemies* (he shall one day say) *which would not that I should reign over*

Pſalm 132. 13. Apoc. 3. 12. 21. 2. Heb. 12. 22. Gal. 4. 26. Eph. 2. 19. Eph. 1. 22.

Col. 2. 15.

Apoc. 19. 15. Pſalm 2. 9. Matt. 25. 31. Luc. 19. 27.

over them, bring them hither and slay them before me. He must reign (saith S. *Paul*) *till he hath put all enemies under his feet.* Thus is he a *King*, endewed with sovereign right and power; crowned with glorious Majesty; enjoying all pre-eminencies, and exercising all acts sutable to Regal dignity. 1 Cor. 15 25.

3. He is likewise a *Priest*, and that much above an ordinary one; (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh) than ever any other Priest had. *Every High Priest* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *is appointed to offer gifts and sacrifices.* He did (as such) once offer up an oblation, in worth and excellency far surpassing all the sacrifices and oblations that ever were made (all the fatteſt *Hecatombs* that were ever sacrificed, all the gold and pretious stones that ever were dedicated, all the spices and perfumes that ever were kindled into incense, upon altar, were but vile and sordid, were ineffectual and unacceptable in comparison thereto) a willing oblation he made upon the *altar* of his *cross* of himself (his most innocent, most pure, most spotless and unblemished self) of his most glorious body (the Temple of the Divinity) of his most pretious blood, of his dear life, *for the life of the world*, and redemption of mankind; for the *propitiation of our sins, and the sins of the whole world*; an oblation which alone could appease God's wrath, and satisfy his justice, and merit his favour toward us. Heb. 8. 6. διαφορωτέρας τέτυχε λειτυργίας, *He hath obtained a more excellent function* Heb. 3. 1. ἀρχιερέως ὁμολογίας ἡμῶν. Heb. 8. 3. Heb. 7. 26, 27. 10. 10, 5, 9. 12. Eph. 5. 2. John 10. 16. John 6. 51. 1 John 2. 2.

He doth also (which is another *sacerdotal* performance) *intercede for us*; He intercedes as an *Advocate* for the pardon of our sins *(If any man sin, we have an advocate with* (or to) *the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous).* He intercedes for the acceptance of our services (whence we are enjoined to *doe all things, to pray, to give thanks in his Name)* for the *granting our requests*; *for grace and assistance*; for *comfort* and *reward*; for all *spiritual blessings* and advantages to be conferred upon us; he thus pursuing the work of salvation by his propitiatory sacrifice begun for us; whence (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* saith) *He is able to save to the uttermost, those that by him come to God, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.* 1 John 2. 1. 1 Tim. 2. 5. John 14. 13. 15. 16. 16. 23, 24. Eph. 5. 20. Heb. 5. 7. Eph. 1. 3, 6. Heb. 7. 25.

He doth also perform the *Priestly* function of *blessing*. Blessing the people in God's name, and blessing God in the peoples behalf; as did that illustrious Type of his *Melchisedek (Blessed*, said he, *be Abram of the most High God, possessour of heaven and earth*; and, *Blessed be the most High God, which hath delivered thine enemies into thy hand.)* So hath *Jesus* effectually pronounced all joy and happiness to his faithful people; He pronounced blessedness to them in his *Sermons*; He blessed his disciples at his parting; *Lifting up his hands he blessed them*, saith S. *Luke*. *God in him* (saith S. *Paul*) *hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places* (or *in heavenly things)* and, *God* (saith S. *Peter) having raised up his son Jesus, sent him to bless us in turning every one of us from his iniquity:* and at the last day he will utter that comfortable benediction: *Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.* So is *Jesus* a true and perfect *Priest*. And, 1 Chr. 23. 13. Lev. 9. 22, 23. Numb. 6. 23. Gen. 14. 19, 20 Matt. 5. 1, &c. Luc. 24. 50. Eph. 1. 3. Acts 3. 26. Matt. 25. 34.

So *finally* in all respects is *Jesus God's anointed*, and *the Christ of God:* as the great *Prophet*, and Doctor; as the *Sovereign King* and *Prince:* as the *High Priest* and *Advocate* of his Church. And indeed, that he is so is the Fundamental Point of our Religion; which the Apostles did peculiarly testify, preach and persuade; the sincere belief of which doth constitute and denominate us *Christians*.

IV. The consideration whereof ought to beget in us a practice answerable to the relations between him and us, grounded thereupon.

Heb. 2. 1, &c. Διὰ τοῦτο δεῖ ἡμᾶς περισσοτέρως προσέχειν τοῖς ἀκουσθεῖσι, μήποτε παραῤῥυῶμεν, &c.

If *Jesus* be such a *Prophet*, we must with careful attention, and a docile mind hearken to his admonitions and instructions; we must yield a steady belief to all his doctrine, and we must adhere constantly thereto, and we must readily obey and practise what he teaches.

If he be a *King* we must maintain our due *allegiance* to him, pay him honour and reverence, submit to his laws and commandments, repose trust and confidence in him, fly to his protection and assistance in all our difficulties and needs.

If he be a *Priest*, we must with sincere faith and hope apply our selves unto him for, and rely upon his spiritual ministeries in our behalf; sue for and expect propitiation of our sins by virtue of his Sacrifice; the collation of all spiritual gifts from his intercession; all comfort, joy and felicity in consequence of his effectual benediction. *Having* (so the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* admonisheth us) *a great Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith.*

Heb. 10. 21, 22.

In short, if *Jesus* be *Christ*, let us be *Christians*; Christians, not only in name, in outward profession, in speculation and opinion, but in very deed and reality, in our heart and affection, in all our conversation and practice. *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ* (that is, who confesseth *Jesus* to be *Christ*, and himself to be his follower) *depart from iniquity.*

2 Tim. 2. 19.

Now the God of peace, that brought from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ, that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

His

His Onely Son.

SERMON XXI.

JOHN I. 14.

And we beheld his glory; the glory as of the only begotten of the father.

THAT *Jesus Christ our Lord* is the μονογενὴς, *the only Son of God*, that is, the Son of God in a peculiar and high manner, otherwise far than any creature can be so termed, S. *John* doth here (and in several other places) suppose, or assert plainly; And it is a great point of the Christian doctrine, a special object of our faith. To shew the truth of which, to explain how it is to be understood, and to apply the consideration thereof to our practice, shall be the subject and scope of our present discourse. John 1. 18. 3. 16, 18. 1 John 4. 9.

I. That the *Messias*, designed by God to come into the world for the restoring and reconciling mankind unto God, was in an especial manner to be the Son of God, even the ancient Prophets did foretel and presignify: *Thou art my son, this day I have begotten thee*, saith God of him in the second *Psalm*. And of him, that which in the first less perfect sense was spoken to King *Solomon* (who as the son and heir of *David*, as the builder of God's house, as a Prince of peace, reigning in great glory, wealth and prosperity; as endewed with incomparable wisdom, did most signally represent and prefigure him) was chiefly intended for him, and did more exactly agree to him: *He shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel for ever*: and again; *He shall cry unto me, thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation: Also I will make him my first-born, higher than the kings of the earth.* And accordingly it was, even before our Saviour's appearance, a persuasion commonly passing among the *Jews* (both learned and unlearned) that the *Messias* should be the Son of God; as may be collected from several passages in the *New Testament*; in which being *the Christ*, and being the *Son of God* are conjoined as inseparable adjuncts, whereof one did imply the other, according to the sense then current, and previous to the embracing our Lord's doctrine. For *Nathanael* we see was no sooner persuaded, that *Jesus* was the *Christ*, but he (according to his anticipation, common to the people) confesseth thus: *Rabbi, thou art the son of God; Rabbi, thou art the king of Israel.* *Martha* in like manner being moved to declare her faith concerning *Jesus*, expresseth it thus: *Yea Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ, the son of God, which should come into the world:* and likewise doth Psalm 2. 7. Heb. 1. 5. Acts 13. 33. 1 Chr. 22. 10. 28. 6. 2 Sam. 7. 13. Psal. 89. 26, 27. Heb. 1. 5. John 1. 49. John 11. 27.

Joh. 6. 69. Matt. 16. 16. doth S. *Peter*, in the name of all his brethren, the Apostles: *We have believed, and have known, that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* S. *John* the *Baptist* also, doth thus express his belief and yield his Joh. 1. 34. testimony concerning *Jesus*: *And I said, and bare record, that this is the Son of God.* Yea even the *High-Priest* himself implied the same, when Mark 14. 61. Matt. 26. 63. examining our Lord he said: *Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? I adjure thee by the living God tell us, whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God:* supposing that to be the *Christ*, and to be the *Son of God* would Matt. 8. 29. Mark 1. 24. Luc. 4. 41, 34. concur in the same person. Yea the Devils themselves had learned this, who cried out, *What have we to doe with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?*

Thus did the ancient *Scriptures* intimate, and thus were God's People generally persuaded about the *Messias*; and that he is indeed the son of God, the Evangelical Scripture doth every where teach us, calling him Matt. 3. 17. 12. 18. 17. 5. Eph. 1. 6. Col. 1. 13. not only at large *the Son of God*, but more emphatically the ἀγαπητὸς *(the darling Son of God)* the υἱὸς τῆς ἀγάπης, *Son of God's love*, the υἱὸς ἀληθινὸς, *God's true Son* (that is, such most properly, in a most excellent manner incomparably representing and resembling God) the ἴδιος υἱὸς Rom. 8. 32. John 5. 18. *(God's proper*, or peculiar *Son)* the πρωτοτόκος, *God's first-born*; God's 1 John 1. 20. Col. 1. 15. Heb. 1. 6. υἱὸς μονογενὴς, *his only begotten Son*: all which *epithets* import somewhat of peculiar eminency in the kind and ground of this his relation unto God. The relation it self in a large sense, and equivocally is attributed to several: *Adam* is called *the Son of God*; and the *Angels* are usually entitled such; and *Princes* are styled *the children of the most high*; and *all men* are said to be *God's Off-spring*, and *Good men* are especially dignified with that *appellation*; *God's people* as such (the *Israelites* of old, and *Christians* now) are the *children of God*; Yea, God is the *Father of all things*, as the Maker and preserver of them: But all these, in comparison to *Christ*, are such in a manner very inferiour, and in a very improper sense; for he is the *Only Son of God*; which denotes a relation in its kind singular, and incomparable; from which all other things are excluded.

Luc. 3. ult. Psalm 82. 6. Acts 17. 29. Matt. 5. 45.

κατ' ἐνάρχειαν υἱοθεσίαν. Naz. Orat. 37.

Now that we may discern the difference, let us consider the grounds and respects upon which this relation of our Saviour to God is built, or the reasons why he is called the son of God: There are several expressed or implied in Scripture.

1. *Christ* is called the *Son of God* in regard to his *temporal generation*, as being in a manner extraordinary conceived in the *Blessed Virgin by the Holy Ghost*; so the *Angel* expressly telleth us: *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing, which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God:* So the *Apostle* also: *When the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a woman* (or born of a woman, γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικὸς; γεννάμενον in some *Copies*) A generation so peculiar and wonderful, without intervention of any father but God himself, is one ground of this relation and title; he therein excelling the common sort of men.

Luc. 1. 35. Τὸ γεννώμενον ἅγιον. Gal. 4. 4. Luc. 1. 32. *He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the highest, and God shall give him the throne of his father David.*

2. *Christ* also may be termed the *Son of God* in regard to his *resurrection* by divine efficacy; that being a kind of *generation*, or introduction into another state of life immortal. Others are upon this ground called the sons of God: *They (saith our Saviour) who shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead —— can die no more; for they are equal to the Angels, and are the children of God* (υἱοὶ τοῦ Θεοῦ) *being sons of the resurrection.* How much more then may he be thence so named, who is *the first-fruits of them that sleep*, and *the first-*

Dies iste quem tanquam extremum reformidas, æterni natalis est. Sen. Epist. 102. Luk. 20. 35, 36. 1 Cor. 15. 20, 23. Col. 1. 18.

first-born from the dead? especially since that of the *Psalmist*, *Thou art my son this day have I begotten thee*, was (according to S. *Paul*'s exposition) verified in the raising him. In this respect *Christ* also did much excel all others, who upon the same ground are called the Sons of God. Apoc. 1. 5. Acts 26. 23. 3. 15.

3. *Christ* is capable of this Title by reason of that *high Office*, in which by God's especial designation he was enstated. If ordinary *Princes* and *Judges* (as being deputed by God to represent himself in the dispensation of justice; or as resembling God in the exercise of their power and authority) have been called *the children of the most High*, in the language of *Holy Scripture*; with how much greater truth and reason may he be called so, who was most signally consecrated and commissionated to the most eminent Function that ever was or could be; who did whatever he did in God's name, who represented and resembled God so exactly? It is his own argumentation and inference: *If he called them Gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the Scripture cannot be broken, say ye of him, whom the father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blaspheme'st, because I said, I am the son of God?* The extraordinary *sanctification* and *mission* did render him worthy and capable of that *Appellation*, far beyond all others, who have for the like reason obtained it. Acts 13. 32, 33. Psalm 82. 6. 29. 1. John 30. 36. 10

4. Whereas also it is said, that God did appoint, or *constitute our Saviour heir of all things*; did *give him Head above all things to the Church*, and did *put all things under his feet*, *did give him power over all flesh*, *did commit unto him all authority in heaven and earth*; did *exalt him to the* highest place of dignity and authority next to himself; *at the right hand of the Majesty in the highest*; yea did place him upon his own throne and *tribunal* in his room, so that *The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son*; well may he in that respect be entitled the *Son of God*; as thereby holding the rank and privilege suitable to such a relation: He being the *Chief* of the Family, and next in order to the great *Paterfamilias of heaven and earth*. *Of him* (saith S. *Paul*) *all the family in heaven and earth is named*; *Moses verily* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *was faithful in all his house as a servant, but Christ as a Son over his own house*: and, *Being made so much better than the Angels* (saith the same *Apostle*) *as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they* (they being only called *servants*, or *ministers*; he being entitled a *son* and *heir*.) Heb. 1. 2. Eph. 1. 22. John 17. 2. Phil. 2. 9. Matt 28. 18. 11. 17. Heb. 1. 3, &c. Acts 2. 33 36. John 5. 22. Eph. 3. 15. Heb. 3. 5, 6. Heb. 1. 4, 5, 7.

In these respects is our Saviour properly, or may be fitly denominated the *son of God* with some peculiarity and excellency beyond others: But his being with such *emphasis* called *God's only begotten son*, (denoting an exclusion of all others from this relation upon the same kind of ground) doth surely import a more excellent ground thereof, than any of these mentioned. For the *first Adam* did also immediately receive his being from the power and inspiration of God (God formed his body and breathed a soul into it,) *Isaac*, *Samuel* and *John* the *Baptist* had also a generation extraordinary and miraculous, as being born of Parents mortified by age, and unapt for generation, by interposition of the divine power (so it is expressly said of *Sarah*, *δυνάμιν ἔλαβεν εἰς καταβολὴν σπέρματος*, *she received power from God for conception of seed*) which productions do not so greatly differ from the production of *Christ* as man. Ἀφ' ἑνὸς δὲ καὶ ταῦτα νενεκρωμένου.

And how can we conceive that the production of Angels should be so much inferiour to our Saviour's temporal generation, if there were no other but that? Heb. 11. 11, 12.

And

And although our Saviour was the first and chief, yet was he not the onely Son of the resurrection; *There were* (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* saith) *many sons* of this kind *brought to glory*; and Christ was *first-born among many brethren*; this is also a ground not proper or perspicuous enough for such a denomination; and indeed before it came to pass, he was called God's son; he was so when he lived, he was so when *God so loved the world, that he gave him for its salvation.*

Heb. 2. 10. Rom. 8. 29. John 3. 16, 18.

Neither doth the free collation of power and dignity how eminent soever well suffice to ground this singularity of relation; for we see others also in regard to their designment and deputation to offices of power and dignity, although indeed subordinate and inferiour to those he received, to be entitled the *sons of God*; and however this is rather the foundation of a metaphorical, than of a natural and proper *sonship*, which is too slender and insufficient for him; who in the most solemn and august strain is denominated such.

Likewise although our Saviour be the heir of all things, yet hath he coheirs, whom *God hath* (as S. *Paul* speaketh) *together enlivened, and together raised, and together seated with him in thrones of* glory and bliss; beside that privileges of this kind are rather *consecutive* and *declarative* of this his Relation to God, than formally *constitutive* thereof: *If a son, then an heir*, saith S. *Paul*; inheritance follows *sonship*, and declares it, rather than properly makes it.

Rom. 8. 17. 29. Eph. 2. 5, 6. Heb. 2. 10. Rom. 8. 17.

Moreover those prerogatives of singular affection, and favour appropriated to *Christ*, together with all those glorious preferments consequent on them, do also argue some higher ground of this relation: for how could it be, that merely upon account of that temporal generation (which did only make him a man, *of like passions and infirmities to us, sin only excepted*) or in respect to any thing consequent thereupon, God should affect him with so special a dearness, and advance him to dignities so superlative, ὑπεράνω πάσης ἀρχῆς, καὶ ἐξουσίας, καὶ δυνάμεως, καὶ κυριότητος, *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named; Angels, and authorities, and powers being* (as S. *Peter* says) *made subject unto him*? Such proceedings (that generation only, or any thing resulting from it, being supposed) do not seem consistent with that decent congruity and natural equity, which God is ever wont to observe in his regard to persons and in his ordering of things.

Eph. 1. 21. 1 Pet. 3. 22.

We must therefore search for a more excellent, and more proper ground of this magnificent relation, or peculiar *sonship*; and such an one we shall find clearly deducible from testimonies of holy Scripture, (and by several steps of discourse we shall deduce it.)

1. It is thence *first* evident, that our Saviour had in him somewhat more than humane, according to which he is said to have existed before his temporal generation here among men. Even as men after death are in regard to a superviving part of them, their immortal soul, said to be and live; for, even then, saith our Lord, *all men do live to God. For*, before his birth here, he is said to have been in heaven, and to have descended thence: *No man*, saith he, *hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, which is in heaven*: Even when he visibly lived here, he was (as himself affirms) *secundum aliquid sui*, according to somewhat invisible in him, then actually in heaven; and according to that *somewhat* he was before in heaven; and by Union of that invisible being to humane visible nature, he is said to have descended from heaven. His ascension into heaven was but a translation

Luc. 20. 38. John 3. 13.

ſlation of the humane nature thither, where according to a more excellent nature he did abide before the incarnation: for, *What* (ſaith he again) *if ye ſhall ſee the Son of man aſcend up, where he was before?* from hence he is declared worthy and capable of ſo tranſcendent preferments; for, *He that cometh from above, out of heaven, is above all things*; becauſe, *The ſecond man is the Lord from heaven.* He, as to his manifeſtation in the fleſh, was *junior* to S. *John* the *Baptiſt*, but in truth was of more ancient ſtanding, and thence was to be preferr'd before him, as S. *John* himſelf perceived, and profeſſed: *He that* (ſaid S. *John*) *comes after me is preferred before me, becauſe he was before me.* He did ſubſiſt even before *Abraham* was born, whence without abſurdity he could affirm, that *He*, and *Abraham* had interviews and entercourſe together; ſo he diſcourſed with the *Jews*: *Thou art not* (ſaid they) *yet fifty years old, and haſt thou ſeen Abraham?* He replied; *Verily, Verily, I ſay unto you, before Abraham was, I am*: this ſaying did ſeem very abſurd to them, and ſo offended them, that they took up ſtones to caſt at him; not apprehending the myſtery couched in his words, and that he had another nature, different from that which appeared to them, according to which that ſaying of his was verified. Yea farther he had a ſubſiſtence and a glory before the world had a being; for thus he prays: *And now, father, glorifie me, with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*; *Glory* (that is a moſt honourable ſtate of being, and excellent perfection) was not only deſtinated to him, but he really had it, and enjoyed it with God, before the world was.

John 6. 62. John 3. 31. 8. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 47. John 1. 15. John 8. 58. John 17. 5. ἣν εἶχον παρὰ σοί.

2. Neceſſary indeed it was, that he ſhould exiſt before the world, for that, ſecondly, God by him made the world, and for that he made the world himſelf: *God* (ſaith Saint *Paul*) *created all things by Jeſus Chriſt*; and, *By him* (ſaith the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews*) *God made the worlds* (or the Ages, τὺς αἰῶνας, that is, all things which ever at any time did ſubſiſt; thoſe very *ages*, which the ſame *Apoſtle* ſaith *we believe to have been framed by the word of God.*) *By him* (ſaith S. *John* in the beginning of his *Goſpel*) *were all things made, and without him was nothing made, that was made*; δι' ὦτῦ, that is, *by him*, not δι' αὐτὸν, *for him* only; to exclude that ungrammatical miſinterpretation Saint *Paul* joineth both theſe notions together: τὰ πάντα δι' ὦτῦ, καὶ εἰς ἔτὸν ἔκτιται, *All things* (ſaith he) *were made by him, and for him*; as alſo to prevent any reſtriction, or exception of matters created by him, he particularly reckoneth what things were made by him; *By him* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth*; *whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers, all things were created by him, and for him*: he was not only (as ſome heterodox Interpreters would expound it) to create a new moral, and figurative world; he ſhould not only reſtore and reform mankind, but he of old did truly and properly give being to all things; and among thoſe things, he even created Angels, *all things in heaven*; beings unto which that metaphorical creation of men here doth not extend, or any-wiſe appertain: he therefore conſequently, as S. *Paul* ſubjoins, ἔξι πρὸ πάντων, *doth exiſt before all things*; as the cauſe muſt neceſſarily in nature precede the effect.

Heb. 1. 2. 11. 3. Eph. 3. 9. John 1. 3. Col. 1. 16. κ' αὐτὸν

3. He did indeed (to aſcend yet higher, even to the top) exiſt from all eternity: for he is called abſolutely ἀρχὴ, *the beginning*, which excludes all time previous to his exiſtence; he is ſtyled πρωτότοκ& πάσης κτίσεως, *the firſt born of every creature*, (or rather born before all the creation, as πρῶτός μ& ἦν, ſignifies, *he was before me*, in S. *John.*) He is *the Word*, which was *in the beginning*, that is, before any time conceivable

Col. 1. 18. Apoc. 3. 14. Col. 1. 15. John 1. 30. John 1. 1.

ceivable, and consequently from eternity. He is called *the eternal life*: 1 John 1. 2. *The life* (saith S. *John* in the first *Epistle*; his life that is another name, John 1. 4. frequently attributed to Christ, especially by that Apostle; *the life was* 11. 25. 14. 6. *manifested, and we did see it; and we bear witness, and shew that eter-* 1 John. 1. 2. 5. *nal life, which was with the father* (ὁ λόγος ἦν πρὸς τὸν θεὸν, *the word* 11. 5. 12. 5. 20. *was with God*; and ἡ ζωὴ ἦν πρὸς τὸν πατέρα, *the life was with the Father*, are, as I conceive, the same thing:) and more explicitely in the same 1 John 5. 20. *Epistle*: *We are* (saith S. *John*) *in him that is true, in his Son Jesus Christ; he is the true God, and the eternal life.* Hence is he frequently in the *Apocalypse* styled *the first and the last, the beginning and the end,* Apoc. 1. 11, 17. 2. 8. 21. 6. *Alpha and Omega; He that was, and is, and is to come;* which phrases 22. 13. do commonly express the eternity and immortality proper to God; as in that of *Isay: Thus saith the Lord, the King of Israel; and his Redeemer,* Isa. 44. 6. 41. 4. 48. 12. *the Lord of Hosts; I am the first, and I am the last, and beside me there is no God.* The same is signified by that elogy of the *Apostle* to the *He-* Heb. 13. 8. *brews: Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*; (that is, who is eternally immutable) that *Apostle* also implies the same, when he saith, that *Melchisedek* represented and resembled the son of God, as having μήτε ἀρχὴν ἡμέρων, μήτε ζωῆς τέλος, *neither beginning of days,* Heb. 7. 13. *nor end of life*; *Melchisedek* in a typical or mystical way, *our Lord* in a real and proper sense was such; beginning-less and endless in his existence. And the Prophet *Micah* seems to have taught the same, saying of him (of him that should come out of *Bethlehem*, to be *Ruler* in *Israel*) Micah 5. 2. that *his goings forth have been from old, even from everlasting* (or, from the days of eternity. His eternity is however necessarily deducible from that, which is by S. *John*, S. *Paul*, and the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* so plainly affirmed of him, that he made the Worlds, that he made the *Ages*, that he made *all things*; for if he made the world, he was before the foundations of the world, which phrase denotes eternity; if he made the Ages, he must be before all Ages; if all things were made by him, and nothing can make it self, then necessarily he was unmade; and being unmade, he necessarily must be eternal; for what at any time did not exist, can never without being made come to exist. His eter- 1 Cor. 1. 24. nity also may be strongly inferred from his being called the *Word*, the *Wisdom*, and the *Power* of God; for if he were not eternal, ἦν ἄρα καιρὸς, ὅτε οὐκ ἦν τὸν υἱὸν ὁ θεὸς, *there was a time when God wanted these*; *In decret. Conc. Nic. pag. 276.* when he was without mental speech or understanding; when he was not wise, when he was not powerful; as S. *Athanasius* argues. It therefore doth with sufficient evidence appear from Scripture, that our Saviour had a being before his temporal birth, and that before all creatures, yea even from eternity. Farthermore.

4. From what hath been said, it follows, that his being was absolutely Divine. If he was no creature, if authour of all creatures, if eternally subsistent, then assuredly he is God; that state, that action, that property are incommunicably peculiar unto God. Only God is ὁ ὤν, *being of himself* originally, and independantly; only God is *the Creatour* Heb. 3. 4. *of all things (He that made all things is God*, saith the *Apostle* to the *He-* 1 Tim. 6. 16. *brews) Only God hath immortality* (or eternity) saith S. *Paul*; No epi- Rom. 16. 26. *thet* or attribute is more proper to God, than that αἰώνιος θεὸς, *God eternal.* Hence is our Lord said by S. *Paul* before he did assume the 2 Phil. 6. 7. form of a servant, and became like unto men, to have *subsisted in the* * Τὸ εἶναι ἴσα τῷ θεῷ. *form of God, not deeming it robbery* * *to be equal to God* (or to have a subsistence in duration and perfection equal to God) so that as he was after his incarnation truly man, partaker of humane nature, affections and

and properties, so before it, he was truly God, partaking the Divine essence and attributes. Thence is he often in the Scriptures absolutely and directly named God; God in the most proper, and most high sense: *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God*, saith S. *John* in the beginning of his *Gospel* (the place where he is most likely to speak with the least ambiguity, or darkness) the same word, which was in time *made flesh, and dwelt among us*, did before all time exist with God, and was God. *God* (saith S. *Paul*) *was manifested in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached among the Gentiles, believed upon in the world, assumed up into glory*: Of which propositions, 'tis evident, that Christ is the subject, and by consequence he is there named God. God is also by S. *Paul* said to have *purchased the Church with his own blood*; who did that, but he that also was man, even *the man Christ Jesus*? S. *Thomas* upon his conviction of our Saviour's resurrection did express his faith upon him, by crying out: *My Lord, and my God*; which acknowledgment our Saviour accepted and approved as a proper testimony of that faith. • *(He permits him to say it, or rather he accepts it, not hindring him*, saith S. *Athanasius.)* S. *Paul* calls the coming of our Lord at the resurrection, *the appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*. To the Son (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* interpreteth it) it was said in the *Psalm (Psal.* 45. 7.) *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*; *the sceptre of thy Kingdom is a right sceptre*. *We are* (saith S. *John*) *in the true one, in his son Jesus Christ, this he* (οὗτος) *is the true God, and life eternal*; no false, no metaphorical, no temporary God, but the very true God, the supreme eternal God. *Out of whom* (saith S. *Paul*, recounting the privileges of the *Jewish* nation) *as concerning the flesh* (or according to his humanity) *Christ came who is over all, God blessed for ever*; ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς, *the God over all*; the sovereign God and Lord of all things; the most high; *God blessed for ever*; the ὁ εὐλογητὸς, which is a characteristical title, or special attribute of God in the style of the Scriptures, and according to the common use of the *Jews*. Yea even of old, *Isaias* foretold *of the Child which should be born, of the Son which should be given to us*, that *his name should be called* (that is according to the *Hebrew* manner of speaking, that he should really be; or however that he truly should be called) *the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of peace*.

John 1. 1.

1 Tim. 3. 16.

Acts 20. 2.

John 20. 28. Συγχωρεῖ λέγειν, καὶ μᾶλλον ἐπάγεται, μὴ κωλύων αὐτόν. Athan. Orat. 3. contra Ar. p. 394.

Tit. 2. 13. Heb. 2. 8. 1 John 5. 20.

Utrosque Dei appellatione significavit Spiritus & eum qui ungitur Filium, & eum qui ungit, id est Patrem, Iren. 3. 6.

Rom. 9. 5.

Apoc. 5. 13. πᾶν κτίσμα (*where by the way seeing all creatures worship him, he is excluded from being a Creature.*

Mar. 14. 61. Rom. 1. 25. 2 Cor. 11. 31.

Isa. 9. 6.

In these places more clearly and immediately, in many other places obliquely, and according to fair consequence; in many more probably, our Saviour is called God, God absolutely without any interpretative restriction or diminution. And seeing the Holy Scripture is so careful of yielding occasion to conceive more Gods than one, seeing it is so strict in exacting the belief, worship and obedience of one only God, absolutely such; may we not well infer with S. *Irenæus*, *Now*, (saith he, speaking indeed concerning the God of the *Old Testament*, whom the *Gnosticks* did not acknowledge to be the highest and best God, but in words, applicable to the God of the *New Testament*, whom we adore: *Now* (saith he) *neither the Lord, nor the Holy Ghost, nor the Apostles would ever have called any one definitively, nor absolutely God, unless he were truly God*: and, *Never* (saith he again) *did the Prophets, or the Apostles name any other God, or call Lord, beside the true and only God*.

Vid. 1 John 3. 16. Gal. 1. 1, 12. Jud. 4. Isa. 35. 4.

Neque igitur Dominus, neque Spiritus Sanctus, neque Apostoli eum, qui non esset Deus, definitivè & absolutè Deum nominâssent, nisi esset verus Deus Iren. 3. 6.

Nunquam Prophetæ, neque Apostoli alium Deum nominaverunt, vel Dominum appellaverunt, præter verum, & solum Deum. Idem lib. 3. *cap.* 8.

That he is truly God, we might also from other appellations peculiar to God; from divinest attributes, and divinest operations ascribed to him; from the worship and honour we are allowed and enjoined to yield him, farther shew; but these things (in compliance with the time and your patience) I shall omit.

Other appellations also peculiar unto the supreme God are assigned to him, as that most appropriate and incommunicable name *Jehovah*: (of which in the Prophet *Isay* God himself says thus, *I am the Lord, and there is none else*: and *Moses*; *Jehovah our God is one Jehovah*: even this is attributed to him: for *This* (saith *Jeremy*) *is his name, whereby he shall be called, Jehovah our righteousness*; and of S. *John* the *Baptist* it was by *Malachy* foretold; that he should *prepare the way of Jehovah*. The name *Lord* (answering to *Jehovah*) is both absolutely, and with most excellent adjuncts commonly given him: *The second man*, saith S. *Paul*, *is the Lord from heaven*; *The Lord of all things* he is called by the same Apostle; and, *the one, or only Lord. To us* (saith he) *there is one Lord, by whom are all things*. And, The Lord of glory, or most glorious Lord; (*If they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*;) And, *The Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*, he is called in S. *John's Revelation* (*They shall*, saith he, *war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them, for he is the Lord of Lords, and King of Kings*:) We are also by precept enjoined, and by exemplary practice authorized to render unto our Saviour that honour and worship, which are proper and due to the only supreme God; for, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, is the great law of true Religion: * *'Tis only belonging to God* (as S. *Athanasius* speaks) *to be worshipped*; *a creature must not worship a creature, but a servant his Lord, and a creature its God.* And, † *They who call a creature Lord, and worship him as a creature, how* (saith he) *do they differ from the heathen?* But of him it is said, *Let all the Angels of God worship him*; of him myriads of Angels say, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*: Yea *all creatures in heaven and earth, and under the earth* resound the same acclamation, saying; *To him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the worship, and the praise for ever. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood* —— *to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.* Hence the throne of God, the Father, and of his Son are one and the same; *The throne of God, and of the Lamb, are in it*, saith S. *John*, speaking of the heavenly city; *For the Son* (saith that great Father) *reigning with the same royalty of his Father, is seated upon the same throne with his Father.* To invocate the name of our Lord *Jesus Christ* is a practice characterizing and distinguishing *Christians* from *Infidels*; as when S. *Paul* inscribes his *Epistle* to the Church of *Corinth*, *Together with all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place*; and when *Saul* is said to *have authority from the chief Priests to bind all that called upon his name*, so that we need not to alledge the single example of S. *Stephen* invoking our Lord. Indeed himself informs us, that *The Father had committed all judgment unto the Son, that all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father.* To wish and pray for *grace and peace from our Lord Jesus Christ* is the usual practice of the *Apostles*, and to dispense them is a prerogative of his common to him with God his Father. To have the same Holy Spirit as the Father unmeasurably, and to send it from himself, with commissions and instructions, and to communicate

Isa. 45. 6, 18. Deut. 6. 4. Jer. 23. 6. 33. 16. Mal. 3. 1. Matt. 3. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 47. Acts 10. 36. 1 Cor. 8. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Psal. 24. 9. Jud. 4. Apoc. 17. 14. 19. 16. Matt. 4. 10.

* Θεῦ ὄτι μὲν τὸ προσκυνεῖ ὄν. κτίσματι κτίσμα ὑποπροσκυνεῖ, ἀλλὰ δῆλος διαπόντων, ὃ κτίσμα ἐστὶν. Athan. in Ar. Or. 2. p. 394.

† Οὕτοι ὃ κτίσμα λέγοντες εἶναι τὸν † κύριον, ὃ ὡς κτίσματι λατρεύοντες οὐ τῷ. τὸ διαφέρειν ἑλλήνων. Ath. Or. 1. in Ar. p. 296. Heb. 1. 6. Apoc. 5. 12. 13. 4. 11.

V. Apoc. 1. 5.

Apoc. 22. 3.

Τλοῦτε γὰρ τὸ πατρὸς βασιλείαν βασιλεύων ὁ υἱὸς ἐπὶ † αὐτὸν θρόνον τῷ πατρὶ κάθηται. Athan. Orat. 2. in Ar.

1 Cor. 1. 2. Acts 9. 14. 21. Rom. 10. 12, 13, 14. 2 Tim. 2. 22. John 5. 23, 24. 2 John 3. Rom. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 13. 2 Thes. 2. 16. 1 Thes. 3. 12. Tit. 3. 6.

municate it freely, are especial characters of supreme Divinity, and much transcending any Creature; as S. *Athanasius* observes: *With authority* (said he) *to give the spirit doth not suite a creature, or a thing made, but is an endowment of God.* Whereas also we are often severely prohibited from relying or confiding upon any man, or any creature (as in that of the Prophet: *Cursed be the man, that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm*) we are yet allowed, yea we are obliged to repose our truſt and confidence in Christ; *Ye trust in God* (saith he himself to his Disciples) *trust also in me*; whence S. *Paul* calleth him emphatically, *our hope*; in his compellation to *Timothy*: *Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the commandment of God our Saviour, and the Lord Jesus Christ, our hope*; which is the same title, that *Jeremy* attributes unto God: *O the hope of Israel, the Saviour thereof, in time of trouble.* Hence to him jointly with God the Father, and the divine Spirit that solemn benediction or prayer is directed; *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all*; as also a parity of highest adoration is then together with the same divine Persons yielded to him, when we are baptized in his name, and consecrated to his service.

Τὸ δὲ μετέχειν ποιᾶς δόσεως τὸ πνεῦμα, ἐκτίσμενόν ἐστι, καὶ δεῖ δόσεως. Ath. *Orat.* 3. *in Ar. p.* 388.

Jer. 17. 5. Joh. 14. 1. 1 Tim. 1. 1. Col. 1. 27. Jer. 14. 8.

The divinest attributes of God are also in the most absolute manner, and perfect degree assigned to him; Eternity, as we discoursed before. Immensity of presence and power, then implied, when speaking with the *Jews* he told them that he was then in heaven; and when he promises his Disciples, that *he will be with them, whenever they meet in his name*; and also, *that he will be with them to the end of the world.* Infinite wisdom and knowledge; *for in him are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge*; and, *Now are we sure* (say the Disciples to him in S. *John*) *that thou knowest all things*: and, *Lord*, (saith S. *Peter*) *thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*: and S. *Paul* calls him *the wisdom of God*, and *the power of God*; wherefore since God's wisedom is omniscient, and his power omnipotent, so consequently is he. In short, whatever attribute or perfection God hath, the same hath he: for, *All things*, saith he, *that the father hath, are mine*, what creature without high presumption could say those words concerning the divine Spirit: *He shall glorify me, for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

Joh. 3. 13. Matt. 18. 20. Matt. 28. 20. Col. 2. 3. Joh. 16. 30. John 21. 17. 1 Cor. 1. 24. Joh. 16. 15. Joh. 16. 14.

The divine attributes he expresseth by divinest operations and works, which are ascribed to him. It is a most divine work to create, this we shewed before to have been performed by him: To sustain, and conserve things in being is another like work; this he doth, *For he* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *upholdeth all things by the word of his power*: and, *By him*, saith S. *Paul*, *all things consist*. To perform miracles, or doe things surmounting the laws, and thwarting the course of nature; such as by mere word and will rebuking winds and seas, curing diseases, ejecting Devils is the property of him, who (as the *Psalmist* says) *alone doeth great wonders.* Particularly to raise the dead, is a prerogative reserved by God in his own hand (for, *The Lord killeth, and the Lord maketh alive*; *he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up*) This our Lord often did, at his pleasure: for, *As the father raiseth up the dead, and quickneth them*; *even so the son quickneth whom he will*; and of himself he saith in the *Apocalypse*: *I have the keys of hell and of death.* Especially to raise himself, which he assumeth to himself; (*I*, saith he, *lay down my life, that I may take it up again*; *I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again*: and, *Demolish this temple* (saith he

Heb. 1. 3. Col. 1. 17. Ps. 72. 18. 86. 8, 10. 136. 4. 1 Sam. 2. 6. Deut. 32. 39. Apoc. 1. 18. Joh. 10. 17, 18. Joh. 2. 19.

he again) *and in three days I will rear it*; which it was impossible for him to doe, and unintelligible how it should be done otherwise, than by the divinity resident in him. To be καρδιογνώστης, searching mens hearts and discerning their secret thoughts is a peculiar work of him, that
Jer. 7. 10. saith, *I the Lord try the heart, I search the reins*; and of our Lord it is
Joh. 2. 25. said, *He needed not, that any should witness about a man, for he knew what was in man*; and by many experiments he declared this power. To foresee and foretell future contingencies to be peculiar to himself God signified when in the Prophet he thus challenged the objects of heathen
Esa. 41. 23. worship: *Shew the things to come, that we may know ye are Gods*; this our Lord did upon several occasions, particularly in the case of *Judas* his
Joh. 6. 64. treason: *He knew* (saith S. *John*) *from the beginning, who they were, who did not believe, and who it was that should betray him.* This, I say, he did, not as the Prophets by particular arbitrary revelation, but immediately by his own Spirit; whereby even the Prophets themselves
1 Pet. 1. 11. well illustrated and inspired; for it was (as S. *Peter* says) *The Spirit of Christ in them which testified before-hand the sufferings of Christ, and the*
1 Tim. 6. 16. *glories that should follow.* To see and know God *(who inhabits inaccessible light)* is beyond a creatures capacity and state; and yet belongs to
Joh. 6. 46. him. *None* (saith he) *hath seen the father, save he which is of God; he*
Matt. 11. 27. *hath seen the father:* and, *None knoweth the father, but the son, and he to whomsoever the son will reveal him.* To remit sins absolutely he denied not to be the property of God, when his adversaries thus objected it:
Mar. 2. 7. *Who can forgive sins, except God only?* yet he assumed it to himself, and
Isa. 43. 25. asserted it by a miracle. To save also God declared to be a peculiar work
Isa. 43. 11. of his, when he said it, and reiterated it in *Esay*, and in *Hosea*; *I am*
45. 21. *the Lord, and beside me there is no Saviour*; which act yet, and which
Hos. 13. 4. title are no less proper to our Lord. In fine, briefly, he claims to himself at once the performance of every divine work, when he saith, *What-*
Joh. 5. 19. *soever the father doeth, that also doth the son likewise.*

Now all this state and majesty, all these glorious titles, attributes and works, can we imagine that he *whose name is jealous* (as it is in *Exodus* 34. 14.) and *who is jealous of his name* (as it is in *Ezekiel* 39. 25.) who
Deut. 6. 15. Isa. 42. 8. 48. 11. said it once and again in the Prophet *Esay*, that *he will not give his glory to another*; can we conceive, I say, that he should communicate them, or should suffer them to be ascribed to any mere creature, how eminent soever in nature or worth, how dear soever upon any regard? for indeed the highest creature producible must be infinitely distant from him, infinitely inferiour to him, infinitely base and mean in comparison to him, as to any true perfection or dignity; nor therefore can any creature be in nature capable of such names, such characters, such prerogatives; nor can in any reason or justice accept or bear them. Our *Saviour* therefore, unto whom by divine allowance and injunction they are attributed, who willingly admits them, who clearly assumes them to himself, is truly God.

Οὐδ' ἂν ἐτόλμησε δέσποτα, οὐδ' ἂν, ᾧ πολλῶν, εἰς ἐν τῷ κόλπῳ τρέφεσθαι τῶν δεσπότου. Chrys. in Joh. 1. 18.

5. Now the whole tenour of our Religion (according to dictates of Scripture most frequent and obvious) asserting the Unity of God; our Saviour therefore, being God, must of necessity partake the same individual essence with God his Father; and it must be certainly true, which
Joh. 10. 30. he affirmeth concerning himself: *I and the father are one* (ἓν ἐσμεν, are
1 Joh. 5. 7. the same thing, or one in nature; not εἷς ἐσμεν, the same in person, or
Joh. 14. 9. manner of subsistence) and what he again saith; *He that hath seen me,*
Apoc. 21. 22. *hath seen the Father*; and, *I am in the Father, and the Father in me*; by
The Lord God Almighty is its temple and the lamb. the divine essence common to both.

Yet

Yet hath he not this essence from himself, but by communication; for, *As the Father hath life in himself, so he hath given the Son to have life in himself.* And ὁ ὢν παρὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ, He *that is* or hath his essence *from God*, is the *periphrasis* he gives of himself. He is not first in order, as an original, but is *the Image of the invisible God* (an image indeed most adequate and perfectly like, as having the very same nature and essence. He is ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης *(the effulgency of his Father's glory)* and χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως; *the character*, or exact impression *of his substance.* He is the internal word, or mind of God, which resembles him, and yet is not different from him: He is the *life*, the *wisdom*, the *power* of God, which terms denote the most intrinsick and perfect unity. So the *Apostles* by the most apposite comparisons that nature affords, strive to adumbrate the ineffable manner of that eternal communication of the divine nature from God the Father to our Saviour; the which is that generation, whereupon the relation, about which we speak, is founded; or, because of which, our Lord is most truly and properly called *The only begotten Son of God.* For, if to produce a like in any kind or degree, be to generate; then to give a being without any dissimilitude or disparity is the most proper generation: our *Saviour* therefore hence truly is the Son of God the Father. And that he is so only; that no other beside him hath been ever thus begotten, is evident; for that as no reason of ours could have informed us, that our Saviour himself was thus begotten, so no revelation hath shewed us that any other hath been; and we therefore cannot without extreme temerity suppose it. we are sufficiently instructed that all other divine productions together with the relations grounded on them are different from this; by creation things receive a Being from God infinitely distant from, infinitely unequal and unlike to the Divine essence; and that *filiation*, or Sonship which doth stand upon adoption and grace is wholly in kind different from this. And the communication of the divine essence jointly from the Father and Son to the Holy Spirit, doth in manner (although the manner thereof be wholly incomprehensible to us) so differ from this, that in the Holy Scripture (the only guide of our conception, and of our speech in matters of this nature far surpassing our reason) is never called generation; and therefore we must not presume to think, or call it so.

John 5. 26. John 6. 46. Col. 1. 15. 2 Cor. 4. 4. John 14. 9. Heb. 1. 3.

But let so much suffice for explication of the Point; a Point represented in Scripture so considerable, that the belief thereof (if it have that sincerity, and that strength, as to dispose our hearts to a due love and reverence of the Son of God, attended with, or attested to by a faithfull obedience to his laws) doth raise us also to the privilege of becoming the Sons of God, and doth mystically unite us to him, and elevateth us above the world; so doth S. *John* teach us: *To as many* (saith he) *as received him* (received him as the Son of God, or believed him to be so) *to them gave he the power* (or the privilege) *to become the sons of God*, And. *Whosoever* (saith he) *shall confess, that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.* And, *Who* (saith he again) *is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?* of so great importance is the Point, Of which I shall onely now farther briefly propose some practical applications.

Ὧ ἡμεῖς συμμορφόμενοι καὶ χάριν, τῷ δὲ αὐτῷ, πρὸς τὸν τῆς ὑιοθεσίας ἀναβαίνομεν δόξαν. Cyril. Al. John 1. 12.

1 John 4. 15.

1 John 5. 5.

Μὴ θαυμάζῃς εἰ κόσμος ὅλος σωτῆρα ἔχει ἄνθρωπον ψιλὸν, ἀλλ' ὑὸς Θεοῦ μονογενὴς ὁ ὑπὲρ ἀποθνήσκων. &c. Cyril. Catech. 13.

1. We may hence learn whence the performances and the sufferings of Christ become of so high worth, and so great efficacy. *Wonder not* (saith S. *Cyril* the *Catechist*) *if the whole world was redeemed; for it was not a bare man, but the onely Son of God that died for it.* It is not so strange

ſtrange, that God's only Son his mediation, ſhould be ſo acceptable and ſo effectual with God; that the bloud of God's deareſt Son ſhould be ſo pretious in God's ſight, that the interceſſion of one ſo near him ſhould be ſo prevalent with him. What could God refuſe to the Son of his love earneſtly ſoliciting and ſuing in our behalf? What debts might not ſo rich a price diſcharge? What anger could not ſo noble a ſacrifice appeaſe? what juſtice could not ſo full a diſpenſation ſatisfy? *We were not* (S. *Peter* telleth us) *redeemed with corruptible things, with ſilver or gold* (no; whole *Indies* of ſuch ſtuff would not have been ſufficient to ranſome one ſoul) *but with the precious blood of Chriſt, as of a lamb without blemiſh, and without ſpot.* It was not (as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* remarketh) by the *blood of goats and heifers*, that our ſins were expiated (no; whole hecatombs would have nothing availed to that purpoſe) but *by the blood of Chriſt, who by the eternal ſpirit offered up himſelf ſpotleſs unto God* (who as the eternal Son of God did offer himſelf a ſacrifice not to be blamed or refuſed) *It is* (as S. *John* ſaith) *the blood of Chriſt, the Son of God, which purgeth us from all ſin.* And well indeed might a Perſon ſo infinitely noble, worthy and excellent be a ſufficient ranſome for whole worlds of miſerable offenders, and captives. Well might his voluntary undergoing ſuch inconveniences and infirmities of life, his ſuffering ſo diſgraceful and painful a death countervail the deſerved puniſhment of all mankind; well might his ſo humble, ſo free, ſo perfect ſubmiſſion to God's will infinitely pleaſe God, and render him propitious to us. *Well might* (as S. *Athanaſius* ſpeaks) *the very appearing of ſuch a Saviour in the fleſh be a general ranſome of ſin, and become ſalvation to every creature*; the which S. *Paul* thus expreſſeth: *God ſending his own ſon in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin, condemned ſin in the fleſh*; for if our diſpleaſing, injuring and diſhonouring him, who is ſo great and ſo good, doth aggravate our offence; the equal excellency and dignity of the Perſon, ſubmitting in our behalf to the performance of all due obedience, and all proper ſatisfaction, may proportionably advance the reparation offered, and compenſate the wrong done to God. Well therefore may we believe, and ſay with comfort, after the *Apoſtle*: Τίς ἐγκαλέσει κατὰ τῶν ἐκλεκτῶν; *Who ſhall criminate againſt the elect of God? it is God that juſtifieth* (it is the Son of God, it is God himſelf, who ſatisfies divine juſtice for us) *who is there that condemns? it is Chriſt that died.*

1 Peter 1. 18, 19. Pſal. 49. 7. Heb. 9. 12, 13, 14. 10. 4, 8, 10. 1 John 1. 7. Ἡ ἔνσαρκος παρουσία τοῦ σωτῆρος θανάτῳ λύτρον, καὶ κτίσεως πάσης σωτηρία γέγονεν. Athan. ad Adelph. Rom. 8. 3. Rom. 8. 33.

2. We may hence be informed, what reverence and adoration is due from us to our Saviour, and why we *muſt honour the Son, even as we honour the Father*, why even all the *Angels* muſt *worſhip him*; why *every thing in heaven, and earth, and beneath the earth muſt bend the knee* (that is, muſt yield veneration and obſervance) *to him*; why *by all creatures* whatever the ſame preeminence is to be aſcribed, and the ſame adoration paid jointly and equally *to God the Father Almighty, who ſits upon the throne, and to the Lamb* his bleſſed Son, who *ſtandeth at his right hand.* Such divine glory and worſhip we are obliged to yield him becauſe he is the Son of God, one in eſſence, and therefore equal in Majeſty, with his Father: were it not ſo it would be injury to God, and ſacrilege to doe it; God would not *impart his glory*, we ſhould not attribute it unto another. So this conſideration grounds our duty, and juſtifies our practice of worſhipping our Lord; it alſo encourages us to perform it with faith and hope; for thence we may be aſſured, that he being the Son of God omniſcient doth hear and mind us; being the Son of God omnipotent, he can thoroughly help and ſave us; being alſo as ſuch

John 5. 23. Heb. 1. 6. Phil. 2. 9. Apoc. 5. 13.

such absolutely and immensely good, he will be always disposed to afford what is good and convenient for us in our need.

3. We hence may perceive the infinite goodness of God toward us, and our correspondent obligation to love and thankfulness toward him. *In this* (saith S. *John*) *was manifested the love of God towards us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him: In this* (adds he) *is love* (love indeed, love admirable and inconceivable) *not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his only begotten Son to be a propitiation for our sins.* Can there be imagined any equal, any like expression of kindness, of mercy, of condescension, as for a Prince, himself glorious and happy, most freely to deliver up, out from his own bosom, his own only most dearly beloved Son, to the suffering most base contumelies, and most grievous pains for the welfare of his enemies, of rebels and traitours to him? Even such hath been God's goodness to us: The Son of God, the heir of eternal Majesty, was by his Father sent down from heaven (from the bosome of his glory and bliss) to put on the form of a servant, to endure the inconveniences of this mortal state, to undergo the greatest indignities and sorrows; that we, *who were alienated, and enemies in our mind by wicked works, might be reconciled to God*; might be freed from wrath and misery; might be capable of everlasting life and salvation: suitable to such unexpressible goodness ought our gratitude to be toward God: what affectionate sense in our hearts, what thankful acknowledgments with our mouths, what dutiful observance in all our actions doth so wonderful an instance of mercy and goodness deserve and require from us?

Tit. 3. 4. Eph. 2. 4. 1 John 4. 9. 10. Col. 1. 21. 1 John 4. 9.

4. This consideration may fitly serve to beget in us hope and confidence in God upon any occasions, of need or distress to support and comfort us in all our afflictions: for, *He that so loved us, that he gave his only begotten son for our salvation and happiness*; how can we ever suspect him as unwilling to bestow on us whatever else shall to his wisdom appear needful or convenient for us? He that out of pure charity and pity toward us did part with a jewel so inestimable, how can any thing seem much for him to give us: it is the consolatory discourse of S. *Paul*: *He* (saith the *Apostle*) *that did not spare his own son, but delivered him up for us all*; *how shall he not with him freely give us all things?* all things that we truly need, all things that we can reasonably desire, all things which are good and fit for us.

John 3. 16. Rom. 8. 32.

5. S. *John* applieth this consideration to the begetting charity in us toward our brethren. *Beloved* (saith he) *if God so loved us* (as to send his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him) *we ought also to love one another.* If God so lovingly gave up his only Son for our sakes; what in grateful regard to him (in observant imitation of him) what expressions, I say, of charity and good will ought we to yield toward our brethren? what endeavours, what goods, what life of ours should seem too dear unto us for to expend or impart for their good? shall we be unwilling to take any pains, or suffer any loss for them, for whom (together with our selves) the Son of God hath undergone so much trouble, so much disgrace, so much hardship? shall we, I say, be uncharitable when the Son of God hath laid upon us such an obligation, hath set before us such an example?

1 John 4. 12.

6. This consideration also may inform us, and should mind us concerning the dignity of our nature and of our condition; and consequently how in respect to them we should behave our selves. If God did so much consider and value man, as for his benefit to debase his only Son;

if the Son of God himself hath deigned to assume our nature, and to advance it into a conjunction with the divine nature, then is man surely no inconsiderable or contemptible thing; then should we despise no man, whom God hath so regarded and so honoured; then ought we not to neglect or slight our selves: if we were worthy of God's so great care, we ought not to seem unworthy of our own. We ought to value our selves, not so indeed as to be proud of so undeserved honour, but so as to be sensible thereof, and to sute our demeanour thereto. Reflecting upon these things should make us to disdain to doe any thing unworthy that high regard of God, and that honourable alliance unto him. It should breed in us noble thoughts, worthy desires, and all excellent dispositions of soul conformable to such relations; it should engage us
Heb. 2. 11. unto a constant practice, beseeming them, whom God hath so dignified, whom the Son of God hath vouchsafed to make his brethren: by affecting any thing mean or sordid, by doing any thing base or wicked, we greatly undervalue our selves, we must disparage that glorious Family; into which by the Son of God his incarnation we are inserted. Ταύτης οὖν τῆς τιμῆς ἀξίαν τὴν φιλοσοφίαν ὀφείλομεν ἐπιδείκνυσθαι, καὶ μηδὲν ἔχωμεν κοινὸν πρὸς τὴν γῆν· *Let us therefore* (saith S. *Chrys.*) *shew a Philosophy worthy of this honour; having nothing common with this earth.* (in Joh. 1. Hom. 18.)

7. This consideration doth much aggravate all impiety and sin. Wilfull sin upon this account appeareth not only disobedience to our Creatour and natural Lord, but enormous offence against the infinite bounty, and mercy, and condescension of our Saviour; a most heinous abusing the Son of God, who came down into this homely and humble state on purpose *to bless us in turning every one of us from our*
Acts 3. 26. Rom. 6. 22. *iniquities*; to free us from the grievous dominion, and from the woful effects of sin; we thereby frustrate the most gracious intentions of God, and defeat the most admirable project that could be for our
Heb. 6. 6. 10. 28. benefit and salvation: We thereby *trample upon the Son of God, recrucify him, and put him to open shame:* so the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* telleth us, implying the heinous guilt, and sad consequence of doing so:
Heb. 10. 28. *He* (saith the *Apostle*) *that despised Moses his law died without mercy;* —— *Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath troden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing?*

8. *Lastly*, This consideration may serve to beget in us a high esteem of the dispensation Evangelical, and hearty submission thereto.
Luc. 20. 13. Almighty God (as is signified in the *Parable*) after several provisions for the good of mankind, and several messages from heaven to the world here, did at last send his Son, with this expectation: *Surely they will reverence my Son:* And surely much reason he had to expect the greatest reverence to be yielded to his Person; the readiest credence, and obedience to his word. For if any declaration of God concerning his will, or our duty, however proceeding from him (either by dictate of natural reason, or by the instruction of Prophets, or by the ministery of Angels) ought to be entertained with great respect and observance; much more should the overtures of greatest mercy and favour exhibited by his own Son (on purpose sent unto us to discover them) be embraced with highest regard, and humblest reverence, and most hearty compliance. 'Tis the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*
Heb. 1, 2. 2. 1, 3. his discourse, and inference: *Therefore* (saith he, therefore, because

God

God hath in these last times spoken unto us by his Son) we ought περισσοτέρως προσέχειν *to give more* (abundant, or more) *earnest heed to the things, which we have heard; for* (subjoins he) *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at first began to be spoken by (our) Lord; and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him.* Ταῦτ' ἐν διηνεκῶς φέροντες, καὶ ἀναλογιζόμενοι ἐκκαθαίρωμεν ἡμῶν τὸ βίον, καὶ λαμπρὸν ποιήσωμεν. *Continually therefore revolving and recounting these things, let us cleanse our life, and make it bright:* So we conclude with good S. *Chrysostome.*

Almighty God, who hast given us thy only begotten Son to take our nature upon him; grant that we being regenerate, and made thy children by adoption and grace may daily be renewed by thy Holy Spirit, through the same our Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the same spirit, ever one God, world without end. Amen. *Vid.* Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *pag.* 623, &c.

Our Lord.

SERMON XXII.

EPH. IV. 5.

One Lord.

AS the name of *God* (truly common to all three Persons of the Blessed Trinity) is (not in way of exclusion, but) according to a mysterious peculiarity (κατ' οἰκονομίαν, in way of dispensation accommodated to our instruction, as the *Greek* Fathers express it) attributed to God the *Father*, who is the fountain of the Deity, and first in order among the divine Persons; so likewise is the Name *Lord*, truly common to the other persons, peculiarly (though also not exclusively) ascribed and appropriated unto God the *Son*; who therefore in the style of the *New Testament*, which more fully have revealed him, is called sometimes absolutely *Lord*, sometimes *the Lord Jesus*, sometimes *our Lord*; to acknowledge and call him so being the especial duty, and the distinctive mark or character of a Christian: for, *to us*, as *there is one God and Father of all*, and *one Holy Spirit*, so there is (as S. *Paul* here in my Text doth say) *One Lord.* And otherwhere: *There be* (saith he, there be according to popular estimation, and worldly use) *Gods many, and Lords many, but to us there is one God the Father, and one Lord Jesus Christ.* Hence to call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, (that is, by confession and practice to acknowledge him *our Lord*) gives a *periphrasis*, or description of a Christian (*To the Church of God that is in Corinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus called to be Saints, together with all that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ in every place*; that is, Luc. 2. 11. Ὅς ἐστι Χριστὸς, Κύριος. 1 Cor. 8. 6. 1 Cor. 1. 2. Act. 9. 14.

together with all Christians every where, so doth S. *Paul* inscribe his
1 Cor. 12. 3. first *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*) whence, *No man* (saith he in the same *Epistle*) *can call Jesus Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*; that is, no man can heartily embrace Christianity without the gracious assistance of God's Holy Spirit. The reason of which Appellation, being so peculiarly attributed unto Christ, may be, for that beside the natural right unto dominion over us, necessarily appertaining to him as our God, who hath made us, and doth preserve us; there are divers other respects and grounds supervenient, and accruing to him from what he hath undertaken, performed and undergone for us, in spontaneous obedience to the will of God his Father, upon which also the Title of *Lord* is due unto him: the which to declare first, then to apply them unto our practice shall be the subject and scope of our present discourse.

In whatsoever notion we take the word *Lord*; either as a *Prince* over Subjects, or as a *Master* over Servants, or as an *Owner* of goods, or as a *Preceptor*, and President over Disciples, or as a *Leader* and Captain to followers; or as a person singularly eminent above inferiours; he is according to all such notions truly *Our Lord*.

According to whatever capacity we distinctly or abstractively consider him, either as the *Son of God*, or as the *Son of Man*; or as θεάνθρωπος (jointly *God and Man*, united in one Person) as *Jesus* our Saviour, as *the Christ of God*, he is *our Lord*.

If we examine all imaginable foundations of just dominion, eminence in nature the power, the collation of being, or preservation thereof; donation, conquest, purchase, merit, voluntary compact, upon all these he hath a right of *Lordship* over us duly grounded.

I. He is, I say, first *our Lord* according to every notion, and acception of the word *Lord*.

He is our *Prince* and Governour, we are his subjects and vassals:
Heb. 1. 8. for, to him it was said, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.* Of him it was prophesied;
Is. 9. 6, 7. that *the government should be upon his shoulder*, and that *of the encrease of his government and peace there should be no end*; He is *the King of Israel*, or of the Church, who, as the Angel told the Blessed Virgin, *shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever and ever. God hath given him head over all things to the Church.* So is he a Prince most absolute, endewed with sovereign right and power, crowned with glorious Majesty, enjoying all pre-eminences, and exercising all acts sutable to Regal dignity,
Luc. 1. 33. Eph. 1. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 27. in respect to all things, and particularly in regard to us.

He also is our *Master*, and we are his Servants; the Church is a
1 Tim. 3. 15. house and family, whereof he is the οἰκοδεσπότης, or Housholder; *If* (saith
Matt. 24. 45. Matt. 10. 25. he) *they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more those of his household* (τὺς οἰκιακὺς αὐτῦ, *famulos ejus*, his domesticks, or
Eph. 3. 15. menial servants) *All the family in heaven and earth are named of him* (saith S. *Paul*) that is, the whole Church (both triumphant above in heaven, and militant here on earth) is his family, or called the family
Heb. 3. 6. of him, as of its Lord. *Christ* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *is as a*
1 Cor. 7. 22. Col. 3. 24. Eph. 6. 9. Col. 4. 1. *Son over his house, whose house are we. He that is called free, is a servant of Christ*: and, *We serve the Lord Christ*; and, *We have a Master in heaven*, saith S. *Paul*: *Blessed* (saith our Lord himself) *is that servant,*
Matt. 24. 46. *whom his Lord coming shall find so doing*; that is, whom *Christ, our Lord*, coming to judgment shall find discharging his duty faithfully. He indeed as a good Master governeth, ordereth and maintaineth his Family well; furnisheth and feedeth it, with all necessary provisions; protect-

eth

eth it from all want, and all mischief; appointeth to every one therein his due work and service, and payeth to each his due wages and recompence. 1 Cor. 3. 8. Luc. 6. 35. Ap. 22. 12.

He is also our *Owner*; or the Possessour and Proprietary of us; *The Lord that bought us*, as S. *Peter* calls him; and consequently, who possesseth and enjoyeth us. *We are not our own* (saith S. *Paul*) *for we were bought with a price:* whence we are become entirely subject to his disposal. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 Cor. 6. 19. 20. 7. 23.

He likewise is our *Preceptor*, or *Teacher*; or that is, the Lord of our Understanding, which is subject to the belief of his dictates; and the Lord of our Practice, which is to be directed by his precepts. *Ye* (saith he) *call me Master, and Lord*, (διδάσκαλον, καὶ κύριον, *Doctour* and *Lord*) *and ye say well, for so I am:* And, *Be ye not called Masters* (καθηγηταὶ, guides in doctrine) *for one is your Master, even Christ.* And, *Every thought of ours* (saith S. *Paul*) is to be *captivated* to the *obedience of Christ:* Such, as infallibly wise, and perfectly veracious, he necessarily is unto us; such he is, as sent on purpose by God to enlighten our minds with the knowledge of heavenly truth; and *to guide our feet into the ways of peace*; whence we cannot but be obliged to embrace his doctrine, and to observe the rules which he prescribeth us. Joh. 13. 13. Matt. 23. 10. 2 Cor. 10. 5. Joh. 1. Luc. 1. 79.

He is therefore also our *Captain* and Leader; whose orders we must observe, whose conduct we should follow, whose pattern we are to regard and imitate in all things: He is styled ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως, *the Captain of our faith*, ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς, *the Captain of our life*, ἀρχηγὸς σωτηρίας, *the Captain of our salvation*, ἀρχιποίμην, our *chief Shepherd*, the *Apostle, and high Priest of our profession*; the *Bishop of our Souls*. In fine, he (according to what S. *Paul* says) ἐν πᾶσι πρωτεύει, *hath in all things, the primacy*, and *preeminence*; so that according to all notions and senses of *Lordship* he is our Lord; but chiefly he is meant such in the principal sense, as having an absolute right and power to command and govern us. 1 Pet. 2. 21. Heb. 12. 2. 2 Act. 3. 15. 5. 31. 1 Pet. 2. 25. 5. 4. Heb. 3. 1. Col. 1. 18.

II. *Christ* is also *our Lord* according to every capacity or respect of *nature* or *office*, that we can consider appertaining to him.

1. He is *our Lord* as by *nature* the *Son of God*, partaking of the divine essence and perfections: he as such being endewed with eminence superlative, and with power irresistible; as such having created all things, and upholding all things; whence all things necessarily and justly are subject to his order and disposal; all things according to all right and reason are to be governed, possessed and used according to his pleasure. Hence is that most august, and most peculiar name, *JEHOVAH* (denoting either independency, and indefectibility of subsistence, or uncontrollable and infallible efficacy in operation, or both of them together; which therefore is by the *Greek* Interpreters fitly rendred κύριος, and after them *Lord* by our Translatours; for the word κύριεν doth signifie to subsist, and κύριος is used to denote efficacy, ratification, stedfast power or authority) is assigned to him; *This is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*, saith *Jeremy* of him: and, *I will have mercy upon the house of Judah, and will save them by Jehovah their God* (saith God in *Hosea* concerning the salvation accomplished by him) and in the Prophet *Zechary*, he thus speaks of himself: *Sing, and rejoyce, O daughter of Sion, for lo I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know, that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto thee:* where it is said, that *Jehovah*, being sent by *Jehovah* should come and dwell in the Church, enlarged by accession of the *Gentiles*; Jer. 23. 16. 6 Hos. 1. 7. Zech. 10. 12. 2. 9, 10. Jehovah à Jehova Gen. 19. 24. apud Iren. 3. 6.

tiles; who can that be, but *our Lord Christ*, who dwelt among us, and was by God his Father sent unto us? And what in the *Old Testament* is spoken of *Jehovah* is by infallible Expositours in the *New* attributed to our Lord: *Sanctifie Jehovah Sabaoth, and he shall be for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence*; so did *Isaias* speak; and his words are by S. *Peter* and by S. *Paul* applied to *Christ*. *Whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be delivered*; so did the Prophet *Joel* foretell concerning the latter days; and S. *Paul* accommodates it to the salvation obtained by confessing the name of *Christ*. In *Malachy*, *Jehovah* saith, that *he would send his messenger to prepare his way before him*; this according to the *Evangelists* interpretation was verified in S. *John* the *Baptist* his *preparing the way before* our Saviour. Likewise, what *Esay* said: *The voice of him that cried in the wilderness, prepare the way of Jehovah*, is by all the *Evangelists* applied to the *Baptist*, as *the voice crying*, and to our *Saviour*, as the *Lord coming*: *Christ* therefore is the *Lord Jehovah*, independent, and immutable in essence, and in power.

Isa. 8. 13, 14. 1 Pet. 2. 7. Rom. 9. 33. Joel 2. 32. Rom. 10. 9, 10, 13. Mal. 3. 1. Matt. 3. 3. Mar. 1. 2, 3. Joh. 1. 23. Lu. 7. 27. 3, 4. Isa. 40. 3.

The word *Adon* also, which more immediately and properly doth signify *dominion* (and which put absolutely doth belong to God) is plainly attributed to our Saviour. *The Lord (Jehovah) said to my Lord* (*le Adoni*,) that is, God the Father to Christ, the Son, yet Lord of *David*; as our *Saviour* himself expounds it. And, *The Lord (ha Adon) shall come to his temple*; so in *Malachy* 'tis prophecied concerning the coming of *Christ*. According to this notion was it, that S. *Thomas*, being by our Saviour's resurrection convinced of his divinity cried out; *My God, and my Lord*; In this sense it was, that S. *Peter* called our Saviour *Lord*, when he ascribed omniscience to him, saying, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* Upon this account, S. *John* the *Baptist* said, *He that cometh from above is above all things*, which S. *Paul* expresseth thus: *The second man is the Lord from heaven.* So is *Christ*, as he is God, *our Lord.*

Psal. 110. 1. Mark 22. 43. Mal. 3. 1. John 20. 28. John 21. 17. John 3. 31. 1 Cor. 15. 47.

2. He is also our Lord, as *Man*, by the voluntary appointment and free donation of God his Father; in regard to the excellency of his Person, and to the merit of his performances. God did by gift and delegation confer upon him a supereminent degree of dignity and authority, with power to excecute the most Lordly acts of enacting, of dispensing with, and of abrogating laws; of judging, of remitting offences; of dispensing rewards, and of punishing transgressours. The Scripture is copious and emphatical in declaring this Point both in general terms, and with respect to particulars. *Let all the house of Israel* (saith S. *Peter*) *know assuredly; that God hath made him Lord, and Christ, even this Jesus, whom ye did crucify*, And, *Thou hast given him power over all flesh: All things are delivered unto me by my Father: All power is given me in heaven and upon earth. The Father hath loved the Son, and hath given all things into his hand*; saith he concerning himself: and, *Being found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow — and that every tongue should confess, that Jesus is the Lord*: And, *God raised him from the dead, and set him at his right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name, that is named not onely in this world, but also in that which is to come; and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the Church*: and, *We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the Angels for the suffering of death*

Acts 2. 36. John 17. 2. Luc. 10. 22. Matt. 11. 27. Mark 28. 18. John 3. 35. 13. 3. Phil. 2. 8. Eph. 1. 20. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Heb. 2. 9.

death crowned with glory, and honour: and, *The Lamb which was slain is worthy to receive power, and riches, and wisedom, and strength, and honour, and blessing:* and, *When the Son of man sits upon the throne of his glory, ye shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.* Apoc. 5. 12. Mar. 19. 28. 25. 31. 26. 64.

In which places, as in others of the same importance, it is signified generally, that beside the dominion, naturally belonging to our Saviour as God, there hath been conferred on him as man an universal dominion over all things in regard to what as man he did and suffered; and that in him (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* observeth and discourseth) that hath been signally fulfilled, which the *Psalmist* acknowledgeth, and praiseth God for, in respect to man: *Thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hand, and didst put all things in subjection under his feet.* Heb. 2. 7, 8. Psal. 8. 7.

In him also was accomplished the prophetical vision of *Daniel: I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of man — And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed.* Dan. 7. 13, 14.

It is also particularly expressed of him, that to him as Man is committed a power legislative; *I say unto you,* I command you, is the style he commonly used: and, *The Son of man* (said he) *is Lord of the Sabbath* (that is, hath a power to dispense with the observation thereof, or to abrogate the positive law concerning it; which by parity of reason infers a general power of constituting and rescinding Laws of the like nature.) Joh. 15. 10. 12. 14.

The prerogative also of remitting sins was given him: *That ye may* (saith he) *know, that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins* (*then saith he to the sick of the palsie*) *arise, take up thy bed and walk:* and, *The God of our fathers* (saith S. *Peter*) *hath raised Jesus, whom ye slew, and hanged on a tree; him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince, and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and remission of sins.* Matt. 9. 6. Luc. 5. 24. Acts. 5. 30, 31.

The administration of justice and judgment Act. 11. 42. 17. 31. he thus also hath: for he is, ὡρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ κριτὴς, *Ordained by God the judge of quick and dead;* God hath appointed to judge the world, ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισε, *by the man whom he hath ordained: The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment to the Son — and hath given him authority to execute judgment also,* ὅτι υἱὸς ἀνθρώπου ἐστὶ *because,* or whereas *he is the Son of man:* So also for the prerogative of distributing rewards, and inflicting punishments: *The Son of man* (saith he) *shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels, and reward every man according to his work.* Joh. 5. 22. 27. Matt. 16. 27.

Thus by emphatical expression it is signified, that Christ, *as man,* is our *Lord,* by God's appointment and donation. We may also consider, that our Saviour *as the Son of David,* and consequently by a right of succession, according to divine ordination, *as King of Israel* (to the which all Christians are become Proselytes; for προσεληλύθατε Σιὼν ὄρει, *Ye are Proselytes to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Hierusalem,* saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) is our Lord; according to that of the Angel to the Blessed Virgin: *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give him the throne of David his Father; and he shall reign over the house of Israel for ever and ever: Of the encrease of his government there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his Kingdom to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever:* so *Esay* foretold of him; and many like passages occur in other Prophets. Heb. 12. 22. Luc. 1. 32. Isa. 9. 7. Acts. 2. 30.

3. He

3. He also considered as Θεάνθρωπος (*as God and man*, united in one Person) is plainly our Lord. For whatever naturally did appertain to God, whatever freely was (in way of gift or reward) communicated to man, doth accrue to the person, and is attributed thereto in consequence of the union *hypostatical*, or personal. It was indeed by virtue thereof, that *the man Christ Jesus* became capable of so high preferments; where-
Acts 10. 36. fore most properly upon this consideration is Christ *the Lord of all*, as
1 Cor. 15. 27. S. *Peter* styles him; *having all things (him onely excepted, who did subject all things to him) put under his feet.*

4. If we also consider him as *Jesus*, our Saviour, that notion doth involve acts of dominion, and thence resulteth a title thereto: Nothing more becomes a *Lord*, than to protect, and save; none better deserves the right, and the name of a *Lord*, than a Saviour; wherefore those
Isa 43. 11. titles are well conjoined: *I am the Lord, and beside me there is no Sa-*
Acts 5. 31. *viour*, saith God in *Isay* of himself; and, *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince, and a Saviour to his right hand*, saith Saint *Peter* concerning *Jesus*.

5. Likewise if he be considered as *the Christ*, that especially implieth him anointed, and consecrated to sovereign dominion, as King of the Church: well therefore did the Angel express his joyfull message when
Luc. 2. 11. he told the shepherds: *I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people; for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord:* and S. *Peter* well joined them, saying:
Acts 2. 36. *Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.* Thus in all respects is *Christ* our *Lord*.

III. Let us also farther briefly survey the several grounds upon which dominion may be built, and we shall see, that upon all accounts he is our *Lord*.

1. An uncontrollable power and ability to govern is one certain ground of dominion; he that is endewed therewith, it is necessary that we should submit to him, it is reasonable willingly to admit him for our Lord: Persons so qualified *Aristotle* telleth us have a natural title to dominion; as on the contrary persons weak (in power or in wisedom) unable to protect themselves, and unfit to manage things are naturally subjects and servants. This ground eminently agrees to him, as being by nature the Almighty God, who can
Joh. 13. 3. doe all things, whom nothing can resist; and also for that *all things are given into his hand*, all things are put under his feet. Hence he is most
Matth. 16. 18. able to protect us; *the gates of hell cannot prevail against his Church*;
Joh 10. 28. *none can snatch us out of his hand; he is able to save to the uttermost them*
Heb. 7. 25. *that come to God through him.*

Ὁ πρῶτος (ὡς ἔοικεν) καὶ κυριώτατος νόμος, τῷ σώζειν δεσπόζῃ, ἢ σώζειν δεσπόμενον ἄρχοντα καὶ φύσιν ἐπιδιδοῦσι. Plut. *in* Pelop.

Προσήκει γὰρ ἀεὶ τὸ κρεῖττον καὶ φύσιν ἡγεῖσθαι τῷ χείρονι.—Clem. Alex. *Strom.* 7. (*pag.* 506.)

Τὸ δεσπόζον φύσει προτερεῖν ἄρχον φύσει, καὶ δεσπόζον φύσει. Arist. *Pol.* 1. 1, 3, 4.

2. To make, to preserve, to provide and dispense maintenance are also clear grounds of dominion; for what can we more justly claim dominion over, than over our own inventions and works; over that which we continually keep and nourish; over that which wholly depends upon
Acts. 17. 28. us, and subsists merely by our pleasure? Since then *in him we live, and move, and have our being*; since we have derived all our being from him (our being natural as men, and spiritual as Christians) and are by him,
Heb. 1. 3: *who upholdeth all things*, sustained therein; since as to all our powers,
Col. 1. 17. and in all our actions we depend upon him; for *without him we can doe*
Joh. 15. 5. *nothing*, and *all our sufficiency is of him*; he surely is our Lord, having
2 Cor. 3. 5. an

an obsolute right to dispose of us, to order us, and to use us, according to his discretion and pleasure. We thence have reason to render that acknowledgment of the *Elders* in the *Revelation* to him: *Worthy art thou; O Lord, to receive the glory, and the honour, and the power; for thou hast created all things, and for thy will they are, and they were created*; to confess, and celebrate him as our Lord, for that, as it is in the *Psalm*, *It is he that made us, and not we our selves we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.* * Thus by birth, and privilege of nature, as the Son of God, heir apparent and consort of eternal Majesty; thus also concurring with his Father in the divinest actions of creation and providence is *Jesus Christ*, the only Son of God, *our Lord.*

Apo. 4. 11.

Psal. 100. 3.

* Χειρὶς φύσει κύειον, ᾗ βασιλὶς αἰδίῳ ὤν, οὐχ ὅτε ἐποιήλεια μᾶλλον γίνεται κύειον· ἔνθ' τότε ἀρχὴν λαμβάνει τὸ εἶ κύειον, ᾗ βασιλεὺς, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἐστὶν ἀεὶ τοῦτο ᾗ τότε καὶ αἰτίαν ποιήσαι. ᾗ λυτρωσάμενον πάντας γίνεται ᾗ ὅτως ζῶντων ᾗ νεκρῶν κύειον. Ath. *Orat.* 3. *in Ar. pag.* 385.

But beside these natural grounds of dominion over us, there are several others considerable, each of them according to the standing rules of justice and equity, sufficient to found a good title thereto. We (considering our selves as the sons of *Adam*, in that state wherein Christ found us, or wherein we should now be, if he had not vouchsafed to come and redeem us) had attempted to withdraw our selves from our due subjection to God by wilful rebellion and disobedience, we thence had forfeited the benefit of God's favourable protection and providence for our good; we had become Outlaws, dead in law; *(dead in trespasses and sins)* we instead of being subjects and servants of God were become (or should have been) *aliens, and enemies to God by wicked works*, according to the natural *blindness of our minds not knowing* (or acknowledging) *God*; in our affections estranged and averse from him, in our practice opposite to his holy will and righteous laws, we in a manner were got out of God's possession; were in respect to him become imbecil and *lost*: we were *like sheep gone astray* out of the fold of his gracious care and governance; we had got other Masters, and were come into other hands; like those who in the Prophet confess; *O Lord our God, other Lords besides thee have had dominion over us.* The Devil had got us into his power; we were *captivated* (or taken alive, as S. *Paul* phraseth it, ἐζωγρημένοι) *at his will*; we were detained under wretched subjection, overpowred, and oppressed by him; who therefore is called *the Prince*, and the *God of this world*; to whose suggestions it hearkned, whose will it observed, whom it was prone even to worship and adore. The world also (whose *friendship is enmity to God*, which *all lieth in wickedness)* had prevailed over us, so as *to walk according to it*; to be governed by its corrupt principles, and vicious practices; to be driven by its force, and drawn by its allurement into evil. we were captives, and slaves also *to the law of sin ruling in our members*; *serving divers lusts and pleasures*; being in our actions guided by a *carnal mind*, opposite to God and goodness; swayed by sensual appetites, and hurried by violent passions to what is bad. This was the condition of mankind generally when Christ came, and would have so continued; but out of it he came to deliver us; by the merit of his blood, and power of his grace, to free us from the oppressions of all those usurping powers; to recover and restore us into the propriety, possession and protection of God. *He came to seek and to save that which was lost: to save us from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; to deliver us out of the power of darkness, and to translate us into his* own *Kingdom*; the kingdom *of righteousness, peace and joy.* So that he hath acquired us to himself; we being now περιποίησις, *an acquist* made by him (as S. *Paul* calleth us) and λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν (as S. *Peter* speaks) *a peo-*

Eph. 2. 1, 5.

Col. 1. 21.

Rom. 8. 7, 8, 9.

Luc. 19. 10.

Matt. 18. 11.

Jo. 6. 15. 24.

Ps. 119. 176.

Isa. 26. 13.

2 Tim. 2. 26.

Act. 10. 38.

Col. 2. 3.

John 14. 30. 16. 11.

Eph. 6. 12.

2. 2.

2 Cor. 4. 4.

Jam. 4. 4.

1 John 2. 15.

1 John 5. 19.

Eph. 2. 2.

Rom. 7. 23. 6. 12, 16, &c.

Tit. 3. 3.

Rom. 8. 7, 8.

Luc. 19. 10.

Matt. 10. 6.

Luc. 1. 71.

Col. 1. 13.

Rom. 14. 17.

Eph. 1. 14.

1 Pet. 2. 9. *a people by acquisition* peculiarly appertaining to him: and divers ways we have been acquired to him, as to our Lord.

3. He hath acquired us by free donation from God his Father; for John 17. 2. 13. 3. Eph. 1. 22. *God hath given him power over all flesh; God hath delivered all things into his hand; God hath subjected all things under his feet.* Peculiarly God hath given unto him those who comply with his gracious invitations Joh. 10. 27. and suggestions; his *sheep, that hear his voice, and follow him*; them hath God given him, to govern them with especial favour, and keep 17. 12, 6. 6. 39. them with a particular care; *Whom* (saith he) *thou hast given me, I have kept*; and, *This is the will of the Father that sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing.*

4. Again, he hath acquired us by just *right* of *conquest*, having subdued those enemies, unto whom (partly by their fraud and violence, partly from our own will and consent) we did live enslaved and addicted: them he vanquished, *having spoiled principalities, and powers, and made a shew of them, openly triumphing over them.* Whence we rightly fall under subjection to him, as accessions to his victory, having formerly belonged to his enemies, and having by his mercy been preserved: he might justly have deprived us of liberty, and of life; might have utterly destroyed us, or have detained us in woful misery, as dependents upon, and partizans with his foes; our selves together with them being Rom. 5. 8, 10. found in open hostility against him; but *according to his great mercy he saved us*; and did put us into a capacity of a free, comfortable and happy Col. 1. 21. Eph. 1. 8. Titus 3. 3. life under him; *calling us to his kingdom and glory.* We therefore being 1 Thess. 2. 12. *subacti potentiâ* (subdued by his power) become *jure subditi* (in right subject to him) [being *servati* we are made *servi*;] being saved from death by him, we according to justice and reason become vassals to him, so that all our life should be devoted to his service; that (as it is in the Luc. 1. 74. hymn *Benedictus*) *being delivered out of the hands of our enemies* (his enemies, and our enemies also no less in truth and effect) *we should serve him without fear.*

5. He hath also farther acquired us to himself by *purchase*; having by a great price bought us; ransomed us out of sad captivity and redeemed us from grievous punishment due to us. We, as heinous sinners and rebels, had forfeited our lives to God's law, and were sentenced unto a miserable death; we had lost our liberty, and were throne into a Rom. 11. 32. grievous prison, fettered in guilt, lying under wrath, and reserved to pu- 3. 13. Gal. 3. 22. nishment unavoidable; we were stripped of all goods, all comfort, all hope and remedy: such was the case of man, when he procured a redemption, a pardon, a deliverance and restitution for us; delivering up himself a *ransome for us all*; undergoing a punishment for our sins, discharging Rom. 8. 34. our debts, propitiating divine justice, acquitting us from all claims and Acts. 20. 28. pretences upon us; yea meriting for us a better state than we did ever 1 Pet. 1. 18. before stand in; Thus *he purchased his Church with his own blood*: 1 Cor. 6. 20. 7. 33. whence, as S. *Paul* argues, *we were not our own, for we are bought with a price.* In requital for such mercies and favours so unexpressibly great, we cannot, either in gratitude or justice, owe less than our selves to be rendred up wholly to his dominion and disposal; it is our duty therefore to be his subjects and servants, and it was indeed the intent of his doing so much for us, that we should be so: he did all *gratis* (most freely) as to any precedent motive beside his own Rom. 14. 9. goodness, but he would not do it fruitlessly, as to effect: *To this end* (saith S. *Paul*) *Christ both died, rose and revived, that he might be Lord both*

Οὐ γὰρ ἐρυθρὰν, καὶ γῆν, καὶ θάλασσαν δῶρ, ἀλλὰ τὸ πάντων τούτων τιμιώτερον, τὸ ἑαυτοῦ αἷμα καταδεὶς, ὕτως ἡμᾶς ἐξηγόρασε. Chrys. Ant. 21.

both of the dead and living. He died for all, that they, which henceforth live, should not live to themselves, but unto him which died for them: and, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity,* Tit. 2. 14. *and purify to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

6. He likewise acquired a Lordship over us by desert, and as a reward from God, sutable to his performances of obedience and patience, highly satisfactory and acceptable to God. *For this the Father loves me, because* John 10. 17. *I lay down my life, that I may take it again: He humbled himself, becoming* Phil. 2. 8. *obedient to the death of the cross; therefore also did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name. For the joy that was set before him, he en-* Heb. 12. 2. *dured the cross, and having despised the shame, sate down at the right hand of the glory of God. We see Jesus for the sufferances of death crowned with* Heb. 2. 9. *glory and honour. He drank of the brook in the way, therefore he hath lifted* Psal. 110. 7. *up his head. Because he poured out his soul unto death; therefore did God* Es. 53. 12. *divide him a portion with the great, and he did divide the spoil with the strong;* as the *Prophet* expresseth it.

7. We may add, that he hath acquired a good right and title to dominion over us, as our continual most munificent benefactour; by the great benefits he bestoweth on us, by the ample hire, and large recompence he pays us. He affords us a sure protection under him, and a liberal maintenance; high privileges, and ample rewards for our service: It is no *Egyptian* bondage that he would detain us in, requiring hard labour, and yielding no comfort or recompence, but it is a most beneficial and fruitful service. Christ hath promised *to withhold no good thing* from Psal. 84. 11. his servants; nothing requisite for the support or convenience even of 34. 9, 10. this temporal life (for to them *who seek the Kingdom of God, and its* Matt. 6. 33. *righteousness, even all these things shall be added,* or cast in) but especi- Rom. 8. 28. ally most inestimable precious recompences he hath promised, and will certainly bestow in spiritual and eternal blessings: *He will render to every* 2 Peter 1. 4. *man according to his works; to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life;* saith S. *Paul;* Rom. 2. 6. and, *Being freed from sin* (saith he again) *and made servants to God, ye* Rom. 6. 22. *have your fruit unto sanctification, and in the end everlasting life:* a fruit to sanctification, that is, all benefits conducing to our spiritual welfare here, and hereafter a life in perpetual joy and happiness. To them who have been diligent in performing their tasks, and improving their talents committed to them now for his interest, and honour, he will one day say: *Well done good and faithful servants enter into your Master's* Matt. 25. 21. *joy:* and, *Blessed* (saith our good Master) *are ye, when men shall revile* Apoc. 11. 18. *you, and speak all manner of evil against you falsly for my sake; Rejoyce, and be exceeding glad, for great shall your reward be in heaven.* Now Matt. 5. 12. he that is at such care and charges for us; who feeds and furnishes us so plentifully, who rewards our small pains, our poor works, our unprofitable services (such indeed we must confess all that we can doe to be) with so high and bountiful wages, him surely most justly we should esteem, and most willingly call our good *Lord,* and Master.

8. Yea farther yet, our Saviour *Jesus,* is not onely our Lord by nature, and by acquisition in so many ways (by various performances, deserts and obligations put on us) but he is also so by our own deeds, by most free and voluntary, most formal and solemn, and therefore most obligatory acts of ours. He is our Lord and King by election; we finding our selves oppressed by cruel tyrants and enemies; groaning under intolerable slaveries, loa-

Καθάπερ ἡμεῖς οἰκέτας ἀγοράζοντες, αὐτὸς τὸς πωλυμένους πέπρεσθαι ἐρωτῶμεν εἰ βέλονται ἡμῖν δυλεύσαι· ὅτω καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς ποιεῖ ἐπειδὴν, &c ἐ γὰρ καταναγκασμένη ἡ δεσποτεία αὐτῦ ἐστι, &c. Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 21.

ded with heavy burthens, plunged into grievous distresses, tormented with anxious fears, regrets and sorrows, had our recourse unto him, upon his gracious invitation, offering us deliverance, ease and refreshment under his most equal and gentle government: *Come unto me all ye that labour, and are heavy laden: and I will give you rest —— Take my yoke upon you; —— for my yoke is easie, and my burthen light*; so he was pleased to invite us; and so we did, or have at least seemed and pretended to undergo his yoke, freely submitting to his government: We have vowed perpetual allegiance and fealty to him, as to our lawful Prince; we have promised entire subjection to his will, and sincere obedience to his laws; we have engaged forsaking all things to follow him; to follow him as our Captain, and to fight resolutely under his banners against the common enemies of his glory, and our salvation. We did συμφωνεῖν (as it is in the *Parable*) *contract*, and agree with him upon certain conditions and considerations, most advantageous to our selves, to be his faithful servants, and diligently to perform his work: We renounced all other Masters; yea resigned up all claim to any liberty or power over our selves; becoming absolutely devoted to his will and command: This we did at our Baptism, in most expres and solemn manner, and in every religious performance we confirm our obligation; when we acknowledge his right over us, and our duty toward him; when we implore his protection, his succour, and his mercy; when we promise our humble respect and obedience to him: if our daily confessions do signifie any thing, if our vows and protestations have any truth or heart in them; if our prayers are serious, or praises are hearty, our communions have in them any thing of good earnest and sincerity; we do by them continually tie faster the band of this relation and duty toward him; he by our renewed choices, and consents, and promises, and acknowledgments doth appear to be our Lord. But let thus much suffice for explication of this point; or for considering upon what grounds *Jesus Christ*, the only Son of God is our *Lord*: Now for practical applplication of the point thereof.

Matt. 11. 28.

2 Tim. 2. 3. 4. 8.

Matt. 20. 2.

Chrys. Ἀνδρ. 21.

1. The general influence which this doctrine may and should have upon our practice is very obvious and palpable. If we are truly persuaded, that Christ is our Lord and Master, we must then see our selves obliged humbly to submit unto, and carefully to observe his will; to attend unto, and to obey his law, with all readiness and diligence: for, *Why call ye me Lord, Lord; and doe not the things that I say*, is the expostulation of our Lord himself, implying it to be a vain and absurd profession, an irrational and illusive pretence we make, when we avow and invoke him as our Lord, but withall disclaim his authority in our practice, by slothfully neglecting, or wilfully disobeying his commands: *Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doth the will of my father, which is in heaven*; that is, not he that makes loud and eager professions (crying Lord, over and over again) is in God's esteem a loyal subject, or faithful servant, or shall obtain the rewards assigned to such; but he that, although perhaps more sparing in words and pretences doth really his duty, and performs the will of God. *Many* (saith our *Saviour* again) *shall in that day* (in that great day of final account and recompence) *say unto me, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy name prophecyed, and in thy name cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? and then will I profess unto them; I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* Not only bare professions and acknowledgments are insufficient,

Luc. 6. 46.

Matt. 7. 21.

* Matt. 21. 22. Luc. 13. 25.

sufficient, but even the faireſt and moſt plauſible actions done in the name of Chriſt will avail nothing, without real obedience to the law of Chriſt; even then, when ſuch actions are performed, Chriſt doth not know them; that is, doth not eſteem them his ſervants; the working of iniquity rendring them uncapable of that name and privilege. Such perſons do, as S. *Paul* ſpeaks, *profeſs to know him* (or acknowledge him as their Lord) *but with their works they deny him*; *who are diſobedient, and to every good work reprobate* (that is, upon trial found bad and falſe) *they* (as S. *Peter* ſays) *deny the Lord that bought them. Do ye not know* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *that to whom ye yield your ſelves ſervants to obey, his ſervants ye are, whom ye obey?* and, *Every one* (ſaith our *Saviour*) *that doeth ſin, is the ſervant of ſin*; and, *By whom* (ſaith S. *Peter*) *a man is overcome, to him he is made a ſervant, or enſlaved* (δεδούλωται.) 'Tis not what we ſay, but what we doe; not what we would ſeem, but what we indeed are, doth really conſtitute, and truly denominate us ſervants: we not onely ſhall loſe the rewards and privileges granted to the ſervants of Chriſt, but we do even forfeit all claim to the very name if we diſobey his commands, being indeed properly ſervants to thoſe luſts which ſway us; to that Devil, whoſe pleaſure we fulfill; to that world, whoſe bad manners we follow: we do but invade and uſurp the name of Chriſtians, if our practice is not conformed to the precepts of our Lord.

Tit. 1. 16. 2 Pet. 1. 16. Rom. 6. 16. John 8. 34. 2 Pet. 2. 19.

Πάντιμον καὶ ἔνδοξον, καὶ ζωοπρεπὲς σημεῖον *Mar. Lugd. Euſeb.* 5. 2.

Mendacium eſt Chriſtianum ſe dicere, & opera Chriſti non facere. Ambr.

'Tis a lye to call ones ſelf a Chriſtian,

and not to doe the works of Chriſt, as *S.* Ambr. *ſaith. Omnino nihil prodeſt nomen ſanctum habere ſine moribus; quia vita à profeſſione diſcordans abrogat illuſtris tituli honorem per indignorum actuum vilitatem.* Salv. *de. Gub. Dei* 3. *ſub fin.*

2. Indeed the conſideration of this point doth clearly demonſtrate to us the great heinouſneſs of ſin; how many follies, iniquities, baſeneſſes and ingratitudes lie complicated therein: the madneſs of oppoſing irreſiſtible power, and diſſenting from infallible wiſdom; the unworthineſs of offending and abuſing immenſe goodneſs; the injuſtice and diſloyalty which are couched in the diſobedience of him, who by ſo many titles, and upon ſo many obligations is our Lord; the abuſiveneſs of evacuating all his laborious and expenſive deſigns in acquiring us; the levity and giddineſs of diſavowing him by our practice, whom we ſo often have acknowledged our Lord, and vowed entire ſubjection unto.

3. Again, if Chriſt be our Lord, then are we not our own Lords, or our own men; we are not at liberty, or at our own diſpoſal as to our perſons, or our actions: thoſe rules of the civil Law, *that a ſervant can poſſeſs nothing of his own, that no profit can ſimply accrue to him*, but all in reſult muſt goe to his Lord; that he is reckoned no body in law; and the like, do moſt perfectly agree to us in regard to Chriſt, who is upon ſo many accounts abſolutely our Lord, infinitely more than one man can be to another. We conſequently muſt not think to have our own wills, we muſt not attend our own buſineſs, we muſt not pleaſe our own appetites, or gratify our own deſires, or enjoy our own pleaſures, or follow our own fancies, or regard our own profits, or ſeek our own honour; we muſt not undertake or proſecute any thing merely our own, or farther than doing ſo is ſubordinate unto, or conſiſtent with the ſervice, intereſt and glory of our Lord: otherwiſe we do conſtitute our ſelves the Lords and Maſters, in effect renouncing and caſting off him: if he be truly our Lord, it is his will, and word, that ſhould be the rule of all our actions; which we ſhould diligently attend unto, which we ſhould readily obſerve; it is his buſineſs, that we ſhould with eſpecial care mind, and moſt earneſtly proſecute; it is his advantage and credit

Ὁ δοῦλος οὐ μόνον οὐδὲν κτᾶται, οὐδὲ ἔστιν, ἀλλ' ὅλος ἐκείνου. Ariſt. *Pol.* 1. 3.

Τῷ δούλῳ τὸ ζῆν μὴ ὡς ἔθέλεσθαι. Ariſt. *Pol.* 6. 2.

credit, that we ſhould propound unto our ſelves, as the main aims of all our endeavours. Whatever we deſign or undertake of moment, we ſhould do it with this formal conſideration and reference; doing it as the ſervants of Chriſt; from conſcience of our duty to him, with intention therein to ſerve him, with expectation of reward onely from
1 Cor. 10. 31. him; according to thoſe Apoſtolical precepts: *Whether we eat, or drink,*
1 Cor. 6. 20. *or whatever we doe, we ſhould doe all to the glory of our Lord:* We muſt
2 Cor. 5. 15. *glorifie him with our bodies, and our ſpirits, which are his.* We muſt *not live to our ſelves, but to him that died, and roſe again for us:* Since *whether we live or die* (that is, whatever action we ſet upon relating either to life or death) *we are the Lords*; we ſhould direct all to his honour profit and ſervice.

4. If Chriſt be our Lord (abſolutely and entirely ſuch) then can we have no other Lords whatever, in oppoſition to him, or in competition with him; or otherwiſe any way than in ſubordination, and ſubſerviency to him: *No man* (as he doth himſelf tell us) *can ſerve two Lords*; Mat. 6. 24. that is, two Lords having collateral, or equal authority; their injunctions will interfere, oppoſe or ſupplant one the other; our affections will incline to one more than to the other; at leaſt we ſhall be detained in hovering ſuſpence; our leiſure, our care, our endeavour being employed in the ſervice or attendance of one will force us to neglect and diſappoint the other; *Ye cannot ſerve God and Mammon*; ſerving wealth (that is, eagerly affecting it, and earneſtly purſuing it) is inconſiſtent with our duty to Chriſt; the like may be ſaid of honour, of pleaſure, of curioſity, of any worldly thing; for, *He that will be a friend of the world* Jam. 4. 4. καθίσταται. *is thereby* (ſaith S. *James*) *conſtituted an enemy of God*; and if he thereby be made an enemy, he ſurely can be no good ſervant; a ſervant being (as the Philoſopher calls him) *humilis amicus, a meaner ſort of friend*; who performeth ſervice out of good-will and affection; like S. *Paul*, who diſcharged that high and laborious ſervice, of preaching the Goſpel, incumbent on him, and of that kindly neceſſity which he ex-
2 Cor. 5. 14. preſſes, ſaying, *The love of Chriſt conſtrains me*; or as S. *Peter* injoins,
2 Cor. 9. 17. thoſe particular ſervants of Chriſt (employed by him in teaching and
1 Pet. 5. 2. guiding his people) to doe their duty, μὴ ἀναγκαστῶς, ἀλλ' ἑκουσίως, *not by conſtraint, but willingly*; *not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind*; or
Eph. 6. 7. as S. *Paul* chargeth all ſervants, μετ' εὐνοίας δουλεύειν, *to ſerve with good will, as to the Lord, and not to men.* It is indeed the proper nature, and the neceſſary condition of this ſervice, that we decline, forſake, renounce, deteſt all other obligations, all affections, all encumbrances, which may
Lu. 14. 33. avert us from a cloſe adherence thereto. *Whoever* (ſaith he) *he be of you, that forſaketh not* (or, who renounceth not, who biddeth not farewell to, ὃς οὐκ ἀποτάσσεται) *all that he hath, cannot be my diſciple*; or
Luc. 14. 26. my follower and ſervant: *If any man cometh after me, and do not hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers, and ſiſters, yea and his own life, he cannot be my diſciple*; he cannot indeed truly and heartily be ſo, who in love and obſervance of Chriſt will not readily forſake and loſe all.

5. Particularly therefore, if Chriſt be our Lord, we are thereby diſobliged, yea we are indeed prohibited from pleaſing or humouring men, ſo as to obey any command, to comply with any deſire, or to follow any cuſtom of theirs, which is repugnant to the will or precept of
Gal. 1. 10. Chriſt: *If* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *I did yet pleaſe men* (that is, humour, ſooth or flatter them, ſo the word ἀρέσκειν doth import) *I were not the ſervant of Chriſt*; that is, I were not ſuch in effect, I did in ſo doing not behave

my

my self as a servant of Christ; as it becomes such an one, and as such an one is obliged to doe. And, *Ye* (saith he again) *are bought with a price, be not the servants of men* or, *ye are not the servants of man*, so the words will bear rendring) that is, ye therefore do not, or ye therefore ought not to perform service to men, absolutely as such, or with ultimate relation unto them; but when ye lawfully, and allowably doe it, ye doe it out of conscience, and regard to Christ as his servants. We may indeed, yea in duty we must obey men humbly and willingly, diligently and faithfully in our stations, and according to our conditions, as we are placed and called in this world, either as subjects or servants; but we must do this in subordination to our principal, and supreme Lord; in obedience to his command, and with regard to his service; so we are taught by S. *Paul: Servants* (saith he) *obey your Masters according to the flesh with fear and trembling* (that is very respectfully and carefully) *in singleness of heart, as to Christ; not in eye-service, as menpleasers, but as the servants of Christ; doing the will of God from the soul; serving with good will as to the Lord, and not unto men*: and, *Be subject* (saith S. *Peter*) *to every humane constitution διὰ τὸν Κύριον, for the Lord*; (that is, out of conscientious regard, or affection to the Lord; because he is our Lord) *as free, and not having your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the seuvrnts of God.* Yea, *Whatsoever* (saith that wise instructour, S. *Paul* again) *ye doe, doe it heartily as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive back the recompence of inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ.*

1 Cor. 7. 23. Eph. 6. 5, 6, 7. 1 Pet. 2. 13. 16. Col. 3. 23, 24.

6. It is we see (which may be another improvement of this consideration) not onely an engagement, but an encouragement to the performance of all duty; particularly to the performance of those hard duties (so contrary to natural will and stomach) chearfull obedience and submission to men; who often, as S. *Peter* intimates, are σκολιοὶ, *crooked*, or untoward, and harsh in their dealings with their servants; to whom yet upon this consideration he enjoins us willingly to yield obeisance, no less than to *the good and gentle*; for that in this and all other performances of duty we do serve a most equal and kind Master, who will graciously accept our service, and abundantly requite it; a Lord that will not suffer his servants to want any needfull sustenance, any fit encouragement, any just protection or assistance, who will not onely faithfully pay them their promised allowance, but will advance them to the highest preferment imaginable. No man ever had reason to complain with them in the Prophet: *It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances?* No; The Devil himself, with envy and regret observing the benefits and blessings which the pious man enjoyed in regard to his faithfull service, could not but say; *Doth Job serve God for nought; hast thou not made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side! thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is encreased in the land.* No wonder, argued the detracting Spirit, and little thank or praise is due to a servant, whose service is so bountifully rewarded. Indeed our Lord is not onely just and faithfull so as to render unto every man ἴδιον μισθὸν κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον, *a proper reward answerable to his proper pains*; but he is exceedingly, beyond expression, liberal in bestowing on his servants retributions infinitely surpassing the desert and worth of all their labours: for their small, weak, faint, imperfect and transitory endeavours (by all which he is indeed really nothing the richer, or the greater) he returneth blessings in nature, in degree, in duration immensely great, pretious and glorious. He fails

Mal. 3. 14. Job 1. 9, 10. 1 Cor. 3. 8.

not

not here to feed them with food convenient, to cloath them decently, to ſupply all their needs, to comfort them in all diſtreſſes, to keep them in all ſafety, to deliver them from all evil; he afterwards conferreth on them a Kingdom, an incorruptible and unfading Crown; a ſtate of perfect joy and endleſs glory.

7. 'Tis a great comfort alſo for a Chriſtian (how mean and low ſoever in his worldly condition) to conſider the dignity and excellency of this his relation; how great, and how good a Lord he ſerveth; and
Apoc. 19. 16. the greateſt Princes are his fellow ſubjects (for *He is the King of Kings,*
Pſal. 72. 11. *and Lord of Lords*; *All kings ſhall fall down before him, all nations ſhall ſerve him.)* Yea, that the higheſt Angels are his fellow-ſervants (as
Apoc. 22. 8. the Angel in the *Revelation* told S. *John.)* That although his Lord be
Eph. 1. 20. ſo high in power and glory above all, yet he is ſo gracious, as not to
Luc. 1. 48. neglect or deſpiſe him; but condeſcendeth to regard the loweſt of his
Job 34. 19. ſervants with equal care and favour as the higheſt: *He accepteth not the perſons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they all are the work of his hands*, ſaid good *Elihu*; and they all, we might add, are the price of his bloud.

8. And as it is a comfort to the meaneſt, ſo it is no ſhame or diſparagement for the greateſt of men to ſerve ſuch a Lord; 'tis a relation in it ſelf more worthy and honourable than the higheſt dignity or preferment in the world: to wear a crown, how rich ſoever, to command the whole earth, to poſſeſs all the land, and all the gold under heaven, are beggarly trivial and ſordid things in compariſon thereto; a ſervant of Chriſt (the Apoſtolical ſtyle) is a ſtyle far more glorious than all thoſe windy Titles, which the greateſt Monarchs aſſume to themſelves; having ſuch a place in God's peculiar regard and care doth exceed all privileges and advantages, all glories and dignities, which any perſon is
Phil. 3. 8. capable of; Well therefore did S. *Paul* in reſpect to *the excellency of the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt his Lord* eſteem all ſuch things (all worldly privileges and benefits) *as loſs, and as dung*; as things detrimental and deſpicable; wiſely did the Holy Apoſtles forſake all things (all their deareſt relations, all their ſweeteſt enjoyments, all their ſecular occupations) to follow ſuch a Lord. *(Behold* ſaith S. *Peter, we have let go all things, and have followed thee.)* Moſt juſt and reaſonable are thoſe ſentences pronounced againſt thoſe vainly proud, or perverſly contumacious people,
Luc. 9. 26. who are aſhamed to obey him, or do reject his government: *Whoſoever ſhall be aſhamed of me, or of my words, him ſhall the ſon of man be aſhamed of, when he comes in the glory of himſelf, and of his father, and the holy angels.* Them who proudly diſdain to ſerve him here, will he with juſt, and ſad diſdain reject hereafter from his face and favour; yea with
Luc. 19. 27. dreadfull vengeance will he puniſh their perverſeneſs: *Thoſe mine enemies* (will he ſay) *that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and ſlay them before me.*

9. S. *Paul* alſo maketh uſe of this conſideration to preſs upon ſuperiours their duties toward their inferiours; their duties of equity, meek-
Col. 4. 1. neſs, kindneſs, mercy, pity, and all humanity. *Maſters* (ſaith he) *yield unto your ſervants that which is juſt, and equal, knowing that ye alſo*
Eph. 6. 9. *have a Maſter in heaven.* And, *Ye maſters* (ſaith he again) *doe the ſame things to them* (perform the like good offices, ſhew the ſame good will to your ſervants) *forbearing menaces, knowing that your Maſter alſo is in heaven, and there is no reſpect of perſons with him.* Thus in *Leviticus*
Lev. 42, 43, 55. God commandeth his people not to *rule over their ſervants with rigour*, aſſigning this reaſon, *for they are my ſervants* &c. And we know how

our

our Saviour, as he doth commend and bleſs thoſe wiſe and honeſt ſervants who being appointed over his houſhold (that is, being placed in any ſuperiour rank or charge) do behave themſelves juſtly and kindly to their fellow-ſervants, *diſpenſing to them their food in due ſeaſon*; ſo upon thoſe who injuriouſly or rudely do beat or abuſe their fellow-ſervants; who are harſh, rigorous or unmerciful in exactions of debt, or in any other dealings toward them; he denounceth ſevere chaſtiſement. *A ſervant of the Lord* (that is, one employed by Chriſt in any office or charge) *muſt not fight, but muſt be gentle unto all*, (ſaith S. *Paul*; ſuch indeed ſhould be the humility and goodneſs of Chriſtians one toward another, that the greateſt of them ſhould ſtoop to the meaneſt offices and expreſſions of good will to their brethren: *He* (ſaith our Lord) *that will be great among you, let him be your miniſter, and he that will be firſt of you, let him be your ſervant.*

Matt. 24. 45, 49. Matt. 18. 28, &c. 2 Tim. 2. 24. Matt. 10. 44.

10. The conſideration indeed of Chriſt being our Lord, is in general an inducement to charity, to all ſorts of charity. *We muſt* (ſaith Saint *Paul*) *walk worthy of our calling, with all lowlineſs of mind, and meekneſs, with long ſuffering, forbearing one another in love, endeavouring to keep the unity of ſpirit in the bond of peace*, becauſe *we are members of* the ſame *body, whereof Chriſt is the head*, and fellow-ſervants of the *ſame Lord*. 'Tis an endearing and obliging relation; it becometh us, and concerneth us, being ſo of one family, to be courteous and gentle, kind and helpful one to another; to maintain peace, quiet and love one with another; it is a juſt duty and reſpect to our common Maſter, who loveth order and peace, who hateth confuſion and diſſention in his houſe; who is himſelf full of charity toward every one of his, and therefore hath enjoined it as the eſpecial duty, hath declared it to be the moſt diſtinctive character of his ſervants and followers: *Hereby* (ſaith he) *ſhall all men know, that ye are my diſciples, if ye have love one to another.*

Eph. 4. 2, 5. 2 Cor. 13. 11. John 13. 35.

11. Particularly this conſideration doth oblige us to exerciſe that piece of charity, and of juſtice, which conſiſts in forbearing raſh and harſh cenſure; which practice is not only very uncharitable, and unjuſt toward our brethren, but it is alſo a wrongful and arrogant encroachment upon our Lord himſelf, unto whom only the right of deciſion in ſuch caſes doth appertain; unto whoſe infallible and impartial judgment both they and we are obnoxious: *Who art thou* (ſaith Saint *Paul*) *that judgeſt another's ſervant* (or domeſtick; ἀλλότριον οἰκέτην) *to his own maſter he ſtandeth or falleth.* And, *Why doſt thou judge thy brother, or why doſt thou ſet at nought thy brother:* and, *We ſhall all be preſented before the judgment ſeat of Chriſt. There is* (ſaith S. *James*) *one Lawgiver, who is able to ſave, and to deſtroy; who art thou that judgeſt another?* 'Tis, we ſee, an invading our Lord's right and authority, without moſt evident and reaſonable cauſe, to cenſure or condemn our fellow-ſervants.

Rom. 14. 4, 10. Jam. 4. 12.

12. The conſideration of this Point our Saviour doth alſo improve as an engagement to imitate himſelf in the practice of all vertue and piety; eſpecially in the practice of charity, humility and patience. It is proper for a ſervant to follow and attend upon his maſter in all places, and in all performances; to compoſe himſelf in behaviour to the manners and example; to conform himſelf to the garb and condition of his Lord: Is it not abſurd and unſeemly, that the ſervant ſhould be more ſtately, or more delicate than his maſter; that he ſhould ſlight thoſe, whom his maſter vouchſafes to reſpect; that he ſhould refuſe to under-

take those employments, should scorn to undergo those hardships, which his master doth willingly condescend unto? to such purpose our Saviour discourseth; impressing by this argument on his disciples the duties of humility, charity and patience by him exemplified for that very end: *Ye call me*, saith he *Master, and Lord; and ye say well, for so I am; if I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should doe as I have done to you.* And having directed his disciples to the patient enduring of reproaches, affronts and injuries put upon them, he enforces his precept by subjoining: *The disciple is not above his Master, nor the servant above his Lord; 'tis enough for the disciple to be as his Master, and the servant as his Lord*; that is, the servant in all reason ought to be very well content, if he find such usage as his Lord hath willingly and patiently undergone. And he thus again impresses these duties on them: *He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he that is chief, as he that doth serve: for whether is greater, he that sitteth at meet, or he that serveth? but I am among you as he that serveth.* Yea S. *John* raiseth this consideration so high, that he saith thus: *Because he laid down his life for us, we also ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

John 13. 3.

Matt. 10. 24. Luc. 6. 40. John 15. 20.

Luc. 22. 26. Matt. 20. 25.

(ὅτι.) 1 John 3. 16.

13. Finally, for our satisfaction and encouragement we may consider, that the service of Christ is rather indeed a great freedom than a service; it is a reducement into a most desirable estate, wherein we fully enjoy that wherein liberty is defined to consist, ἐξουσίαν αὐτοπραγίας, *power of doing whatever* (as reasonable and wise men) *we please* our selves to doe; wherein all things are lawful to us, excepting only such things as are unprofitable to us, or hurtful. What *Aristotle* made the character of a just Prince (whose government doth no-wise prejudice true liberty) that he doth not in his government chiefly aim at his own profit, but his Subjects good, is perfectly true of our Lord; he is indeed capable to receive no private benefit to himself, beside satisfaction in our welfare; all his laws and commands, all his administrations and proceedings are purely directed to our advantage. Even the statutes, which God gave to *Israel* by *Moses* are said to have been *commanded for their good*, not for any good that could accrue to God from their observance: much more are the laws of *Christ* purely such; conducing to the health, the safety, the peace, the comfort, the joy, the happiness both of our bodies and souls; of the present temporal life here, and of our immortal state hereafter: *His religion is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.* Well therefore might S. *James* call the Law of Christ *a perfect Law of liberty*; well might our *Saviour* say, *If the Son set you free, then are ye free indeed.* What the *Stoicks* vanted of themselves, the *Christian* modestly and truly may say, that he is the only freeman; 'Tis this Philosophy only, to which those words of *Seneca* may truly be applied: *You must serve Philosophy, that you may attain true liberty:* for, if to be above the reach of all considerable evil or mischief; if to be safe from all enemies, and secure from all impressions of fortune; if to have no reason much to fear, or much to grieve for any thing; if not to desire things base, or things immoderate; if to have an especial command over ones self is (as those philosophers define it) properly liberty; then is he most free that serves our Lord. If to be rescued from the servitude of

Qua est vera libertas? innocentia. Epict.

Deut. 10. 13 6. 24. Neh. 9. 13.

1 Tim. 4. 8.

Jam. 1. 25. John 8. 36.

Philosophiæ servias oportet, ut tibi contingat vera libertas. Sen. Ep. 8. & 88.

Non homines timere, non fortunam; nec turpia velle, nec immodica; in se ipsum habere maximam potestatem, &c. Sen. Ep. 75.

of disorderly passions and base vices is the greatest freedom, then the good Christian chiefly doth enjoy it. *A good man* (saith S. *Austin*) *although he serve, is free; a bad man, although he reign, is a slave; not of one man, but which is more grievous, of so many Lords, as of vices.* Such indeed is the benignity of our Lord, that he treats his faithful servants rather as friends, than as servants; *Ye are* (saith he) *my friends, if ye doe whatever I command you; I call you no more servants.* Yea he bears to them the affection of a brother, and affords them the honour to be so styled: *Go* (saith he, after his resurrection to *Mary Magdalen*) *to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father, to my God, and to your God*; and, Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην, *See ye what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the sons of God.*

Bonus etiamsi serviat, liber est; malus etiamsi regnet, servus est; nec unius hominis, sed quod gravius est tot dominorum quot vitiorum. Aug. de Civ. D. 4. 112.

John 15. 14.

John 20. 17.

1 John 3. 1.

Full of so many practical uses is this excellent Point; the which I leave to be farther deduced by your meditation.

Now, *The God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*; to whom be glory and praise for ever. *Amen.*

1 Thess. 5. 23.

Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost.

SERMON XXIII.

THE INCARNATION OF Our LORD.

MATTH. I. 20.

For that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost.

Τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν, ἐκ πνεύματός ἐστιν ἁγίου.

WIthout any preface, or circumstance of speech, we observe three particulars couched in these words. 1. The incarnation of Jesus our Lord, implied by the word τὸ γεννηθὲν, that *which is conceived*, or generated. 2. The principal efficient cause of this Incarnation the Holy Ghost; by whose immediate operation,

without any active influence of man, he was generated, *is of the Holy Ghoſt*. 3. The concurrence of the Bleſſed Virgin *Mary*, as the ſubject of that divine virtue and operation; he was *conceived in her*. Upon each of theſe particulars, being all of them conſiderable Points of that Faith, which we daily profeſs (and eſpecially proper ſubjects of our meditation at this time) I ſhall reflect, obſerving ſomewhat profitable for our edification both in way of right knowledge, and in tendency to practice.

John 1. 1, &c. 1 John 1. 1.

I. Our Saviour *Jeſus* was conceived and born; that is, the only Son of God, our Lord and Redeemer, the ſame who *was from the beginning*, and did (as S. *John* in the entrance of his Goſpel teacheth us) from all eternity *exiſt with God*, the eternal *word of God*, *by whom all things were made*, was *in the fulneſs of time* conceived and born; that is, had a production agreeable to the nature of man, becoming thereby truly and really a man, which wonderful myſtery is in Scripture by various phraſes expreſſed and implied; by the word being incarnated, that is *being made*, or becoming *fleſh*; *God being manifeſted in the fleſh*; *The Son of God being ſent in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh*; *partaking of fleſh and blood*; His *taking the form of a ſervant*, *being made in the likeneſs of men*, *being found in faſhion as a man*, *aſſuming the ſeed of Abraham*: His *deſcending from heaven*, *coming forth from the father*, *being ſent*, *and coming into the world*: *The day-ſpring from on high viſiting us*, *eternal life being manifeſted*; the reſult of what is ſignified by theſe, and the like expreſſions, that, The bleſſed and glorious perſon, who before from all eternity did ſubſiſt *in the form* or nature *of God*, being the Son of God, one in nature with his Father (the expreſs image, or exact character of his ſubſtance) did by a temporal generation truly become man, aſſuming humane nature into the unity of his Perſon; by a real conjunction and union thereof to the divine nature, in a manner incomprehenſible and ineffable. He did, I ſay, truly become man, *like unto us* in all things (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *ſin only excepted*, conſiſting as ſuch of all the eſſential ingredients of our nature; endued with all our properties and faculties, ſubject to all paſſions, all infirmities, all needs adherent, or incident to our nature and condition here.

John 1. 14. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Rom. 8. 3. Heb. 2. 14, 16. Phil. 2. 7, 8. John 3. 13, 31. 6. 33, 38, 50, 51, 58. 3. 17. 10. 36. 17. 18. 1 John 4. 2, 3, 9. Gal. 4. Jo. 16. 27, 28. Luc. 1. 78. 1 John 1. 2. Phil. 2. 7, 8. John 10. 30. 14. 9. 1 John 5. 7. Col. 1. 15. 2 Cor. 4. 4. Heb. 1. 3. Heb. 2. 17. 4. 15.

Vid. Athan. *in tract. cont.* Apollinar. Phil. 2. 8. Ἐν ὁμοιώματι ἀνθρώπων ὡς ἄνθρωπος. Rom. 8. 3.

He was not only (as the *Gnoſticks* and ſome other *Hereticks* have conceited) in ſhape and outward appearance (as a ſpectre, deluding mens ſight and fancy) but in moſt real truth a very perfect man; having a real body, figured and circumſcribed as ours, compacted of fleſh and bloud; viſible and tangible; which was nouriſhed and did grow, which needed and received ſuſtenance, which was tender and ſenſible, frail and paſſible; which was bruiſed with ſtripes, torn with ſcourges, pricked with thorns, pierced with nails, transfixed with a ſpear, which was mortal, and underwent death by expiring its breath, and being diſjoined from the ſoul that enlivened it. He had alſo a ſoul, endewed with the ſame faculties as ours; with an underſtanding, capable of learning and improvement (for, he was, as man, ignorant of ſome things, which he might know; and *He grew*, 'tis ſaid, *in wiſdom and in ſtature*) with a will, ſubject and ſubmiſſive to the divine will (for, *Let this cup*, ſaid he, *if it be poſſible*, *paſs from me*; *but however let not my will*, *but thy will be done*; and, *I ſeek not my own will*, *but the will of the Father which hath ſent me*) with ſeveral appetites, of meat, of drink, of ſleep and reſt (for we read that he was hungry, that he thirſted, that he was weary) yea with various paſſions and affections (φυσικὰ καὶ ἀδιάβλητα πάθη, I mean, that is, natural and irreprehenſible paſſions) and

Mark 13. 32. Luc. 2. 52. Matt. 26. 39. Luc. 22. 42. John 5. 30. Matt. 21. 18. John 4. 6, 7.

theſe

these of the most troublesome and afflictive sort, such as zeal, pity, sorrow; the which were sometime declared by very pathetical significations, and are expressed in high terms: as upon occasion of his friend *Lazarus* his death, 'tis said, *He groaned in spirit and was troubled*; He then, and upon other occasions out of pity and sorrow did *weep*; and ye know what excesses of sorrow, what anxieties and agonies, what tribulations, disturbances and amazements the *Evangelists*, using those very terms, describe him to have undergone at his passion; so that, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh, *We have not an High-Priest, that could not compassionate* (or sympathize with) *our infirmities, but who was in all points tempted* (or exercised and proved) *as we are, yet without sin.*

Matt. 16. 23. John 2. 17. Mar. 3. 5.

John 11. 33.

Περίλυπος. Matt. 26. 38.
Ἀδημονεῖν. Matt. 26. 37.
Ἀγωνία. Luc 22. 24.
Τετάραγται. Joh. 12. 27.
Ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι. Mar. 14. 33.
Πεπερασμός. Luc. 22. 28. Heb. 4. 15.

So it appeareth, that the Son of God (co-eternal and co-essential with his Father) became the Son of man; truly and entirely partaking of the nature and substance of man, deficient in no essential part, devoid of no property belonging to us; exempt from no imperfection or inconvenience consequent upon our nature, except only sin, the which is not a natural so much as a moral evil, did not arise from man's original nature, but proceedeth from his abused will, doth rather corrupt than constitute a man.

Now concerning this great dispensation several inquiries and considerations may be made, concerning the manner of it, how therein God did assume our nature; or how therein God and man subsist united; concerning the reason of it whence it proceeded, and why it was designed; concerning the use and influence of it, which it should have upon our practice.

1. As for the first Point, the manner of this mystery, we may well in discretion and modesty answer with the *Schoolman*; *It is not in man to define what manner of communication this is, whereby the humane nature is communicated to the word*; we cannot indeed otherwise than by negation determine, not otherwise than by comparison explain it. No words perhaps, which we do use to signifie our conceptions about these material and inferiour things, will perfectly and adequately sute to a mystery so much remote from the common objects of our knowledge, so far transcending our capacity; to affirm positively, that this wonderfull Incarnation did come to pass, that this incomprehensible and ineffable union doth persist in this or that manner may be rash and dangerous; it would cease to be admirable, if we could fully conceive or express it: but this justly and safely we may assert, that whatever manner of conception or expression about it doth plainly derogate from the divine perfections, or is irreconcileably repugnant to the nature of things, or disagreeth with the tenour of revealed truths evidently connected unto, or depending on this mystery; or which (either directly and immediately, or obliquely and by manifest consequence) doth contradict the language and doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, is to be rejected by us: whence we may for exclusion of errours and mistakes about this Point, with the Holy *Fathers*, and particularly with the great Council of *Chalcedon* assert, that in the Incarnation of our Lord the two natures, *divine*, and *humane* were united ἀσυγχύτως, ἀτρέπτως, ἀδιαιρέτως, ἀχωρίστως.

Cujusmodi sit hæc communicatio, quâ natura humana communicatur verbo, non est hominis definire. Alens.

Syn. Chalc. Acts. 5. (*fin.*) (*pag.* 340.)

1. The natures were, I say, united ἀσυγχύτως, that is, without any confusion, or commixtion; for such a way of blending would induce a third

third nature different from both, such as resulteth from the composition and contemperation of the elements into a mixed body; such a commixtion being supposed, our Lord would be neither God nor man, but another third kind of substance, such as must not without any ground or authority be supposed; that would destroy, diminish or alter the properties of each; which is unsound to say, and impossible to be, for the divine nature is not capable of any diminution or alteration: wherefore both natures in this mystery do subsist entire, distinct and unconfused, each retaining its essential and natural properties.

2. The Incarnation was performed ἀτρέπτως, that is without conversion or transmutation of one nature into another: The divinity could not be turned into humanity, for how could God (the eternal, self-subsistent, most simple and immutable *Jehovah*) as such, be any-wise changed or made, become infirm and passible, consist of body and soul, suffer and die? Nor could the humanity be turned into divinity; for how could that which did not subsist at all before the Incarnation, be therein converted into another thing? why should our Saviour ever be called man, when his humanity was by translation into divinity destroyed? why is it said, *the word was made flesh*, if the flesh was changed into the word? to omit, how impossible it is, that one Substance should be transmuted into another, especially a corporeal into a spiritual, a finite into an infinite; to omit likewise the many dangerous consequences of this position, and its inconsistency with many principal and plain doctrines of our religion, particularly the real passion and death of our Lord, which could not be incident to him otherwise than as retaining the true nature of man.

3. The natures were also joined ἀδιαιρέτως, undividedly, that is, so as they have not distinct subsistences, or do not constitute two persons: for there is but one *Christ*, one person, to whom, being God, and being Man, are truly and properly attributed.

4. We must also understand the natures to be united ἀχωρίστως, inseparably; so that they never are severed, the union is never dissolved; the same person never ceasing to be both God and Man; not even then, when our Lord as man did undergo death; for he raised himself from the dead, he reared the temple of his own body, being fallen: as being God he was able to raise himself, as being man he was capable to be raised by himself; the union between God and man persisting, when the union between humane body and soul was dissolved.

We might add, in farther exclusion of erroneous conceits, that this mysterious union was not made κατὰ παράσασιν, *by assistance*, or close presence onely, nor κατ' ἐνοίκησιν, merely *by inhabitation*, nor κατὰ σχέσιν, *by relation*, nor κατ' ἀξίαν, *by estimation*, nor καθ' ἁρμονίαν, *by conformity*, in will and practice, nor κατὰ ταυτοβυλίαν, *by consent*; as *Nestorius* and other heterodox Dogmatists anciently, in opposition to the Catholick exposition of this mystery did imagine; but it doth not seem worth the while to discuss those antiquated conceits, or with more subtilty to intrigue the Point.

Salmeron. *apud* Gerard. *in loc. Exeget. p.* 441. Bel.

As for illustration of it by comparison, I shall onely (passing over divers more wide and improper resemblances; such as those of *Bellarmine*, the union of a man's arm to his body, the incision of a bough into a tree, and the like) observe, that nature doth afford us one similitude very apposite for explication of this mysterious union; which is the union of a man's soul and body, whereby he becometh one Person: The soul and body are two substances, very different in kind, in properties, in dignity:

dignity: the one of it self, material, extended, divisible, passive and corruptible, lifeless and senseless; the other immaterial, indivisible, incorruptible, self-moving, endewed with life, knowledge, passion: both of them are also capable of separate existence, or of subsistence by themselves; yet are these two, although in a manner difficult for us to conceive or comprehend, closely united together, and do concur to the making up a man; and that so as to remain still in substance distinct, each retaining its natural properties, without any confusion, or any conversion of one into the other; so also that from them the same man receiveth the denominations of corporeal and spiritual, of mortal and immortal: In a like manner (although in a degree more admirable and incomprehensible) are the divine and humane natures conjoined in our Lord; for, as we hear in the *Athanasian* Creed, *As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.* So much for the manner.

2. As for the reason why the Son of God did assume our nature; the chiefest and clearest reason thereof was, God's design thereby to exercise and demonstrate his immense goodness, mercy and pity toward us; *So God loved the world, that he gave his onely begotten Son: In this the love of God was manifested, that God sent his onely begotten Son into the world, that we might live by him. Through the tender mercy of our God the day spring from on high did visit us:* It was χρηστότης καὶ φιλανθρωπία, the *benignity and philanthropy of God*, which induced him to engage his Son upon such a debasement and *exinanition* of himself, that we thereby might be raised to a capacity of salvation.

Joh. 3. 16. 1 Joh. 4. 9. Rom. 5. 8. 8. 32. Διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους θεῦ. Luc. 1. 78. Tit. 3. 4.

If we farther desire to contemplate the wisdom of God in this admirable proceeding; and to know, why God among other means and methods, alike (for all we can know) possible to him, did chuse in this way to transact our redemption; it may be answered, that it becometh us rather to adore the depth of God's wisdom herein, than to sound it, or to hope by searching to reach the bottom of it: yet some congruities of this method to the reason and exigency of things are in the Scripture intimated to us, and in some manner are discernible by us, sufficient to recommend the divine wisdom therein to our admiration; Reasons may be assigned why our Redeemer should be θεάνθρωπος, why God, why man. It well became God to stoop down thus, that as his goodness toward us was infinite, so the demonstrations thereof, to his glory and our benefit, should be answerably such; which perhaps could not otherwise be, than by such a condescension: As a Prince could not make any other so great attestation of favour to his vassal, as by descending from his Throne, laying aside his Majesty, putting himself into a like condition, conversing freely with him, subjecting himself to the same laws and duties, enduring the like hardships and inconveniencies with him.

God's choice is reason enough.

Nisi enim esset verus Deus, non adferret remedium, nisi esset homo verus non præberet exemplum. Leo. *M. de nat. Serm.* 1.

Eph. 1. 6. Εἰς ἔπαινον δόξης τῆς χάριτος αὐτοῦ.

It was expedient that our Redeemer should be God, that he might be able by his power to save us; to remove those huge obstacles that crossed our salvation, to subdue those potent enemies which opposed it; to command and conquer nature, to vanquish the powers of hell, to abolish death in our behalf. Ἔνδειξις δυναστείας.

It was requisite that he should be the co-essential natural Son of God, that by the nearness of his relation to God, by the supereminent dignity of his Person, by the immense value of his merit he might conciliate God's favour to us, fully appease his wrath incensed against us, and satisfy his justice abused by our offences.

It

It was convenient, that his doctrine should carry with it the highest certainty, and strongest efficacy; that his example should challenge the greatest regard and strictest imitation; that his laws should have supreme authority, and with greatest advantage oblige us; fit therefore it was that he should be God, and have the character of divinity stamped upon what he said and performed.

The redemption and salvation of man did import an honour too august for any creature to be dignified with; it was a work too difficult and mighty for any but God to atchieve; it was not proper that any creature should be principal in managing an affair of such height and importance: needfull and expedient therefore it was, that our Saviour should be God.

It was also requisite, upon many accounts, that he should be man: that by perfectly obeying God's commands, and submitting patiently to God's will as man, he might procure God's favour toward man; that as man had deeply wronged and offended God, so man also should highly content and please him; in S. *Paul's* language, that *as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners* (that is, were condemned and exposed to death, upon God's just displeasure for that one man's transgression, back'd with the like in his posterity) *so by the obedience of one man many should be made righteous* (that is, all who would imitate his obedience should be absolved from guilt, exempted from punishment, and received into grace; God being well pleased with and reconciled to mankind especially to his followers, in regard to that man's dutifull observance of his will.) Decent it was that as man did approve, so man also should *condemn sin in the flesh*, that as man by wilfull self-pleasing did incur misery, so by voluntary suffering he should recover happiness; Ἔπρεπε, * *It did* (as the *Apostle* saith) *become him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their Salvation perfect through suffering.*

Rom. 5. 19, &c.

He by his humanity did unite mankind in fraternity. Τῷ ἔχεσθαι ἐν τῇ σαρκὶ αὐτῆς καθαρ-γήσας. Eph. 2. 15. Ὅτι μέλη ἐσμὲν τῆς σώματος αὐτῆς, ἐκ τῆς σαρκὸς αὐτῆς καὶ ἐκ τῶν ὀστέων αὐτῆς. Eph. 5 30.

Rom. 8. 3. *That he might taste death for man.* Heb. 2. 9. Col. 1. 22. * Heb. 2. 10.

It was also fit, that he who was designed to intercede for our welfare, to propitiate for our faults, to succour and relieve our distresses, should be tender of our good, and sensible of our needs; that he therefore should by nature and experience be disposed συμπαθῆσαι to *compassionate our infirmities*, and μετριοπαθῆσαι to be *gently affected toward us*, in respect of our ignorances and errours; whence ὤφειλε, he (saith the divine *Apostle* again) according to the design appointed to him, and undertaken by him ought, or *it did behove him to be in all things like unto his brethren, that he might be a mercifull and faithfull High-Priest in things pertaining to God; that he might propitiate for the sins of the people; for in that he hath himself suffered being tempted, he is also able to succour those that are tempted.*

As the Devil did overbear man —— Evæ *advocata.* Iren. Heb. 4. 15. 5. 2.

Heb. 2. 17. Ἀνθρώπων μὲν ὅσα οὐκ ἰσχυε. Θεὸς γενόμενος πάσχειν οὐκ ἠδύνατο. Procl. in Const. Eph. pag. 5.

He was to be man also, for that by appearing in humane shape, visible and audible, familiar and agreeable to us, he was qualified for that great design of declaring God's will and intentions toward us in a more easie, less amazing, and more obliging way, than otherwise could have been: for that hence likewise he could, with more advantage, describe an exact copy of righteousness for us to transcribe; shewing us exemplarily how as men we should behave our selves; how we should moderate our sensual appetites, how govern our passions, how order and employ all the powers of our soul, and members of our Body; how pass through all conditions, and entertain all events befalling us; it not

not being indeed otherwise possible, that so lively and so sutable a pattern of transcendent charity, meekness, humility and patience could have been exhibited to us.

Fit it also was, that he who was to be appointed our Judge, substitute of the supreme Judge invisible, should be, as God (of perfect wisdom, and so able to discern all matters of fact, to distinguish all points of right; of perfect rectitude, so as never willingly to discost from truth and equity) so also man: visible and audible to us, without surprising astonishment and terrour; apt to screen us from the insupportable presence of God; endued with a natural tenderness of good will and compassion toward us, disposed to temper needful severity with competent mildness. Acts. 17. 31; 10. 42.

In fine, it was most congruous, that he who was designed to *recapitulate and Reconcile* (as S. *Paul* speaketh) *all things in heaven and earth*, to be the great *mediatour* and *peacemaker* between God and man, for the repairing God's honour, and dispencing his grace, for the *purchasing our peace*, and procuring our salvation, that he should be most nearly allyed unto both parties; that consequently if possible (and what is to God, the author of this œconomy, impossible?) he should be both God and man; Son to God, and brother to us; the same in nature with God, in kind with us. Such reason and wisdom is discernible in this dispensation. Ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι, Eph. 1. 10. ἢ εἰρηνοποιῆσαι δόξαν. Col. 1. 20. 1 Tim. 2. 5.

III. Now for the practical use of this doctrine (for it is not a doctrine merely speculative, and barren of fruit, or practical use) it should, *first*, have a powerful influence upon our minds, causing us, with high degrees of love and gratitude, to adore the infinite goodness of that God, who hath been pleased himself to stoop so low, that he might advance us from the lowest depth of meanness and wretchedness, to the highest pitch of honour and happiness, that we are capable of: What words can express, what thought can apprehend a favour so unconceivable, and ineffable? well might S. *Paul* call it ὑπερβάλλουσαν τῆς γνώσεως ἀγάπην, *Love transcending all knowledge*: Well may heaven admire, and earth be astonished, and hell tremble at the disclosure of such a mystery, at the accomplishing such a miracle of grace, and mercy; that the sovereign majesty of heaven, the eternal Lord of glory, the worlds great maker, the only Son of God, and heir of all things, should become a poor, small, weak and frail man; should dwell in a tabernacle of flesh, should converse with silly, wretched and frail mortals here, should be exposed to want, disgrace and pain: ὦ βάθος, O depth of goodness, and mercy unsearchable! if this will not, What consideration can raise us, what benefit can affect us? What prodigious ingratitude will it be, to be regardless, or insensible of kindness so wonderful. Eph. 3. 19.

2. Another great use of this point, is to engage us, as universally to all obedience, so particularly to the duties of humility, of patience, and of charity. Did the Son of God thus willingly submit, and so abase himself; and shall we then be refractary, shall we exalt our selves; shall we refuse any appointment, or repine at any proceeding of God? Did he from the highest pitch of glory superceleſtial, voluntarily descend into this gloomy region, and state of ignoble obscurity; did he, abandoning immense wealth, freely embrace extreame poverty; did he gladly sequester himself from those ineffable joys above, to converse with sorrow and sadness here, in this valley of tears, for God's sake, and ours; And shall we be unwilling to doe any thing for God's sake,

or to part with any thing for him? to these purposes doth S. *Paul* apply the consideration of this point: *Let* (saith he) *the same mind* (the same humble, patient, meek, charitable mind) *be in you, which was in Christ Jesus; who being in the form of God — emptyed himself, taking upon him the form of a servant; being made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death*: It was the greatest argument and instance of humility, patience and charity, that could be, for him, that did exist in the form of God, thus to debase himself to partake of our nature, and submit to our state: and *know* (saith that *Apostle* again) *the Grace* (or graciousness) *of our Lord Jesus Christ, that being himself rich, for your sake he became poor* (being rich as God, and Lord of all things, he put himself into this mean and poor condition of man) *that ye, through his poverty, might be rich*; it was a consideration surely most proper to his purpose of inciting unto charity.

Phil. 2. 6, 7, 8.

Vid. 1 Joh. 4. 10, 11. 2 Cor. 8. 9. Ἐορτάζομεν ἐπιδημίαν θεοῦ πρὸς ἀνθρώπους, ἵνα πρὸς θεὸν ἐκδημήσωμεν, ἢ ἐπανέλθωμεν, Naz. *Orat.* 38.

3. The consideration of this point should raise our minds to a sense of the dignity of our nature, accompanyed with dispositions of heart, and deportments of life answerable thereto: By our Lord's Incarnation our nature is so advanced, that we become nearly allyed to God, of the blood-royal of heaven, in this respect overtopping all the creation of God; so that hereby (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* discourseth) that of the *Psalmist* was verifyed, concerning man; *Thou hast crowned him with glory, and honour, and hast set him over the works of thine hands; thou hast put all things under his feet*: the Angels themselves cannot boast of such an honour; for *he took not the Nature of Angels, but he took the Seed of Abraham*: Being therefore so highly dignifyed, we should have a mind suitably great and noble, loving, delighting in, aiming at the most excellent things, void of base cares, of sordid desires, of unworthy designs; we should in all our conversation, demean our selves worthily and decently, like the brethren of *Jesus*, and children of God; that we may not * disparage and disgrace this illustrious alliance. As our Lord did vouchsafe, in most condescensive Grace, to resemble us, so should we, with a generous and honest ambition, aspire to resemble him; as he stooped to humanity, so let us rear our selves to a kind of Divinity, in purity of mind, and sanctity of life; so S. *Gregory Nazianzene* exhorteth; *Let us* (saith he) *be as Christ, since Christ is become like us? let us, for his sake, be Gods, seeing he is become Man for us.*

Pſal. 8. 5. Heb. 2. 7, 8.

Heb. 2. 16. 1. 5.

Agnosce, Christiane, dignitatem tuam, & divinæ consors factus naturæ, noli in veterem vilitatem degenere conversatione recidere. Leo *de Nat. Serm.* 1.

Phil. 2. 15. Matt. 5. 48. 1 Pet. 1. 15, 16.

* *Vid.* Leonem *P. de Nat. Serm.* 6.

Γενώμεθα ὡς χριστὸς, ἐπεὶ καὶ χριστὸς ὡς ἡμεῖς. Γενώμεθα θεοὶ δι' αὐτὸν, ἐπεὶδὴ, κἀκεῖνος δι' ἡμᾶς ἄνθρωπος. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 41.

4. The consideration of this point should fill our hearts with spiritual comfort, and joy; There never can be a greater occasion, or juster cause of rejoycing, than this, that our Lord is born and come: It is signally *Evangelium, good tidings*; never news more welcome hath come into the world; never report more gratefull was heard by mortal ears: It is news from heaven, and the best that ever came thence; *Behold* (said the *Angel* that brought it, and a Message it was most worthy the mouth of an Angel) *I tell good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people*; news, at which all heaven was pleased, and ravished with joy, breaking presently forth into Hymns of Praise and Congratulation; *There was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, and good will to men.* In this, if we mark it, all the grand causes of extraordinary joy and festivity do conspire.

Luc. 2. 10. Εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην.

Luc. 2. 13.

Is

Is the birth of a Prince ever by honeſt Subjects entertained and celebrated with joy? Behold a Prince born to all the World; a Prince that cometh to rule mankind with perfect equity and clemency; to bring with him all peace and proſperity; to atchieve the moſt noble exploits, that could be undertaken in our behalf; to protect us in moſt aſſured ſafety, to defend us from all evil, to ſubdue and deſtroy all the enemies of our welfare, to reſcue us from the greateſt ſlaveries and miſeries, to ſettle us in perfect happineſs; He bringeth *ſalvation from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us; ſo that being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him all the days of our lives.* Luc. 1. 71. 74.

Is Victory glorious and joyful? See the invincible warriour is iſſued forth into the field, *conquering and to conquer*; he that ſhall quell, diſarm, and rifle *the ſtrong one*, that ſhall rout all the forces of hell, that ſhall defeat ſin, and ſlay death it ſelf, that ſhall ſubdue the world, and ſubject all things to himſelf: The *captain of our ſalvation* appeareth, triumphing in humility; the great blow is given; the Devil's pride and envy are abaſed; all the enemies are amaſed, are daunted, are confounded at his preſence; they cannot ſtand, they break, they ſcatter, they flee before him. Apoc. 6. 2. Luc. 11. 22. Joh 16. 33.

Is the publiſhing of Peace acceptable? Behold eternal peace between heaven and earth, a general peace among men, a peace of conſcience between man and himſelf, is now eſtabliſhed and proclaimed: the illuſtrious Ambaſſadour, the noble hoſtage, the infallible pledge thereof is arrived; *Preaching peace to them that are far off, and to them that are near.* Eph. 2. 17. Act. 10. 36.

Is recovery of liberty comfortable unto ſlaves and captives? Behold the Redeemer is come, the great ranſome is laid down ſufficient to purchaſe the freedom of whole worlds: innocence appearing in humane nature hath unlocked the priſon of ſin, in which we were cloſely detained, hath broken the ſhackles of univerſal guilt, which ſorely pinched mankind: he is come, who is anointed to preach (αἰχμαλώτοις ἄφεσιν) *diſmiſſion to the captives.* Gal. 3. 22. Luc. 4. 18.

In natali Domini quaſi in nuptiis ſpiritualibus ſponſæ ſuæ Eccleſiæ Chriſtus adjunctus eſt, tunc proceſſit ſponſus de thalamo ſuo, hoc eſt verbum Dei de utero virginali. Aug. *de Temp. Serm.* 2.

Is the coming of a good friend to be congratulated? Behold, the beſt friend to all mankind (bringing with him moſt wholeſome advice, moſt needful ſuccour, moſt ſeaſonable conſolation) is arrived to viſit us, and dwell with us.

Is it a comfortable thing to be graced with honour? What greater honour could mankind be dignifyed with, than this of receiving the Son of God into its kind, and kindred? What could more advance, and adorn us, than this high relation?

Is mirth ſeaſonable to the day of Marriage? Behold heaven and earth this day are coupled, divinity is eſpouſed to humanity, an eternal indiſſoluble knot of amity, of unity, is tyed between God and Man; the great Bridegroom is come forth clad in his nuptial garment of fleſh, ready to wed the Church, his beloved ſpouſe.

Is the Sun's riſing (after a long, dark and cold night) chearful and comfortable? See, the *Sun of righteouſneſs is riſen, with healing in his wings*; diſpenſing all about his moſt pleaſant light, and ſalutary influences: *The day ſpring from on high hath viſited us*, diffuſing an univerſal light upon the ſouls of men, diſpelling the night of ignorance and errour, *ſhining out to thoſe which ſit in darkneſs, and the ſhadow of death, and guiding our feet in the way of peace*; *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come* Luke 1. 78, 79. Iſa. 60. 1.

and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee, &c. Never did heaven with so clear and serene a countenance smile upon earth, as it did this day, when this super-illustrious luminary (this *bright morning star*, as he is
Apoc. 22. 61. called in the *Apocalypse*) did spring up above our *horison*. From this
Ἀστὴρ λαμπρὸς καὶ ὄρθριος. auspicious day commenced the revocation of that fatal curse, by which we were exiled from Paradise, condemned to death, exposed to hell; the reinstating us in a condition of hope, in a capacity of happiness; the return of life and joy into this region of corruption, and disconsolateness: This is the day, which *all nations desired*, and earnestly longed for (with an implicite sense) which the good Patriarchs foreseeing did rejoyce; which the Profits in so magnificent streins did predict and presignify. In our Lord's nativity all mankind was in a manner born, or did revive; was restored from a manifold necessity of dying; from lying dead in the guilt, and under the power of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably dissolved by corruption, and our souls immersed into that *second death* of endless misery. It is in effect therefore the Worlds nativity that we celebrate, annexed to that of our Lord; the beginning of the new, better, spiritual and eternal life to men: all reason therefore we have upon this consideration heartily to rejoyce; How extremely stupid and senseless are we, if the apprehension of goods so many, so excellent hence accruing to us doth not inspire our hearts
Psal. 118. 24. with a gratefull chearfulness? *This is the day which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce and be glad therein.*

Con-

Conceived by the Holy Ghost. Born of the Virgin Mary.

SERMON XXIV.

THE INCARNATION OF Our LORD.

MATTH. I. 20.

For that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost. Τὸ γὰρ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθὲν.

IF every circumstance of our Lord's wonderfull incarnation deserveth to be considered, as affording matter of good instruction, and serving to excite devout affection; then surely the principal causes and ingredients thereof may demand a special regard from us; such are those which are couched in this Text; The efficiency of the *Holy Spirit*, by which it was accomplished; the concurrence of the Blessed Virgin *Mary*, as the subject, in whom the divine virtue did work it; upon which two particulars we shall reflect, in order.

I. It was the *Holy Ghost*, by the singular virtue and operation of whom, without intervention of any man, or earthly Father, the *Blessed Virgin* became impregnated and did conceive. *Joseph* was, ὡς ἐνομίζετο, in outward esteem, the Father of our Saviour (for *Is not this*, said they, *the Carpenter's son? Is not this the son of Joseph?*) the modesty of his Holy Mother being preserved from misprision under the shrowd of wedlock, during the time that by God's order the mystery and truth of things was to be concealed from general notice, *untill the day of his being shewed*, and *manifested to Israel*; but God onely was in truth his Father, his Incarnation being performed by the miraculous efficacy of God's Holy Spirit; upon which account (beside his eternal generation) he was also the Son of God; for *therefore* (said the Angel to his Mother) *that holy thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God.*

Luc. 3. 23. Matt. 13. 55. John 6. 42. Luc. 4. 22. Marc. 6. 3.

Luc. 1. 80. John 1. 31.

Luc. 1. 35.

The matter of fact was well known to *Joseph* by Revelation, and to the Blessed Virgin her self by her conscience also; and by them it was attested

attested to the Holy Apostles; their attestation being seconded by the Miracles of our Lord, together with all the potent arguments which confirm his Doctrine: Nor do we find, that even the adversaries of our Lord did ever offer to impeach his Parents of imposture, or did anywise trouble them about this report coming from them. And it is so clearly, and fully affirmed in the *Gospels*, that it is prodigiously strange that here have been lately some (called *Josephites*) who have questioned it, upon weak pretences of discourse; whom we cannot otherwise consider, than as intolerably audacious perverters of Scripture, or subverters of its authority and use; for surely nothing there can be deemed certain, if this point is not. The fact therefore we must take for granted; and for our farther instruction about it we shall consider three particulars; the *manner* of it, the *reasons* for it, the *practical use*, whereto it may be applyed.

Apud Episcopium.

Luc. 1 35. δυνάμις ὑψίστου.

1. The manner of that operation, whereby the Holy Ghost did effect the humane generation of our Lord, is by the Archangel *Gabriel* expressed to be from *the supervention of the Holy Ghost, and the divine power over-shadowing the Blessed Virgin*; the which words being of so general interpretation, and as to precise meaning so little intelligible by us, may well serve to bound our curiosity, and to check farther inquiry. Some indeed (as the followers of *Valentinus* and *Apollinarius* of old, as *Menno*, *Servetus*, and others of late) have been so bold as to determine, that the Holy Ghost did bring from Heaven a body, which he did convey into the Blessed Virgin; or that our Saviour's flesh was formed of a divine seed, from the substance of God himself; or that in his conception the Holy Ghost did create, and impart somewhat of matter; but it is enough to say, that these are rash and groundless conceits; The holy Fathers, having weighed and discussed such imaginations, to prevent dangerous or misbecoming thoughts and speeches, about a point of so sacred nature, more soberly do teach, that our Saviour was conceived by the Holy Spirit, not σπερματικῶς, *seminally*; but δημιουργικῶς, *operatively*; οὐ διὰ συνουσίας, *by copulation*; but διὰ δυνάμεως, *by power*; not *de substantia Spiritus S. of the substance of the Holy Ghost*; but *de potentia, by the virtue of it*; and farther than this, say they, *Generationem ejus quis enarrabit*; *Who can declare his generation*, or exactly describe the manner of a performance so very wonderfull and sublime; to the which no experience doth furnish any event like or comparable? When therefore it is said, that the conception, or generation was ἐκ πνεύματος ἁγίου, *of the Holy Ghost*, the *Preposition* ἐκ is to be taken for the same with ὑπὸ, or διὰ (as it is very commonly used) denoting not matter out of which, but efficiency by which the effect was derived. But,

Damasc. 3. 2. Just. Mart. *Apol.* 2. Aug. *de Temp. Serm.* 6. P. Leo *de Nat. Serm.*

2. Why was our Saviour conceived by the Holy Ghost? Divers reasons for it may be assigned.

1. It was needfull for assuring the Divinity of our Saviour, or his being the Eternal Son of God. That the *Messias*, the Redeemer of the World should be the Son of God was necessary, according to the purpose of God, the ancient predictions, the general opinions and expectations of God's people (often implyed in the *Gospels*;) Accordingly such he was as the coeternal Word in his divine nature; but it was requisite that he should also be such according to his humane nature; that by his extraordinary generation, as Man, his other more sublime generation (so much transcending humane conceit) might be more credible, and the world might be convinced of his divinity; for men

Psal. 2. 7, 12. 1 Chr. 22. 10. 2 Sam. 7. 13. Psal. 80. 27. Joh. 1. 34. 49. 11. 27. 6. 69. Matt. 16. 16. Marc. 14. 61.

hardly

hardly would have been capable to believe him more than a man, whom they saw born in the common way of men; *Is not this the Son of Joseph*, was an argument which they urged against him, when he spake about his *descent from heaven*, *Joh.* 6. 42. and caused them to admire, when they observed the power of his miracles (*Matt.* 13. 55.) and the wisdom of his discourse (*Luk.* 4. 22.) but easily might they be induced to admit a mystery, which was countenanced by so grand a miracle, as the birth of a child, by the divine power, without a Father. 26. 63. Matt. 8. 29. Marc. 1. 24. Luc. 4. 34.

2. This was the most fit way of accomplishing that so necessary conjunction of the divine and humane nature: A work of such grandeur and glory, of such grace and goodness, was not to be atchieved by any other agent, than by him, who is the substantial virtue and love of God; by whom we see all extraordinary and most eminent works to have been managed, to whom commonly the μεγαλεῖα θεῦ, the majestick and magnificent things of God are ascribed; for in the creation of the world, it was *the Spirit of God* which moved upon the waters, forming things, and impregnating them with all kinds of life and vigour natural; He it is, to whom those signal works of providence, the revelation of divine truth, the prediction of future events, the performance of miracles, the renovation of mens minds, and reformation of their manners in a peculiar manner are attributed; So likewise to him this incomparably supernatural, glorious and important act was most properly due. Acts. 2. 11.

3. It being necessary that our Saviour should be consecrated to his great functions, and perfectly sanctifyed in his person, as Man; And those performances (according to the mystical œconomy of things among the divine persons) being appropriated to the Holy Ghost, the natural spring of all derived sanctity; his efficacy must needs intervene to this purpose: If *Jeremy*, S. *John Baptist*, and S. *Paul* (persons designed for offices and employments in dignity, in consequence so far inferiour) were sanctifyed, and separated by the Holy Ghost from their mothers womb; In how more excellent kind, and degree, was it requisite that he should be sanctifyed thereby, who was sent into the world to redeem, and purify it from all filth and fault? according to that saying of our Lord, *Say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemest, because I said I am the Son of God?* whereas the style of *Gods* was given to persons devoted to far meaner services. Jer. 1. 5. Luc. 1. 15. Gal. 1. 15. Joh. 10. 36.

4. It was needfull, that the humane nature, which God did vouchsafe so highly to advance, by assuming it to a personal conjunction and union with himself, should be clear from all stain, and pollution; such as in ordinary propagation doth adhere to our *sinfull flesh* and corrupt nature; That he whom God even as man would so dearly love, and so entirely be pleased with, should be void of the least inclination to iniquity, or impurity; for (as the *Psalmist* telleth us) *God is not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him*; He is *of purer eyes, than to behold evil, and cannot* so much as *look upon iniquity*; How then would he receive any defiled thing into so near an union, into so dear a regard, into so full a complacence: He therefore was to be thoroughly sanctifyed; and thence it was needfull that his Humanity should issue from the fountain of Holiness, God's most Holy Spirit. *Futurum hominum salvatorem talis ortus decebat, qui & in se haberet humanæ substantiæ naturam, & humanæ carnis quinamenta nesciret.* Leo 1. de Nativ. Ser. 2. Rom. 8. 3. Psal. 5. 4. Hab. 1. 13.

5. It

5. It in like manner was neceſſary, that he who was ordained to appeaſe God's diſpleaſure, and fully to reconcile him toward us, to expiate all our offences, thoroughly to redeem mankind from the guilt, and from the power of ſin; who with abſolute authority was to teach,
2 Cor. 5. 21. to exemplify, to command all righteouſneſs, ſhould himſelf *know no ſin*;
Heb. 6. 26, 27. *Such an high Prieſt* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *became us, who was holy, harmleſs, undefiled, ſeparate from ſinners; who had no need firſt to offer up ſacrifices for his own ſins:* The ſacrifice expiatory for our offences was to
1 Pet. 1. 19. be *a lamb without blemiſh, and without ſpot:* Whence he was to be fully
Luc. 1. 35. ſanctifyed; and to become τὸ ἅγιον, *that holy thing* (abſolutely) as he was termed by the celeſtial meſſenger: Whence from the ſource of ſanctity, the Holy Ghoſt, whoſe proper name doth import Holyneſs, whoſe proper work it is to ſanctify, he was to derive a perfect ſanctity and purity in his ſacred conception.

6. We may add, as an obſervable point, the analogy, or appoſite reſemblance thereof, between the conception of our Saviour for us, and
Gal. 4. 19. his *formation in us*; his natural generation and the ſpiritual regeneration of Chriſtians; his becoming our brother in the fleſh, and our being made his brethren in the ſpirit; both being effected by the ſame agent: As Chriſt was made true man, and partaker of our nature, ſo we become
θείας φύσεως κοινωνοί. true Chriſtians, *and conſorts of the divine nature* by the operation of the
2 Pet. 1. 4. ſame divine Spirit: As he by the diſpenſation of God, ſo we by his grace
Eph. 1. 10. *are born not by bloud, nor by the will of fleſh, nor by the will of man, but of*
John 1. 13. *God*; Hence doth accrue a new relation, and we become his brethren, not onely as he was made like to us, but alſo as we become like to him;
1 Pet. 1. 23. 1 Joh. 3. 9. and are *begotten of God*, by the ſame heavenly virtue, the ſame *incorruptible ſeed.*

It may indeed be an admonition to us to labour after this ſpiritual conception, which will render us conformable to our Lord, and far more truely allyed to him, than even his partaking our nature hath done; And indeed without that ſpiritual one, this carnal alliance will not ſignifie any thing of benefit to us; it will little profit us, that he was
2 Cor. 5. 16. born in the fleſh, if we are not *born of the ſpirit*; without which ge-
Joh. 3. 3, 5. neration *we cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*

3. The proper application of this point is to engage us on a thankfull adoration of the divine goodneſs and wiſdom; ſo fully, ſo fitly carrying on that infinitely gracious work of our redemption; all the divine perſons of the Bleſſed Trinity in a particular manner conſpiring, as in the deſignation ſo in the execution thereof; The Father mercifully deſtinating and ſending his Son; the Son willingly and gladly condeſcending to come; the Holy Ghoſt effectually bringing him into the world; to which Bleſſed Trinity therefore we ſhould render all humble reverence, and hearty praiſe: And ſo much for the firſt particular obſerved in the Text.

τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθέν. II. The next is, the concurrence of the Bleſſed Virgin *Mary* to our Lord's Generation; *that which is conceived* (or generated) *in her.*

The being generated (τὸ γεννᾶσθαι, here) we may ſuppoſe to reſpect, or to expreſs his whole humane generation, with the parts and progreſs thereof; implying on the Virgins part all that ſhe as a mother did confer thereto; wherein therefore are comprehended the following particulars;

Luc. 1. 42. Iſa. 11. 1. 1. His conception of her ſubſtance, whence he is called *the fruit of her womb*; and *a rod* (that is, a branch, or twig) *ſprouting from the ſtem*
συλλήψη ἐν γαστρί. Luc. 1. 31. *of Jeſſe*; and, *Behold*, ſaid the Angel, *thou ſhalt conceive in thy womb.*

2. The

2. The nutrition, accretion, and entire conformation of his body, out of her blood and substance; whence her womb is said to bear him (*blessed is the womb that bare thee*) to have been **gravidated*, or great with child, the which as it grew, did swell her womb visibly; so that **she was found*, or observed, by apparent signs, *to be with child of him*, or to have him in her womb. Luc. 11. 27. * ἔγκυος. Luc. 2. 5. Matt. 1. 18. * εὑρέθη ἐν γαστρὶ ἔχουσα.

3. His nativity it self, or exclusion into the open world; which is thus expressed by the *Evangelist*; *The days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son.* Luc. 2. 6.

Whatever therefore any mother doth confer to the entire production of a child, is to be attributed to the Blessed Virgin; whence she was truly and properly *the mother of our Lord*, and is accordingly often so called in the Gospels; whence also she hath been in the Church defined to be and commonly styled Θεοτόκος, the bearer and mother of God; that is, of him who is God; that term asserting the Divinity of Christ, and the Unity of his person [against *Nestorius* and his partizans; who said, that the Virgin was not properly Θεοτόκος, but χριστοτόκος; and that He who was born, was not God, but ἄνθρωπος θεοφόρος, *a man carrying God*, or divinity in him.] Luc. 1. 43. Nest. *ad* Cyrill. *in Conc.* Eph. Cyrill. *Epist. ad* Nest.

Now for our instruction and use we may resolve the word *her* into three respects distinctly considerable; He was born of her, a Woman; He was born of her, a Virgin; he was born of her, *Mary*; each of which respects is pregnant with matter observable: He was born of a Woman, that was highly needful to be; of a Virgin, that was very requisite; of *Mary*, that doth involve diverse circumstances of importance.

1. Our Saviour was born of a Woman.

The *Valentinian* Hereticks of old did opine, that he was only born through a woman, or did merely pass through her, as liquor doth pass through a vessel; But that is a great errour; for He was born in her, and of her; in our Text it is ἐν αὐτῇ γεννηθέν, *generated in her*; which in sound expresseth no more, than her containing him when conceived, but according to the force of the *Hebrew* particle ב (*Be*) answering to ἐν here, is apt to signifie more; and must be taken to do so in conformity to parallel expressions; as that of S. *Paul*, *God sent forth his son born* ἐκ γυναικὸς, *of a woman*; and that of S. *Luke* (in the best Copies, followed by our English Translatours) τὸ γεννώμενον ἐκ σου, *the Holy thing that is born of thee, or out of thee.* Gal. 4. 4. Luc. 1. 35.

Indeed of a woman he was born, that is from the matter and substance of a woman; so as thereby to bear the return of a kinsman to us, becoming consanguinious to all mankind, which *God did make of one blood*; whence *he is not ashamed to call us brethren* [and alloweth us to be *of his flesh, and of his bones.*] Acts 17. 26. Heb. 2. 11, —— 14. Eph. 5. 30.

We may easily conceive, that God could immediately have created a nature in kind and properties like to ours, and have assumed it; but that would not have so fitly served the design of reconciling himself to us, and redeeming us; to the effecting that in the most congruous way, not only a resemblance in nature, but a cognation and proximity in blood was needful, or at least was very convenient and suitable: for our blood being tainted, our whole stock having forfeited its dignity and estate by the rebellious disloyalty of our common ancestours, it was expedient that it should be purged and restored by the satisfactory merit, and acceptable fidelity of one, who was of our race and kindred. We being to be adopted, and received into God's Family, it was proper that business should be transacted by intervention of a common re-

Gal. 4. 4, 5. lation according to the discourse of S. *Paul*, *God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, that he might redeem those that were under the law* (that according to the obligation undertaken by him, he performing the obedience required by the law, might redeem those, who being tyed to obey the law, had yet transgressed it) ἵνα τὴν υἱοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν, *that* (it followeth) *we might receive the adoption*; that is, that we by virtue and in consequence of that birth from a woman, and of that obedience to the law performed by our brother, might be in capacity to receive the quality or state of Sons to God.

It was likely seemly, that the Devil, who by the weakness of a woman had seduced man from his duty to God, had overthrown, triumphed over, and captivated God's creature, in just amends, for the reparation of God's honour, and our consolation, should by the strength and faithful constancy of one, proceeding from a woman, be himself defeated and debased; according to the mystical intent of that most ancient prophecy, or promise, *The seed of the woman shall break the serpent's head*; of the woman, the man is not mentioned; for,

2. Our Lord was born of a Virgin: so it was anciently presignifyed

Isa. 7. 14. עלמה and predicted; *a Virgin shall conceive and bear a son*; *A Virgin*; *Almah*, ἀπόκρυφος (so *Aquila*, with respect to the derivation of the word, did render it) that is *a recluse*; one who perhaps had seldome seen, who *never had known a man*.

This, it seemeth, was that *new thing* (that most strange and admirable thing) which God in the Prophet *Jeremy* did foreshew, that he

Jer. 31. 22. *would create in the earth*, and which should then happen, when he would restore *Sion*, and establish a new covenant with his people; namely, *a woman shall compass a man*; a woman in a manner extraordinary, without the concourse of a male, should conceive, and enclose in her womb a man; that very man, who should accomplish the great matters there predicted and promised. So it was, and so upon diverse accounts it was requisite that it should be.

For how otherwise apparently, to the sense and satisfaction of all men, could he be that which (according to ancient Prophecies, and common expectation, as also according to the exigency of things, and the tenour of divine purposes) he ought to be, both the son of God, and the son of man, otherwise than by coming of a Virgin? He must be born of a woman, that he might truly be the son of man; He must be born of a Virgin, that he might be clearly the son of God; How otherwise could there be an effectual conviction of his divine original?

It was also decent and expedient, that the tabernacle in which God should reside and dwell, should be proper and enclosed; that the Temple of the divinity should be holy and separate; that the soil, whence Holyness it self would sprout forth, should be clear and pure from all sordid mixtures; that none should presume to touch the border of that Holy * Mountain where God so specially would manifest himself; that the lust of man should not approach that place, whence the glory of God would so illustriously shine forth.

Ἔφερε δὲ τὸν ἐπὶ ἀφθαρσίᾳ τῷ παντὸς ἐν τῷ ἀνθρωπίνῳ βίῳ γαμούμενον, καὶ τὸ ὑπηρέτησον αὐτῷ τῇ γενέσει ἁγνὸν ἁγιάσας. Greg. Nyss. *in Christi Nat.* (Tom. 2. p. 776.)

* Exod. 19. 11.

It was also most convenient for exciting due attention and regard, for begetting faith, for procuring reverence and admiration in men, that our Redeemer should enter on the world in a manner so peculiar and miraculous: For who that heareth of such an event, can forbear to mind it, and ponder on it? Who can doubt him to be the Son of God, whom by sufficient and certain attestation he learneth to have been conceived

conceived without any concurrence of man? who will not readily defer high veneration to him, who appeareth in a manner so glorious, and supernatural?

3. Moreover, our Saviour was born of *Mary*; of that singular person determined and described in the *Gospels*; of her, that was espoused to, and did live with *Joseph*; with *Joseph* the Carpenter; who was born in the town of *Bethlehem*, who lived in the city of *Nazareth* in *Galilee*; who both according to natural and legal extraction was descended in a direct lineage from *King David*, being (as S. *Luke* saith) *of the house and family of David*, and who by consequence did lineally come from *Abraham*. She her self was also of the same stock and family; as may be collected from circumstances intimated in the story, and certainly may be deduced from the prophecies concerning our Saviour's stock, with the assertions implying their accomplishment. Ἐξ οἴκου καὶ πατριᾶς Δαβίδ. Luc. 2. 4. 1. 27.

Of *Mary* therefore, by blood and progeny a Princess, extracted from the most illustrious stem on earth; not only famous among men, but (which is infinitely more) especially dear to God; who yet in external condition was very mean and poor, living obscurely in habitation with an Artisan, of a painful and not gainful trade. Luc. 1. 48.

As for her personal qualifications, they were excellently worthy; for in disposition of mind she was very religious and devout toward God; in the temper of her spirit very sweet and calm, very modest, meek and humble; such the passages occurring in the *Gospels* concerning her do shew her to have been; such particularly that most excellent *hymn* ejaculated by her (wherein we may discover a spirit ravished with the most sprightly devotion imaginable; a devotion full of ardent love, of humble thankfulness, of hearty joy, tempered with most submissive reverence) demonstrateth her to have been.

Of a mother so related, and so qualified, our Saviour was born; both which points were requisite.

She was so related, for the declaration of God's truth, fidelity and constancy in accomplishing those ancient predictions and promises made to the Fathers; to *Abraham*, that *in his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed*; to *David*, that *of the fruit of his loines God would raise up Christ to sit upon his throne*; concerning whom, as by many passages in the *Gospel* it appeareth, God's people had a general expectation and persuasion, that he should be *the rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch growing out of his roots*; *in whom the horn of David should bud*; who *should raise the tabernacle of David that was fallen, and rule over the Kingdom of Jacob for ever*. And that our Lord should be born at *Bethlehem*, that he should be called a *Nazarene*, were circumstances touched in the Prophets, for the verification whereof it was needful that the mother of our Lord should be thus related. Gen. 26. 4. 12. 3. 18. 18. 22. 18. Gal. 3. 8. Acts 3. 25. Acts 2. 15. Isa. 11. 1. 10. Rom. 1. 3. 15. 2. Ps. 132. 17. Apoc. 5. 5. 22. 16. Amos 9. 11. Acts 15. 16. Luc. 1. 32. Jer. 33. 15. 23. 5. — Matt. 2. 5. 21. 15. 23. 9. 15. 27. 22. 20. 30. 42.

She was also to be so duely qualifyed as to her state and mind; being homely in state of life, and holy in disposition of mind; to signifie, that God did not so much regard the outward pomps and appearances of this vain world, as the inward frame and temper of spirit.

It is indeed no small disparagement to those empty glories, which men are wont so hugely to admire, and it may be a strong inducement to a moderate esteem of them, if we consider it, that God did not chuse for the mother of his son, and Saviour of mankind, a visibly great Princess, or any to appearance honourable, splendid or wealthy personage; but her that was espoused to a mechanick artificer, her that was only rich in grace, and deck'd with interiour endowments; *adorned* (after

1 Peter 3. 4. the garb, which S. *Peter* recommendeth to women) *with the hidden man of the heart, in the incorruptible purity of a meek and quiet ſpirit, which in the ſight of God is of great price.* This is the reflexion which ſhe her ſelf did make upon the matter; for this *her ſoul did magnifie* Luc. 1. 51. — *God, becauſe he had regarded the low eſtate of his handmaiden*; — *he had ſhewed ſtrength with his Arm, he had ſcattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts; he had put down the mighty from their ſeat, and had exalted the humble and meek; he had filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he had ſent empty away:* This ſheweth the extreme folly of contemning the poor, to whom commonly God expreſſeth ſo ſpecial regard, who are capable of ſo high favours, who have ſo glorious conſorts of their ſtate.

Such a perſon did the ſon of God chuſe to bear himſelf, to bear duty unto, to confer that ſpecial favour and eminent honour upon; an honour, among all exteriour honours the higheſt, that ever was vouchſafed to any of humane kind, or indeed to any mere creature.

I ſay of exteriour honours, for ſpiritual advantages, our Lord himſelf doth teach us in our eſteem to prefer above this great privilege; they being *toto genere*, ſuperiour, and placing us in a nobler relation to him Matt. 12. 5. than this; *Whoſoever*, ſaith he, *ſhall doe the will of my Father that is in heaven, the ſame is my brother and ſiſter and mother*; the ſame in a more excellent manner and ſublime degree is allyed, is endeared to me, than he can be upon the ſcore of any carnal kindred: The conformity to him in our mind and affections doth render us nearer to him than any cognation of blood; the having him formed in our hearts is more conſiderable, than the bearing of him in the womb.

Indeed, the mother of our Lord her ſelf, although as ſuch ſhe was Luc. 1. 28. 48, 49. κεχαριτωμένη, *eſpecially favoured and graced*, and *bleſſed among women*; although upon that account *all nations muſt* eſteem and *call her bleſſed*; although worthily ſhe did in that reſpect acknowledge, that *God had done* μεγαλεῖα, *magnificent and mighty things for her*; yet really, in juſt eſteem, to have Chriſt born in her ſoul, to have participated of his divine grace and preſence in her heart, the Holy Ghoſt's having produced a ſpiritual birth of holy diſpoſitions in her, was a nobler honour, and a truer happineſs than that; *neither would it*, as S. *Chryſoſtome* ſaith, *have been any-wiſe profitable to her, if ſhe had not been vertuous, to bear Chriſt in her womb, or to bring forth that admirable birth*; this our Saviour plainly declared, when as a good woman, tranſported by the raviſhing excellency of his diſcourſe, did cry out, * *Bleſſed is the womb that bare thee*, he thence took occaſion to ſay, *Yea rather, bleſſed are they that hear the word of God and keep it.*

Οὐδὲ τὸ κυοφορῆσαι τὸν Χριστὸν, ἢ τὸν θαυμαστὸν ἐκεῖνον τόκον τεκεῖν ἔχει τι κέρδος, ἀφετῆς ἄκ κοης. Chryſ. in Matt. 12. 50.

* Luc. 11. 27.

We might alſo here farther obſerve, that our Saviour upon other good accounts, willingly did chuſe ſo mean a parentage; namely,

That he thence might have readier opportunity to undergoe and taſte the greateſt inconveniences and hardſhips incident to our nature, thereby more fully meriting and ſuffering for us.

That he might have occaſion to exemplify the moſt difficult vertues and duties (humility, meekneſs, patience, contentedneſs) ſhewing us how we ſhould vertuouſly comport with the loweſt ſtate; how we ſhould chearfully ſuſtein wants, labours, pains and diſgraces; how we ſhould contentedly be deſtitute of all the glories, riches and pleaſures of this world;

That

That also the divine power and glory might appear more conspicuously through his worldly state of impotency and baseness.

That he might insinuate the nature of his Kingdom not to consist in secular pomp and puissance, but in spiritual power over the hearts of men.

That he might discover wherein our happiness doth consist; how little any thing, which is high in vulgar esteem of men, is an ingredient thereof: And what is the true grandeur of a man; not his outward garb and retinue, but his inward vertue and goodness.

Finally, this relation of the Blessed Virgin to our Lord, as it should beget a precious esteem and honourable memory of her (for let that mouth be curst which will not call her blessed, let the name of him be branded with everlasting reproach of folly, who will not prefer her in dignity before any Queen or Empress) so it should not serve to breed in us fond opinions, or to ground superstitious practices in regard to her, as it hath happened to do among divers sorts of *Christians*; especially among the adherents to *Rome*. For,

They (out of a wanton mind, but in effect profanely and sacrilegiously) have attributed to her divers swelling and vain names, divers scandalously unsavoury, some hideously blasphemous titles and elogies, as alluding to, so intrenching upon the incommunicable prerogatives of God Almighty, and of our Blessed Saviour; such as *the Queen of Heaven*, *the Health of the world*, *the Mother of mercies*, *the Spouse of God*, *our Lady* (as if beside our *unus Dominus*, there were *una Domina* in the Church, forgotten by S. *Paul*) with the like. Ephes. 4. 5. 1 Cor. 8. 6.

They ascribe to her the most sublime attributes of God, together with his most peculiar actions of providence and protection over us, yea of redemption it self.

They yield acts of religious veneration (prayer and praise) to her, and those in a very high manner and strein; professing not onely *to serve her* religiously (which the Holy Scripture chargeth us to doe in regard to God and him onely) but ὑπερδουλεύειν, to doe more than serve her, or to serve her with exceeding devotion.

Who commonly do at the end of their works joyn, *Praise be to God, and to the Blessed Virgin*; as if she were to share with God in the glory and gratitude due for blessing or success upon our performances. Laus Deo & B. Virgini.

All this they doe without any plain reason, any plausible authority, any ancient example, yea manifestly enough against the best reason, the commands of God, the doctrine and practice of the primitive Church, all which do conspire in appropriating religious adoration to God alone; Neither the Holy Scripture, nor the first Fathers excepting the Blessed Virgin from the general rule; or taking notice of her as an object of our worship, but nipping the first essays of such a superstition in the *Collyridians*.

Such groundless and foolish conceits, such dangerous and impious practices we should carefully beware; the which, as they much derogate from God's honour, and prejudice his service, and thwart his commands, so they indeed do rather greatly discredit, injure and abuse the Blessed Virgin; (making her name accessory to such enormous scandals) than they do bring any honour, or doe any right to her.

And

And, I doubt not but, εἴ τις αἴσθησις, if she from her seat of bliss doth behold these perverse services, or absurd flatteries of her, she with holy regret and disdain, doth distaste, loath, disdain and reject them; with a *Non nobis Domine*, Psal. 115. *Not unto us, O Lord*; and with the *Angel* in the *Apocalypse*, Ὅρα μή, *See thou doe it not.*

Apoc. 19. 10. 22. 9. Act. 10. 26. 14. 14.

Whose greater honour it was in truth, to be a meek and humble servant, than to be the mother of her Lord and Saviour; It is the chief and truest honour we can doe her, to esteem her great modesty and humility, to imitate her piety and grace, after her pattern conscientiously to reverence and obey her Son; Unto whom therefore let us with hearty thankfulness render all Glory and Praise. *Amen.*

Suffered under Pontius Pilate.

SERMON XXV.

1 COR. 1. 23.

*But we preach Christ * crucified.*

* *Who was crucified.* (τὸν ἐσταυρωμένον.) Λόγος τῆς σταυροῦ, 1 Cor. 1. 18.

THE Doctrine of the Gospel is called *the word of the Cross*; that is, a report concerning our Lord's crucifixion, together with a declaration of the ends, effects and uses of it; this being a special and main point therein, whereto all the rest are closely allyed, and whereon the whole method of our salvation dependeth; a point, which (as S. *Paul* in this, and in several other places doth acquaint us) of all others did find the hardest entertainment among all sorts of people, to whom it was addressed; few auditours being disposed to swallow it, or able to digest it. The *Jews* were much offended, that one who suffered by their hands in so vile and wretched a manner, should be propounded to them as their *Messias* and *King*; the same, who according to their opinions and hopes (grounded on their ancient Prophecies plausibly interpreted, and on their constant traditions) was destined to restore them from their afflicted condition, and to rear them into a high state of prosperity. The *Pagans* took it for an extravagantly foolish conceit, that a person of so mean a quality, and so miserable a fortune, should be such as was told them, *the Son of God*, and *Lord of all things*, the authour of happiness, and the object of highest adoration to all men; very absurd and abominable this Proposition did generally seem to the carnal and worldly prejudices of men, who little could understand, and less would consider the sublime design thereof;

Celsus. Orig. *lib.* 2. *p.* 83, &c. *lib.* 1. *p.* 368. Porphyrius. Aug. *de. Civ.* D. 10. 28. Lucian. Jul. *apud* Cyrill. 6. *p.* 194. Tryphon. *apud* Just. (*p.* 317.)

thereof; but to thoſe, who (being endewed with a meek heart, and enlightned by divine grace) did rightly apprehend and duely weigh it, it did afford great ſatisfaction and comfort; it had on them a moſt effectual and beneficial influence; proving indeed unto them *the power of God to ſalvation*; as raiſing in them ſtrong hopes of ſalvation, and engaging them in a practice conducible thereto. Upon this point therefore our Lord's Ambaſſadours, the *Holy Apoſtles*, in their preaching chiefly did inſiſt, declaring the great ends, and excellent fruits of our *Bleſſed Saviour*'s crucifixion; according to that of S. *Paul*, *I determine to know nothing among you ſave Chriſt, and him crucified.*

1 Cor. 1. 18. Rom. 1. 16.

1 Cor. 2. 2.

It is therefore queſtionleſs a moſt profitable, and ever (eſpecially now, when our Lord's paſſion is by the Church ſolemnly commemorated) very ſeaſonable ſubject of our meditation; apt to excite good thoughts, good affections, and good reſolutions in us; and as ſuch I mean now to recommend and apply it; endeavouring to aſſiſt your meditation by ſuggeſting ſome remarkable particulars concerning it; and in my diſcourſe I ſhall not ſo much generally conſider the death and paſſion of our Lord, as the particular manner and kind thereof, by crucifixion; the which we may contemplate, as qualified with divers notable adjuncts; namely, 1. As a ſuffering in appearance criminal. 2. As moſt bitter and painfull. 3. As moſt ignominious and ſhamefull. 4. As agreeable and advantageous to the intents of his paſſion. 5. As completory of ancient preſignifications and predictions. 6. As apt to excite devotion in us, and to enforce on us the practice of our duty.

Tryphon the *Jew* in *Juſtin Martyr*, doth confeſs, That *Chriſt*, according to the Prophecies of Holy Scripture, was to ſuffer, but it did offend him that he ſhould ſuffer in this kind. *Juſt. M. p.* 317.

I. Let us conſider it as a ſuffering in appearance criminal; or a ſeeming execution of juſtice upon our Lord, as a malefactour: *He was*, as the *Prophet* foretold, *numbred among the tranſgreſſours*; and *God* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *made him ſin for us, who knew no ſin*; that is, God ordered him to be dealt with as an exceedingly ſinfull, or criminous perſon, who in himſelf was perfectly innocent, and void of the leaſt tendency to any fault: So in effect it was, that he was impeached of the higheſt crimes, not onely as a violatour of the divine law, in breaking the Sabbath, in keeping bad company, and holding an over-free converſation; but as an impoſtour, deluding and ſeducing the people; as a blaſphemer, aſſuming to himſelf the properties and prerogatives of God; as a ſeditious and rebellious perſon, *perverting the nation*, forbidding the payments of tribute to *Cæſar*, uſurping Royal authority, and pretending to be *Chriſt a King*; in general, as a κακοποιὸς, *a malefactour*, or one guilty of notable crimes; ſo his proſecutours (in the Goſpel) did affirm, *If* (ſaid they to *Pilate*) *he were not a malefactour, we ſhould not have delivered him up unto thee*: As ſuch he was repreſented and arraigned; and that although by a ſentence wreſted from the Judge againſt his conſcience, by the malicious importunity of his accuſers, he was condemned, and in pretence ſuffered as ſuch, is clear and admitted by all.

Iſa. 53. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 21.

Joh. 5 18. 10. 30. 7. 12. Luc. 23. 2. Matt. 27. 63.

Joh. 18. 30.

Now whereas any death, or paſſion of our Lord (as being in it ſelf infinitely valuable, and moſt precious in the ſight of God) might have been ſufficient toward the accompliſhing the general deſigns of his paſſion, the expiation of our guilt, the appeaſement of God's wrath, the ſatisfaction of divine juſtice; it might be inquired, why God ſhould ſo expoſe him, and why he ſhould chuſe to ſuffer under this odious and ugly character; to ſatisfie this demand, and that we may the more admire the wiſedom and goodneſs of God in this great diſpenſation, divers reaſons may be aſſigned, which are intimated in Holy Scripture, or bear a conformity to its doctrine, why it was ſo ordered. For. 1. As

1. As our Saviour freely did undertake a life of greateſt meanneſs and hardſhip, ſo upon the like accounts he might be pleaſed to undergoe a death of all moſt bitter and uncomfortable: There is nothing to man's nature (eſpecially to honeſt and ingenuous nature, wherein natural modeſty is not extinct) more abominable than ſuch a death: God for good purpoſes hath planted in our conſtitution a lively ſenſe of diſgrace; and of all diſgraces that which proceedeth from an imputation of heinous crimes is moſt diſguſtfull and pungent; and being conſcious of our innocence, doth increaſe the ſmart; and to reflect upon our ſelves dying under it, or leaving the world with an indelible ſtain upon our name and memory, is yet more grievous; Even to languiſh by degrees, enduring the torments of a long, however ſharp diſeaſe, would, to any ingenuous perſon, be far more eligible, than in this manner (of being reputed and treated as a villain) to find a quick and eaſie diſpatch; Some touch of which reſentment we may conceive breaking forth in our Lord, and ſomewhat of man's nature diſcovering it ſelf in that queſtion; *Be ye come out as againſt a thief, with ſwords and ſtaves?* He did it ſeems, as a man, loath to be proſecuted as a thief; yet he willingly choſe it; as he purpoſely did embrace other the worſt of diſtaſtfull things, belonging to our nature, and incident to that lowly condition, into which he did put himſelf; (not onely *being made in the likeneſs of man*, but *taking the form of a ſervant*) to endure want, and to fare hardly; to be ſlighted, envyed, hated, ſcorned and reproached through the whole courſe of his life. Had he dyed in any other way, he had not been ſo complete a ſufferer, nor had taſted the worſt of what men can and do endure; there had been a comfort in ſeeming innocent, which had impaired the perfection of his undertaking. Often was he in danger of death, both from the cloſe machinations, and from the open violences of thoſe who maligned him; but he induſtriouſly declineth a death ſo eaſie, and ſo honourable, if I may ſo ſpeak; it not being ſo diſgracefull to fall by private malice, or by ſudden rage, as by the ſolemn and deliberate proceeding of perſons in publick authority, and great credit.

Luc. 22. 52. Matt. 26. 55.

Phil. 2. 7.

Joh. 5. 18. 8. 37, 40, 59. 7. 1, 19, 25. 10. 32, 38.

This kind of death he did foreſee, and plainly with ſatisfaction did aim at; He (as we have it related in the *Goſpels*) did ſhew his diſciples, that it was incumbent on him (by Gods appointment, and his own choice) ὅτι δεῖ αὐτὸν πολλὰ παθεῖν, *that he ought to ſuffer many things; to be reprobated by the Chief Prieſts, Elders and Scribes; to be vilifyed by them*; to be *condemned, and delivered up to the Gentiles,* εἰς τὸ ἐμπαῖξαι, *to be mocked and ſcourged, and crucifyed:* as a moſt flagitious ſlave.

Matt. 16. 21. Luc. 9. 22. Marc. 9. 12. Ἀποδοκιμασθῆναι ἐξουδενωθῆναι.

Thus would our Saviour, in conformity to all the reſt of his voluntary afflictions, and for a conſummation of them, not onely ſuffer in his body, by ſore bruiſes and wounds, in his ſoul by the bittereſt ſorrows and agonies; but in his name alſo and reputation by the fouleſt ſcandals; undergoing as well all the infamy, as the infirmity which did belong unto us, or could befall us; thus meaning by all means to expreſs his charity, and exerciſe his compaſſion toward us; thus advancing his merit, and yielding the utmoſt ſatisfaction to juſtice in our behalf. Again,

2. Death paſſing on him as a malefactour by publick judgment, did beſt ſute to the nature of his undertaking, was moſt congruous to his deſign in ſuffering, did moſt aptly repreſent what he was doing, and imploy the reaſon of his performance. We all were guilty in a moſt high

high degree; we deserved an exemplary condemnation; the sharpest pain, together with the greatest shame, was due to us for our unworthy offending our most great, and our most good Lord and Maker; He did undertake in our stead to bear all this, and fully to satisfy for us; He therefore underwent the like judgment and punishment, being reputed, being termed, being treated as we should have been, in quality of a notorious malefactour, as we in truth are. What we really had acted in dishonouring and usurping upon God, in disordering and troubling the world, in deceiving and perverting others (by our negligent mistakes, and our presumptuous miscarriages; by our evil practices and contagious examples) that was imputed to him, and avenged on him; *All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all*; he therefore did not only sustain an equivalent punishment, but in a sort did bear an equal blame with us before God and man. Farther, Isa. 53. 6.

3. Seeing it was determined that our Lord should die for us, and that not in a natural but violent manner, so as perfectly to satisfie God's justice, to vindicate his honour, and to evidence his indignation against our sins; it was most fit, that he should perform it in that way, wherein God's right is most nearly concerned, and his providence most discernible; wherein it should be most apparent, that God did exact and inflict punishment on him, that he did yield unto it, and submissively undergoe it. *All judgment* (as *Moses* said in his charge) *is God's*; or is administred in his name, by authority derived from him; all Magistrates being his Officers and instruments, by whom he governeth and ordereth the world, his Kingdom; whence that which is done in way of formal judgment by persons in authority, God himself may be supposed in a more special and immediate manner to execute it, as being done by his commission, in his stead, on his behalf; with his peculiar superintendance and guidance; It was therefore in our Saviour a signal act of submission to God's authority and justice, becoming the person which he sustained of our proxy and redeemer, to undergoe such a judgment, and such a punishment; whereby he received a doom as it were from God's own mouth, uttered by his Ministers; and bare the stroak of justice from God's hand, represented by his instruments; wherefore very seasonably and pertinently did he reply to *Pilate*, avowing his authority under God in those words, *Thou hadst no power over me* (or against me) *except it were given thee from above*; implying, it was in regard to that originally supreme authority of God his Father, and to his particular appointment upon that occasion, that our Saviour did then freely subject himself to those inferiour and subordinate powers, as to the proper ministers of divine justice; Had he suffer'd in any other way, by any private malice or passion of men, God's special providence in that case had been less visible, and *Christ*'s obedience not so remarkable; And if he must die by publick hands, it must be as a criminal, under a pretence of guilt and demerit; there must be a formal process, how full soever of mockery and outrage; there must be testimonies produced, however false and groundless; there must be a sentence pronounced, although most partial and corrupt; for no man is persecuted by authority without some colour of desert; otherwise it would cease to be publick authority, and become private violence; the prosecutour then would put off the face of a Magistrate, and appear as a murtherer, or a thief. Deut. 1. 2 Chr. 19. 6. Κατ' ἐμοῦ. John 19. 11.

4. In fine, our Saviour perhaps in no other way, with such advantage, could have displayed all kinds of vertue and goodness, to the honour of God, and the furtherance of our benefit, as in this: The Judgment-hall, with all the passages leading him thither, and from thence to execution, attended on by guards of souldiers, among the crouds and clamours of the people, were as so many theatres, on which he had opportune convenience visibly, in the eye of the world, to act divers parts of sublimest vertue; to express his insuperable constancy in attesting truth and maintaining a good conscience, his meekness in calmly bearing the greatest wrongs, his patience in contentedly enduring the saddest adversities; his entire resignation to the will and providence of God; his peaceable submission to the law and power of man; his admirable charity in pitying, in excusing, in obliging those by his good wishes and earnest prayers for their pardon, who in a manner so injurious, so despiteful, so cruel, did persecute him; yea in willingly suffering all this for their salvation: all these excellent vertues and graces, by the matter being thus ordered, were in a degree most eminent, and in a manner very conspicuous, demonstrated to the praise of God's name, and the advancement of his truth; for the settlement of our faith and hope; for an instruction and encouragement of good practice to us. Upon such considerations it might be expedient, that he should suffer in this kind as a criminal.

Was Crucified.

SERMON XXVI.

1 COR. 1. 23.

But we preach Christ crucified.

IT is added in the *Creed*, **under Pontius Pilate**; ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου; in which words the *preposition* ἐπὶ may either denote the circumstance of time, when our Saviour's passion did happen in the time of *Pontius Pilate* his government, or presidency over *Judæa*; so the word ἐπὶ is very frequently used; or it may also farther imply a respect to that person, as an instrument of our Saviour's passion; so that it might also be rendred, by, or under *Pontius Pilate*, as President and Judge; thus is the word sometimes used (as for instance, where in the *Gospel* it is said, ἐὰν ἀκουσθῇ τοῦτο ἐπὶ τοῦ ἡγεμόνος, *if this be heard by the Governour*, or *if it come to the Governour's ear*, as it is rendred in our Translation.) Neither of these senses were, I suppose, distinctly, but both rather conjunctly intended here; in relation to the *Evangeli-*

Matt. 28. 14.

cal

cal History; the which (as to the main obvious passages) we are here supposed to know, and do profess to believe; neither do I think any thing more of mystery designed here beyond the full and clear determination of our *Saviour*'s Person; or the declaration of whom we do believe in by circumstances most apt and sutable to that purpose; the *time when*, the *person under whom*, and consequently the *place where*, and *manner how* he suffered. However all these circumstances are in themselves considerable, and afford some matter of edification to our faith and practice: Let us therefore touch them.

1. The *time*, in it self most fit, and most agreeable to divine predictions, doth illustrate the wisdom of God in his providence, doth confirm his veracity, his constancy and his fidelity: For when the fullness of time was come; when the Sceptre of Legislation and Sovereign authority was just departed from *Judah*; while the *Jewish* Temple did stand, but was shortly to be destroyed; before the *Jews* were utterly unsettled, and dispersed; when the LXX. *hebdomades* (of years) were near expiring, the time when the *Messias should be cut off*; when *Judaism* Dan. 9. 26. was by numerous accession of Proselytes diffused over the world; the Sacred Writings being translated, and legible every where; when the world was in the most general peace, and deepest calm; consequently mens attention being than more ready, and their minds more capable of instruction and persuasion concerning divine truths; when the most considerable part of the world was united under one Empire (or under two, that of the *Romans*, and that of the *Parthians*) and thence more fit to be incorporated into a spiritual Common-wealth (to communicate in offices of piety, to impart and receive instruction) when mankind by learning and policy was generally better civilized than ever, more inquisitive after knowledge, and more receptive of truth; when in short all things were duly prepared, and suted for the great effects designed by God to proceed from our Saviour's passion, and other performances, then did he suffer, and doe what God had in his wisdom and goodness predetermined, presignified and predicted. I might add, that the time was fit to be set down, as a character apt to confirm the truth of the history; for direction to a fair inquiry and trial concerning it; to exclude all confusion and uncertainty about it.

2. As for the *Person* under whom our Lord suffered; if we consider him as a *Roman-stranger* (or *Gentile*) or as a *Governour* and *Judge*; or with regard to his personal qualities; or according to his deportment in this affair; something in all these respects may present it self observable by us.

He was an alien from the Common-wealth of *Israel*; so *Jews* and *Gentiles* conspired in violence and injury against their common Saviour; that so in type and mystery it might be signified how the sins of all men did jointly bring him to his death; *that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world might become guilty before God.* Neither was Rom. 3. 19. it for nothing decreed by God, that the *Jews* should (as our *Saviour* Matt. 20. 19. foretold) *deliver him up* (παῖς ἐθνεσιν) to the *Gentiles, to mock, and* Matt. 27. 18. *scourge, and crucifie him.* The *Jews* out of envy and malice delivered him up, accused and prosecuted him, instigated and importuned against him; The *Gentiles* out of ignorance, profaneness and unjust partiality, condemned and executed him; whereby the ingratitude, iniquity and impiety of all mankind did in some sort appear, and was Rom. 5. 6. 8. aptly represented; and consepuently his immense goodness is demon- 10. strated, who for so impious, unjust and flagitious a generation, for so 1 Pet. 3. 18.

malicious enemies, for so cruel persecutours of himself did willing suffer: them, who so combined in mischief against him, he then designed to conjoin in reconciliation to God, and in mutual peace and charity toward one another; *reconciling both unto God in one body by the Cross, having slain the enmity thereby*

Eph. 2. 16. Col. 1. 20.

A *stranger* also was proper for the management of this affair, as apt to be a more fair and indifferent Judge; doing what was designed and fit to be done in our Saviour's trial, for vindication of his personal innocence, and declaration of the iniquity practised against him.

Again, if we consider *Pilate* as a *Governour* and *Judge*; (for so he was, *Cæsar*'s *Procurator*, and *President* of *Judæa*, ἐπίτροπος, and ἡγεμὼν he is called) we therein may discern the wisdom and special providence of God; punishing our Saviour for us by his own officer in a course of Justice; the loyal obedience of our Saviour submitting both to God and to man, although in a case of a plain outrage and highest injustice against himself; the heinousness of that wicked proceeding, wherein that sacred power committed by God to men, and the venerable name of justice were so abused; for if ever, then one might have said with the *Preacher*, *I saw the place of judgment; that wickedness was there; and the place of righteousness, that iniquity was there.*

Matt. 27. 2. &c.

Eccles. 3. 16.

As for *Pilate*'s personal qualities; he is by the *Historians* writing near those times reported to have been a man of a harsh and rough temper, willful and haughty in spirit, violent, rapacious and cruel in his proceedings, and was therefore a proper instrument of providence for execution of such a business; so holy and gracious in God's purpose, so villanous and barbarous according to man's intention; Such a person deserved to bear the guilt of a fact so execrably base; was worthy to be employed therein, and ready enough to undergoe it: It had not in it self been so plausible that such an act should, nor so credible that it could proceed from any person otherwise of good disposition, or right intention; but for him it was proper, of him it could not be improbable; who by his former violence (such as upon the complaints of this people did soon after, as *Josephus* telleth, remove him from his charge) had so incensed the *Jews*, that he would not stick to gratifie them in a matter wherein they so earnestly concerned themselves; and which in semblance (setting aside considerations of justice and honesty, so little material in such a person's regard) so little touched his own interest; in yielding up so poor, so as to outward shew inconsiderable a person, as a boon or sacrifice to their importunate rage: *Pilate* (saith Saint *Mark*) *willing to content the people, released Barrabas unto them, and delivered Jesus, when he had scourged him, to be crucified.*

Joseph. *Antiq.* 18. 5.

Marc. 15. 15. Τὸ ἱκανὸν ποιῆσαι τῷ ὄχλῳ.

Such an one he was; and yet it is observable, that in comparison to the furious *Jews*, he behaved himself with some moderation and ingenuity: He was so fair in examination of the case, as notwithstanding their eager and clamorous prosecution, to discern the right, and to declare our *Saviour* guiltless: he was so far constant and true to his conscience, as to expostulate with the *Jews*, and once, twice, a third time to challenge them, *Why, what evil hath he done?* as often did he discover his inclination and readiness (yea his will and intention, his earnest desire——) to free the innocent person; Yet had he not the heart or the honesty throughly to resist their importunities; they were more obstinate in their wicked designs, than he resolute in his good purposes: So partly, out of fear to offend them, partly out of favour to oblige them (those two usual corrupters of right judgment) he yielded to

John 19. 6. Luc. 23, 14, &c.

John 19. 12. ἐζήτει.

Luc. 23. 20. Acts 3. 13. Κελεύων ἐκεῖνος ἀπολύειν.

to them, unworthily suffering himself to be overborn by their wicked solicitations, so sacrificing acknowledged innocence to his own private interest, and their implacable malice. Thus did the heathen Judge behave himself, serving divine providence, not onely in the publick and formal condemnation of our Saviour to the punishment due unto us, but in the solemn and serious absolution of him from all blame deserved by himself: In shew he condemned our Saviour, in truth he condemned himself, the corrupt Judge; and the *Jews*, the malicious accusers: though he took away his life, yet he cleared his reputation? affording a testimony most valid and convincing of his innocence; such as was requisite to convince all *Jewish* slanders and aspersions; and sufficient to confirm our faith.

3. Farthermore, the name of *Pontius Pilate* intimateth the *place* of our Saviour's passion; he being well known to have been Governour of *Judea*, and to have his Tribunal of Justice at the mother-City thereof, *Jerusalem:* at *Jerusalem*, *that bloudy City*, as the *Prophet* calls it; whose character it was to be the *killer of the Prophets*, *and the stoner of them who were sent unto her*; *out of which it was* (in a sort) *impossible*, that a Prophet should perish; yet the place of all the world most favoured, and graced by God by special blessings and privileges; at *Jerusalem*, his own peculiar seat; *the City of God*, *the City of the great King* it is styled; the which he *out of all the Tribes of Israel*, *out of all the people of the earth had chosen to put his name* (to place his especial presence) *there*; *the holy* and *beloved City*; there at his own doors as it were, before his own sacred Palace, where most especial respect and veneration were due to him, was the King of heaven adjudged and executed; by procurement of his own servants, peculiarly related to him, the Chief Priests and Elders of his chosen people, persons wholly devoted to his service, and highly dignified by him; whose office and especial duty it was to maintain truth and encourage righteousness, to procure, by their instruction and practice, honour to God and obedience to his commandments; which circumstance considered as it highly advances the goodness of him, who willingly suffered there, and by such persons; so it much aggravateth man's ingratitude and iniquity.

Ezek. 22. 2. 24. 6. Luc. 13. 33, 34. Ps. 48. 2. 87. 3. Deut. 12. 5. Neh. 9. 1. Ezr. 6. 12. 1 King. 11. 32. Mat. 4. 5. 27, 53. Apoc. 20. 9, &c.

I shall now proceed to handle the rest of the Particulars which I proposed in the beginning of the last Discourse.

II. We may consider that his suffering was most bitter and painfull. We may easily imagine, what acerbity of pain must be endured by our Lord in his tender limbs being stretched forth, racked and tentered, and continuing a good time in such a posture; by the *piercing his hands and his feet*, parts exquisitely sensible, with sharp nails (so that as it is said of *Joseph*, *the iron entred into his soul)* by abiding exposed to the injuries of Sun scorching, wind beating upon, whether searching his grievous wounds and sores: Such a pain it was, and that no stupifying, no transient pain, but a pain very acute, and withall lingring: for we see that he, and those who suffered with him, had both presence of mind, and time to discourse; even six long hours did he continue under such torture, sustaining in each minute of them beyond the pangs of an ordinary death. But as the case was so hard and sad, so the reason thereof was great, and the fruit answerably excellent; Our Saviour did embrace such a passion, that in being thus ready to endure the most grievous smarts for us, he might demonstrate the vehemence of his love; that he might signifie the heinousness of our sins, which deserved that from such a person, so heavy punishment should be exacted; that

Pfal. 105. 18. O. T. *walked*

Marc. 15. 25. 34.

that he might appear to yield a valuable compensation for those everlasting tortures which we should have endured, that he might thoroughly exemplify the hardest duties of obedience and patience. Farther,

III. We may consider this sort of punishment as most sharp and afflictive, so most vile and shamefull; being proper to the basest condition of the worst men, and *unworthy* (as *Lactantius* saith) *of a freeman, however innocent, or guilty.* It was *servile supplicium*, a punishment never by the *Romans*, under whose Law our Lord suffered, legally inflicted upon freemen, but onely upon slaves, that is upon people scarce regarded as men, having in a sort forfeited or lost themselves; and among the *Jews* likewise, that execution, which most approached thereto, and in part agreed with it (for they had no so inhumane punishment appointed by their Law) hanging up the dead bodies of some who had been executed, was deemed most infamous and execrable; for *cursed*, said the Law, *is every one, that hangeth upon a tree*; cursed, that is devoted to reproach and malediction; *accursed of God*, it is in the *Hebrew*; that is, seeming to be deserted by God, or to be exposed to affliction by his special order.

Quod etiam homine libero quam in nocente videatur indignum. Lact. 4. (p. 436)

Deut. 21. 23. Gal. 3. 16.

Τοῦτο γὰρ μέγιστον τῆς τελευτῆς τὸ εἰς ὕψος ὑπὸ ἀερῶν ἐξέκειτο. Chrys. Tom. 6. Or. 61.

Indeed, according to course of things, to be raised on high, and for continuance of time, to be objected to the view of all that pass by, in that calamitous posture, doth breed ill suspicion, doth provoke censure, doth invite contempt, scorn and obloquy; doth naturally draw forth language of derision, despight and detestation, especially from the inconsiderate, rude and hard-hearted vulgar; which commonly doth think, speak, deal with men according to event and appearance (—*sequitur fortunam semper & odit Damnatos*) whence δειγματίζεσθαι, *to be made a gazing stock*, or object of reproach to the multitude, is accounted by the *Apostle* as an aggravation of the hardships endured by the primitive Christians: And thus in the highest degree did it happen to our Lord; for we read that the people did in that condition, mock, jeer and revile him; ἐξεμυκτήριζον, ἐνέπαιζον, ἐβλασφήμουν, they drew up their noses, they shot out their lips, they shaked their heads at him; they let out their wicked and wanton tongues against him: verifying that prediction in the *Psalm*, *I am a reproach of men, and despised of the people*; *all they that see me laugh me to scorn*; *they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, he trusted in the Lord, that he would deliver him, let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him*; In this case the same persons, who formerly had admired his glorious works, who had been ravished with his excellent discourses, who had followed and favoured him so earnestly; who had blessed and magnified him (for *he*, saith S. *Luke*, did *teach in their Synagogues*, δοξαζόμενος ὑπὸ πάντων, *being glorified by all*) even those very men did then behold him with pitylesse scorn and despight; εἰστήκει ὁ δεωρῶν, *the people*, saith Saint *Luke*, *stood gazing upon him*, in correspondence to that in the Prophet, *they look and stare upon me*; they look in a scornfull manner, venting contemptuous and spitefull reproaches, as we see reported in the Evangelical Histories.

Heb. 10. 33.

Luc. 23. 35. 36. Matt. 27. 38.

Psal. 23. 6, 7.

Mat. 9. 33. 21. 9. 12, 23. Luc. 4. 15.

Luc. 23. 15. Psalm 22. 17.

Thus did our Saviour *endure the cross, despising the shame*; despising the shame that is, not simply disregarding, or disesteeming it, as no evil, with a *Stoical* haughtiness, or *Cynical* immodesty; but not eschewing it, or not valuing it as so great an evil, that for declining it he would neglect the prosecution of his great and glorious designs. There is in man's nature an aversation abhorrency from disgracefull abuse, no less strong than are the like antipathies to pain whence cruel

Heb. 12. 2.

cruel *mockings and scourgings* we find coupled together, as ingredients of the sore persecutions sustained by Gods faithfull Martyrs; and generally men will more readily embrace, and more contentedly support the latter than the former; pain not so grievously affecting the lower sense, as being insolently despised, doth grate on the fancy and wound the mind; for the *wounds* of infamy do as the *Wise man* telleth us, *goe down into the innermost parts of the belly*, piercing the very hearts of men, and touching the soul to the quick. We need not therefore doubt, but that our Saviour (as a man, endewed with humane passions and infirmities) was sensible of this natural evil; and that such indignity did add somewhat of bitter and loathsomnes to his cup of affliction; especially considering that his great charity disposed him to grieve, observing men to act so very indecently, so unworthily, and so unjustly toward him; yet in consideration of the glory that would thence accrue to God, of the benefit that would redound to us, of *the joy that was set before him*, when he *should see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied*, he did most willingly undertake and gladly undergo it: *He became*, as the *Apostle* saith, *a curse for us*, or was exposed to malediction and reviling; he endured *the contradiction* (or obloquy) *of sinfull men*, he was *despised*, *rejected and disesteemed of men*; he in the common apprehensions of men did seem deserted by God, according to that of the Prophet, *We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*; he did himself in a manner seem to concur in that opinion, as by that wofull outcry, *Lama sabacthani*, doth appear; So did he become a curse for us, *that* as the *Apostle* subjoyneth, *we might be redeemed from the curse of the Law*, that is, that we might be saved from that exemplary punishment due to our transgressions of the Law; with the displeasure of God appearing therein, and the disgrace before men attending it: He chose thus to *make himself of no reputation* (as the *Apostle* speaketh) being contented to be dealt with as a wretched slave and wicked miscreant, that we might be exempted not onely from the torment, but also from the ignominy we had deserved; that we together with our life, and safety, and liberty, might recover even that honour which we had forfeited.

Heb. 11. 36. Prov. 18. 8. 12. 18. Heb. 12. 2. Isa. 53. 11. Gal. 3 13. Heb. 12. 13. Isa. 53. 3. 4. Phil. 2. 7.

But lest any one should be tempted not sufficiently to value these sufferings of our Lord, as things not so rare, but that other men have tasted the like; or should be ready to compare them with the sufferings of other vertuous men, as *Celsus* did with those of *Anaxarcus* and *Epictetus*; I shall by the bye interpose somewhat observable concerning them. We may then consider, that not onely the infinite excellency of his person, and the perfect innocency of his life, did enhance the price of his sufferings, but some endowments peculiar to him, and some circumstances, did encrease their force: He was not onely, according to the frame and temper of humane nature, sensibly affected with the pain and shame, and all the rest of evils apparently waiting on his passion; as God (when he did insert sense and passion in our nature, ordering objects to affect them) did intend that we should be, and as other men in like outward circumstances would have been, but in many respects beyond that ordinary rate; No man, we may suppose, could have felt such grief from them as he did, no man did ever feel any thing comparable to what he did endure; it might be truely applyed to him, *Behold and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger* as that extraordinary *sweating great lumps of bloud* may argue; as the terms expressing his affliction

Lam. 1. 22. Luc. 22. 44.

Περίλυπος. ἕως θανάτου. Matt. 26. 37. 38. Luc. 22. 44. ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ γινόμ. Joh. 13. 21. 12. 27. Marc. 14. 33.

affliction do intimate; for in regard to preſent evils *his ſoul* is ſaid to have been *exceedingly ſorrowfull unto death*; he is ſaid ἀδημονεῖν, to be in great anguiſh and anxiety; and to be in an agony, or pang; In reſpect to miſchiefs which he foreſaw coming on, he is ſaid ταράττεσθαι τῷ πνεύματι, to be diſordered, or *diſturbed in ſpirit*, and ἐκθαμβεῖσθαι, to be amazed, or diſmayed at them; to ſuch exceſſive height of paſſion did the ſenſe of incumbent evils, and the proſpect of impendent diſaſters, the apprehenſion of his own caſe, and reflexion upon our ſtate raiſe him: And no wonder, that ſuch a burthen, the weight of all the ſins (the numberleſs heinous ſins and abominations) which he did appropriate to himſelf, that ever have been, or ſhall be committed by mankind, lying upon his ſhoulders, he ſhould feel it heavy, he ſhould ſeem to crouch and groan under it; *Innumerable evils* (ſaid

Iſa. 40. 12.

he in the myſtical *Pſalm*) *have compaſſed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, ſo that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head, therefore my heart faileth me.* God's indignation ſo dreadfully flaming out againſt ſin might well aſtoniſh and terrifie him; to ſtand before the mouth of hell belching out fire and brimſtone upon him, to lie down in the hotteſt furnace of divine vengeance, to undertake with his heart-bloud to quench all the wrath of heaven, and all the flames of hell (as he did in regard to thoſe, who will not rekindle them to themſelves) might well in the heart of a man beget unconceivable and unexpreſſible preſſures of anguiſh; when ſuch a Father (ſo infinitely good and kind to him, and whom he ſo dearly loved) did hide his face from him, did angrily frown on him, How could he otherwiſe than be ſorely troubled? It is not ſtrange, that ſo hearty a love, ſo tender a pity contemplating our ſinfullneſs, and ſuſtaining our wretchedneſs, ſhould be deeply affected thereby; any one of thoſe perſons, who fondly do pretend to, or vainly glory in a ſtupid *Apathy*, or in a ſtubborn contempt of the evils incident to our nature and ſtate, would in ſuch a caſe have been utterly dejected; the moſt reſolved Philoſopher would have been daſhed into confuſion at the ſight, would have been cruſhed to deſpair under the ſenſe of thoſe calamities which aſſaulted our Lord. With the greatneſs of the cauſes, the goodneſs of his conſtitution might alſo conſpire to augment his ſuffering; for ſurely as his complexion was moſt pure and delicate, his ſpirit moſt vivid and apprehenſive, his affections moſt pliant and tractable; ſo accordingly ſhould the impreſſions upon him be moſt ſenſible; and conſequently the pains which he felt both in ſoul and body moſt ſharp and afflictive. That we in like caſes are not alike affected, that we do not tremble at the apprehenſions of God's diſpleaſure, that we are not affrighted with the ſenſe of our ſins, that we do not with ſad horrour reſent our own danger, or our miſery; doth ariſe from that we have very glimmering and faint conceptions of thoſe things, or that they do not in ſo clear and lively a manner ſtrike our mind and fancy; (not appearing in their true nature and proper ſhape, ſo heinous and ſo hideous, as they really in themſelves, and in their conſequences are) or becauſe that we have but weak perſuaſions about them; or becauſe we do but ſlightly conſider them; or from that our hearts are hard and callous, our affections cold and dull, ſo that nothing of this nature (nothing beſide groſs material affairs) can eaſily move or melt them; or for that we have in us ſmall love to God, and little regard to our own true welfare; for that briefly in reſpect to ſpiritual matters, we are neither ſo wiſe, ſo ſerious, ſo ſober; nor ſo good and ingenuous in any reaſonable meaſure,

as

as we ought to be: But our Saviour in all those respects was otherwise disposed; he most evidently discerned the wrath of God, the grievousness of sin, the wretchedness of man most truely, most fully, most strongly represented to his imagination and spirit, he most firmly believed, yea most certainly knew all that God's law had declared about them; he thoroughly did consider and weigh them; his heart was most soft, and sensible, his affections were most quick, and easily excited by their due objects; He was full of dutiful love to God his Father, and most ardently desirous of our good, bearing a more than fraternal good-will toward us; whence 'tis not marvellous, that as a man, as a transcendently good man, he was so vehemently affected by those occurrences; that his imagination was so troubled, and his affections so mightily stirred by them; so that he thence truely did suffer in a manner, and to a degree unconceivable; according to that ejaculation in the *Greek* Liturgies, διὰ τῆς ἀγνώστου σου παθημάτων ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς, χριστὲ, *By thy unknown sufferings, O Christ, have mercy on us.* But farther,

IV. We may consider, that this way of suffering had in it some particular advantages conducing to the accomplishment of our Lord's principal design.

Its being very notorious, and lasting a competent time were good advantages; for if he had been privately made away, or suddenly dispatched, no such great notice would have been taken of it, nor would the matter of fact it self have been so fully proved to the confirmation of our faith, and conviction of infidelity; nor had that his excellent deportment under such bitter affliction (his most divine patience, meekness and charity) so illustriously shone forth: Wherefore to (prevent all exceptions, and excuses of unbelief, and for other collateral good purposes) divine providence did so manage the business, that as the course of his life, so also the manner of his death should be most conspicuous and remarkable; *These things* (as S. *Paul* told *King Agrippa*) *were not done in a corner*; and, *I*, said our Lord himself, *spake freely to the world*; *and in secret have I done nothing*; so were the proceedings of his life, not close or clancular, but frank and open; not presently hushed up, but carryed on leisurely in the face of the world; that men might have the advantage to observe and examine them. And as he lived so he died most publickly and visibly, the world being witness of his death, and so prepared to believe his resurrection, and thence ready to embrace his doctrine; according to what he did himself foretell, *I being lifted up from the earth shall draw all men unto me*; he drew all men by so remarkable a death to take notice of it, he drew some from the wondrous consequences of it to believe on him: And *As*, saith he again, *Moses did exalt the Serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be exalted*; the elevation of that mysterious Serpent upon a pole did render it visible, and attracted the eyes of people toward it; whereby God's power invisibly accompanying that Sacramental performance, they were cured of those mortiferous stings which they had received; so our Lord being mounted on the Cross, allured the eyes of men to behold, and their hearts to close with him; whereby the heavenly virtue of God's spirit cooperating, they become saved from those destructive sins, which by the Devil's serpentine instigations, they had incurred.

Rom. 6. 9

Acts 26. 26. John 18. 20.

John. 12. 32.

John 13. 14.

Another advantage of this kind of suffering was, that by it the nature of that Kingdom, which he intended to erect, was evidently signified; that it was not such as the carnal people did expect, an external, earth-

ly, temporal Kingdom, consisting in domination over the bodies and Estates of men, dignified by outward wealth and spendour, managed by worldly power and policy, promoted by force and terrour of arms, affording to men the advantages of outward safety, peace and prosperity; but a Kingdom purely spiritual, heavenly, eternal; consisting in the government of mens hearts and spirits; adorned with endowments of piety and vertue, administred by the grace and guidance of God's Holy Spirit, maintained and propagated by meek instruction, by vertuous example, by hearty devotion and humble patience; rewarding its loyal subjects with spiritual joys and consolations here, with endless rest and bliss hereafter; no other Kingdom could he be presumed to design, who submitted to this dolorous and disgraceful way of suffering; no other exploits could he pretend to atchieve by expiring on a Cross, no other way could he govern who gave himself up to be managed by the will of his enemies; no other benefits would that forlorn case allow him to dispense; so that well might he then assert, *My kingdom is not of this world*, when he was going in this signal manner to demonstrate that great truth. It was a touch stone to prove mens disposition, and to discriminate the ingenuous, well-disposed, humble and sober persons, who would entertain our Lord's heavenly doctrine with acceptance, notwithstanding these disadvantages, *not being offended in him*, from those perverse, vain, proud, profane people, who being scandalized at his adversity would reject him.

Rom. 14.

John 18. 36.

Another advantage was this, that by it God's special providence was discovered, and his glory illustrated in the propagation of the Gospel, for how could it be, that a person of so low parentage, of so mean garb, of so poor condition, who underwent so woful and dispicable a kind of death, falling under the pride and spite of his adversaries, should so easily gain so general an opinion in the world (among the best, the wisest, the greatest persons) of being *the Lord of life and glory*; How (I say, could it be, that such a miracle should be effected without God's aid and special concurrence? that *Herod*, who from a long reign in a flourishing state, with prosperous success in his undertakings, got the name of *Great*; or that *Vespasian*, who triumphantly did ascend the Imperial throne, should either of them by a few admirers of worldly vanity, seriously or in flattery, be deemed the *Messias*, is not so very strange; but that one who so miserably was trampled on, and treated as a wretched caitiffe, should instantly conquer innumerable hearts, and from such a depth of extreme adversity should attain the sublimest pitch of glory; that *the stone, which the builders* with so much scorn *did refuse, should become the head stone of the corner, this* (with good assurance we may say) *is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.* It may well be so, and thereby *the excellency* of divine power and wisedom was much glorified; by so impotent, so implausible and improbable means, accomplishing so great effects, subduing the world to his obedience, not by the active valour of an illustrious *Heroe*, but through the penitent submission of a poor, abused and oppressed person; restoring Mankind to life by the death of a crucified Saviour.

Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 61.

Psal. 118. 22.

2 Cor. 4. 7. 1 Cor. 1. 27.

Again, this kind of suffering to the devout *Fathers* did seem many ways significant, or full of instructive and admonitive emblemes; being a rich and large field, for a devout fancy to range with affectionate meditation.

Extendit in passione manus suas, &c. Lact. *IV. p.* 437.

His posture on the Cross might represent unto us that large and comprehensive charity which he bare in his heart toward us, stretching forth

forth his arms of kindneſs, pity and mercy, with them as it were to embrace the world, receiving all mankind under the wings of his gracious protection.

It might exhibit him as earneſtly woing, and intreating us to return unto God, accepting the reconciliation which he then was purchaſing, and did then offer to us: *I have ſpread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people*, ſaid *God* of old, doing it then mediately and figurately by his Prophets, but he did ſo now immediately and properly by himſelf; the Croſs being as a Pulpit, from which our Lord *God bleſſed for ever*, did himſelf in perſon earneſtly preach the overtures of grace, did exhort to repentance, did tender the remiſſion of ſin, with action moſt pathetical and affecting. Iſa. 65. 2.

His aſcent to the Croſs might ſet forth his diſcharging that high office of univerſal high-Prieſt for all Ages, and all People; the Croſs being an Altar, whereon he did offer up his own fleſh, and pour forth his blood, as a pure and perfect ſacrifice, propitiating God and expiating the ſins of mankind. Levit. 9. 22. 2 Chr. 4. 1. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 82. *Quod unquam ſacrificium ſacratius fuit, quam quod verus Pontifex altari crucis per immolationem ſuæ carnis impoſuit?* Leo *M. Ep.* 83.

His elevation thither may ſuggeſt to our thoughts, that ſubmiſſion to God's will, ſuffering for truth and righteouſneſs, the exerciſes of humility and patience are conjoyned with exaltation, do qualify for, and in effect procure true preferment; ſo that the lower we ſtoop in humility, the higher we ſhall riſe in favour with God, the nearer we ſhall approach to heaven, the ſurer we ſhall be of God's bleſſing, according to that *Aphoriſm* of our Lord, *Whoſoever humbleth himſelf ſhall be exalted.* The Croſs was a Throne, whereon humility and patience did ſit in high ſtate and glorious Majeſty, advanced above all worldly pride and inſolence; It was a great ſtep, a ſure aſcent unto the celeſtial throne of dignity ſuperlative; for becauſe our Lord *was obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs, therefore did God far exalt him above all dignity and power in heaven and earth*, as S. *Paul* doth teach us. Luc. 18. 4. Matt. 23. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 5. Jam. 4. 10. Phil. 2. 8, 9.

O the fallacy of humane ſenſe! O the vanity of carnal judgment! nothing ever was more auſpicious, or more happy than this event which had ſo diſmal an aſpect, and provoked ſo contemptuous ſcorn in ſome, ſo grievous pity in others; The Devil thought he had done bravely, when he had by his ſuggeſtions brought the Son of God into this caſe; the World ſuppoſed it ſelf highly proſperous in its attempts againſt him; but O how blind and fooliſh is malice, which then doth moſt hurt it ſelf, when it triumpheth in the miſchief which it doeth to others! How impotent is wickedneſs, which is never more thoroughly ruined than by its own greateſt ſucceſs? for by thus ſtriving to debaſe our Lord, they moſt highly did advance him; by thus croſſing our ſalvation they moſt effectually did promote it.

Farther, looking up to the Croſs may admoniſh us how our ſalvation is acquired, and whence it doth proceed; not by caſting our eyes downward, not from any thing that lyeth upon earth; but *our help cometh from above*, our ſalvation is attained by looking upwards; we muſt lift up our eyes to behold our Saviour procuring it, we muſt raiſe up our hearts to derive it from him.

Our Lord's crucifixion may alſo intimate to us, how our fleſh muſt be dealt with, and to what uſage we muſt ſubmit it; for we muſt not only imitate our Saviour in his holy life, but in ſome manner ſhould reſemble him in his gaſtly death; being (as S. *Paul* ſpeaketh) *conformable to his death*, and *planted together with him in the likeneſs of it*; Συμμορφούμενοι τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ.

Phil 3. 10. Rom. 6. 5. Gal. 2. 20. 5. 24. Col. 3. 5. Rom. 8. 13.

mortifying our earthly members, crucifying the flesh with its affections and lusts: having our *old man crucified together with Christ, that the body of sin may be destroyed.* His death may fitly shadow our death to sin, his grievous pain the bitterness of our repentance, wherein our souls should be pierced with sharp compunction, as his sacred flesh was torn with nails; his shame that confusion of mind, which regard to our offences should produce within us.

Passio ipsa per se acerba & amara specimen nobis futurorum tormentorum dabat, quam in hoc seculo morantibus virtus ipsa proponit —— Lact. *lib.* 4.

Reflecting on him we may also discern our state here; wherein, if we will be truely and thoroughly vertuous, we must be exposed to envy and hatred, to censure and obloquy, to contempt and scorn, to affliction and hardship; Every good man must hang on some cross; εἰς τοῦτο κείμεθα, * *We are*, saith S. *Paul*, *appointed to this*, 'tis our lot and portion assigned to us by divine immutable decree; being † *predestinated to a conformity with this image of God's son. We must*, as he did, *by many tribulations enter into the Kingdom of God*; *All that will live godlily in Christ Jesus shall certainly suffer persecution*, one way or other partaking of his cross.

* 1 Thes. 3. 3. † Rom. 8. 29. Acts 14. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

Divers such analogies and resemblances devout meditation might extract from this matter, suggesting practical truths, and exciting good affections in us.

V. We may (for the confirmation of our faith, and begetting in us a due adoration of the divine wisdom and providence) observe the correspondency of this our Saviour's manner of suffering to the ancient Prophecies foretelling, and the typical representations foreshewing it.

Isa. 53. 12. 5, 3. —— Marc. 15. 28.

That most famous, clear and complete Prophecy concerning the passion, doth express him suffering as a malefactour (*he was reckoned among the transgressours*) suffering in a manner very painful (he was *wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*) suffering in a most ignominious way (he was *despised, and rejected of men, as a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief*) which circumstances could scarce so punctually agree to any other kind of suffering, or punishment then used, as to this.

In the 22d *Psalm*, the Royal Prophet describeth an afflicted and forlorn condition, such as by no passages in the story concerning him doth in the full extent, and according to the literal signification of his words, appear sutable to his person, which therefore is more properly to be accommodated unto the *Messias*, whom he did represent; and in that description, among other passages agreeing to our Lord, these words do occur, *Thou hast brought me into the dust of death*; *for dogs have compassed me, the assembly of the wicked have enclosed me*; *they pierced my hands and my feet*; which words how patly and livelily do they set out our Saviour's being nailed to the cross, and treated in that cruel, and in that shameful way by his malicious adversaries?

Psal. 22. 15, 16.

In the Prophet *Zechariah*, God speaking in his own name, *They* (namely some of the *Jews*, being sensible of what they had acted, and penitently affected for it, they) *shall look upon me whom they have pierced*; which words need no violence to wring from them the right meaning, no comment to explain them, in accommodation to that matter, to which the *Evangelists* do apply them, and to which they are so literally congruous.

Zech. 12. 10. John 19. 37.

The same was also fitly prefigured by apposite types. *Isaac*, the immediate *heir of the promise*, in whom the faithful seed was called and conveyed down, and so a most apt type of our Saviour, being devoted

Gen. 22.

and

and offered up to God, did himself bear the wood by which he was to be offered; So did our Saviour, the promised seed, in *whom all nations should be blessed*, himself bear the cross by which he was to suffer, and to be offered up a sacrifice to God. Rom. 9. 8. Jam. 2. 21. Heb. 11. 17.

Those who were dangerously bitten by fiery Serpents, were, by looking upon a brazen Serpent set upon a pole, preserved in life, which (according to most authentick exposition) did represent the salvation, which should proceed from our beholding and believing on him lifted up upon the cross to us, who had been mortally struck and stung by that old Serpent's poisonous insinuations. Tert. c. Jud. cap. 10.

The Paschal Lamb was a most congruous embleme of *Christ our Passover* (that most innocent and meek, most unblemished and spotless Lamb, slain for the sins of the world.) It was to be killed by the whole assembly of the congregation of *Israel*, its bloud was to be dashed on the side-posts and cross-beams of every door; its body was not to be eaten raw, nor sodden with water, but roasted whole, and dressed upon a spit; nor were any of its bones to be broken; which circumstances, with so exact caution and care prescribed, how they justly suite and fitly adumbrate this manner of our Saviour's passion, I need not otherwise than by the bare mention of them declare; every one easily being able to compare and adapt them. 1 Pet. Exod. 12. 5, 6, 9, 46.

VI. Lastly, the consideration of our Lord's thus suffering is applicable to our practice; being most apt to instruct and affect us; admonishing us of our duty, and exciting us to a conscionable performance thereof: No contemplation indeed is more fruitfull, or more efficacious toward the sanctification of our hearts and lives, than this of the cross; For what good affection may not the meditation on it kindle? What vertue may it not breed and cherish in us?

1. How can it otherwise than enflame our heart with love toward our Lord, to think what acerbity of pain, what indignity of shame he did willingly undertake, and gladly endure for us? No imagination can devise a greater expression of charity and friendship; and if love naturally is productive of love, if friendship meriteth a correspondence in kindness, What effect should the consideration of such ineffable love, of so incomparable friendship have upon us? Joh. 15. 13. Eph. 5. 2, 25. Gal. 2. 20. Apoc. 1. 5. Eph. 3. 19.

2. How can a reflection on this case otherwise than work hearty gratitude in us? Suppose any person for our sake (that he might rescue us from the greatest mischiefs, and purchase for us the highest benefits) willingly should deprive himself of all his estate, his honour, his ease and pleasure, should expose himself to extremest hazards, should endure the sorest pains, and most disgracefull ignominies, should prostitute his life, and lose it in the most hideous manner: Should we not then be monstrously ingratefull if we did not most deeply resent such kindness; if upon all occasions we did not express our thankfulness for it; if we did not ever readily yield all the acknowledgment, and all the requital we were able? the case in regard to our Lord is the same in kind, but in degree whatever we can suppose doth infinitely fall below the performances for us of him who stooped from the top of heaven, who lade aside the felicity and Majesty of God, for the sorrows and infamies of the cross, that he might redeem us from the torments of hell, and procure to us the joys of heaven; so that our obligation to gratitude is unexpressibly great, and we are extremely unworthy if the effects in our heart and life be not answerable.

3. What-

3. What surer ground of faith in God, or stronger encouragement of hope can there be, than is hence afforded to us? for *if God spared not his own son, but delivered him up for our sake* to the suffering of these bitter pains and contumelies; How can we in any case distrust his bounty, or despair of his mercy? *How*, as S. *Paul* argueth, *shall he not also with him freely give us all things?* What higher favour could God express, what lower condescension could he shew; how more plainly or surely could he testifie his willingness and his delight to doe us good, than by ordering the Son of his love to undergo these most grievous things for us? How consequently could there be laid a stronger foundation of our hope, and entire confidence in God?

Rom. 8. 32.

4. What greater engagement (in general) can there be to obedience, than to consider how readily and chearfully our Lord did submit to the will of God, in bearing the most heavy yoke that could be imposed on him, in drinking the most bitter cup that could be tempered for him: how that he *did humble himself, being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross?* How dearly he did purchase his property in us, and dominion over us?

Phil. 2. 8.

What detestation of our sins must the serious consideration of this event produce in us? of our sins, that brought such tortures and such reproaches on our blessed Redeemer. *Judas* the wretch who betray'd him; the *Jewish Priests* who did accuse and prosecute him; the wicked rout which abused and insulted over him; those cruel hands that smote him, those pitiless hearts that scorn'd him, those poisonous tongues that mocked and reviled him; all those, who any-wise were instruments or abetters of his affliction; How do we loath them? How do we detest and curse their memories? But how much greater reason have we to abominate our sins, which were the principal causes of all that wofull tragedy? *He was delivered for our offences*, they were indeed the traitours, which by the hands of *Judas* delivered him up: *He that knew no sin was made sin for us*; that is, was accused, was condemned, was executed as a sinner for us; it was therefore we who by our sins did impeach him, the spitefull *Priests* were but our advocates; we by them did adjudge and sentence him, *Pilate* (against his will and conscience) was but our spokesman; we by them did inflict that horrid punishment on him, the *Roman* Executioners were but our agents therein. *He became a curse for us*, that is, all the mockery, derision and contumely he endured did proceed from us; the silly people were but properties, acting our parts; our sins were they that cried out *crucifige* (*crucifie him, crucifie him*) with clamours more loud and more effectual, than did all the *Jewish* rabble; it was they, which by the borrowed throats of that base people, did so outragiously persecute him; *He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*; it was they which by the hands of the fierce souldiers and of the rude populacy, as by senseless engines, did buffet and scourge him; they by the nails and thorns did pierce his flesh, and rend his sacred body; upon them therefore it is most just and fit that we should turn our hatred, that we should discharge our indignation.

Rom. 4. 25. 2 Cor. 5. 21. Gal. 3. 13. Isa. 53. 5.

5. And what in reason can be more powerfull to the breeding in us remorse and penitent sorrow, than reflection upon such horrible effects proceeding from our sins? How can we but earnestly grieve, when we consider our selves by them to have been the betrayers, the slanderers, the murtherers of a person so innocent and lovely, of one so great and glorious, of God's dear Son, and the Lord of all things, of our own best friend, and most kind Saviour?

I.

6. If ingenuity will not operate so far, and hereby melt us into contrition, yet surely this consideration must needs produce some fear within us; For can we at least otherwise than tremble to think upon the heinous guilt of our sins, upon the fierceness of God's wrath against them, upon the severity of divine judgment for them, all so manifestly discovered, all so livelily set forth in this dismal spectacle? If the view of an ordinary execution is apt to beget in us some terrour, some dread of the Law, some reverence toward Authority, What awful impressions should this singular example of divine justice work upon us? How greatly we should be moved thereby, we may learn from the deportment of the most inanimate creatures; The whole World did seem affected thereat with horrour; the frame of things was disturbed, all nature did feel a kind of compassion and compunction for it; the Sun (as out of aversion, or shame) did hide his face, leaving the earth covered for three hours with mournful blackness; the bowels of the earth did yern and quake; the rocks were rent; the veil of the Temple was torn quite through; graves did open, and the bodies did wake; And can we, (who are most concerned) be more stupid than the earth, more obdurate than rocks, more drowsie than buried carcasses, the most insensible and immoveable things in nature? (Matt. 27. 45, 51. Luc. 23. 44.)

7. How also can it but hugely deter us from wilful commission of sin, to consider, that by it we do (as the *Apostle* teacheth) *re-crucifie the Son of God, and* again *expose him to open shame*; bringing up on the stage, and acting over all that direfull Tragedy; renewing (as to our guilt) all that pain, and that disgrace to him; that we thereby (as he telleth us) do *trample upon the Son of God, and prize the blood of the covenant* (that most sacred and precious blood, so freely shed for the demonstration of God's mercy, and the ratification of his gracious intentions toward us) *as a common thing*; of no special worth, or consideration with us; despising all his so kind and painful endeavours for our salvation, defeating his most gracious purposes and earnest desires for our welfare; rendring all his so bitter and loathsome sufferings, in regard to us, altogether vain and fruitless; yea indeed hurtful and pernicious; for if the cross do not save us from our sins, it will sorely aggravate their guilt, and augment their punishment; bringing a severer condemnation, and a sadder ruin on us. Ἀναστανροῦν. Heb. 6. 6. Heb. 10. 29.

8. It may also yield great consolation and joy to us, to contemplate our Lord upon the cross, expressing his immense goodness and charity towards us; transacting our redemption; expiating our sins, and sustaining our miseries; combating and defeating all the adversaries of our salvation.

Is it not comfortable and pleasant to behold him there standing erect, not only as a resolute sufferer, but as a glorious conquerour; where *having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a solemn shew, triumphing over them?* No Conqueror loftily seated in his triumphal chariot did ever yield a spectacle so gallant or magnificent; no tree was ever adorned with trophies so pompous or precious: to the external view and carnal sense of men our Lord was then exposed to scorn and shame; but to spiritual and true discerning, all his and our enemies did there hang up as objects of contempt, quite overthrown and undone, there the Devil ὁ ἰσχυρὸς, that *strong* and sturdy *one* did hang bound and fettered, disarmed and spoiled, utterly baffled and confounded; there death it self hung gasping, with its sting plucked out, and all its terrours Col. 2. 15. Matt. 12. 29. Luc. 11. 22.

Heb. 2. 14. 1 Cor. 15. 54. 2 Tim. 1. 10. rours quelled; his death having prevented ours, and purchaſed immortality for us. There the world with its vain pomps, its counterfeit beauties, its fondly admired excellencies, its bewitching pleaſures, did hang up all diſparaged and defaced; as it appeared to S. *Paul*, *God forbid* (ſaid he) *that I ſhould glory, ſave in the Croſs of Chriſt, by which the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.* There *our ſins*, thoſe ſins, which (as S. *Peter* ſaith) our Saviour *did carry up unto the gibbet*, did hang, as marks of his victorious proweſs, as objects of our horrour and hatred, as malefactours by him *condemned in the fleſh*. There that manifold enmity (enmity between God and man, between one man and another, between man and his own ſelf or conſcience) did hang *aboliſhed in his fleſh, and ſlain upon the croſs; by the blood whereof he made peace, and reconciled all things in heaven and earth.* The blood of the croſs was the cement, joyning the parts of the world: There together with all our enemies did hand all thoſe cauſes of woe and miſery to us, thoſe yokes of bondage, thoſe inſtruments of vexation, thoſe hard laws, which did ſo much burthen and encumber men, did ſet them at ſuch diſtance and variance, did ſo far ſubject them to guilt and condemnation; all *that bound of ordinances*, inducing our obligation to ſo grievous forfeitures and penalties, was *nailed to the croſs*, being cancelled and expunged by our Saviour's performances there.

Ἀνήϵγκαν. ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον 1 Pet. 2. 14. Rom. 8. 3. Col. 1. 10. Eph. 2. 15. 16. Col. 2. 14.

9. This conſideration is a ſtrong inducement to the practice of charity toward our neighbour: for can we forbear to love thoſe, toward whom our Lord bore ſuch tender affection, for whom he did ſuſtain ſo wofull tortures and indignities? Shall we not in obedience to his moſt urgent commands, in conformity to his moſt notable example, in grateſull return to him for his benefits, who thus did ſuffer for us, diſcharge this moſt ſweet and eaſie duty toward his beloved friends? Shall we not comport with an infirmity, or bear a petty neglect, or forgive a ſmall injury to our brother, when as our Lord did bear a croſs for us, and from us, obtaining pardon for our numberleſs moſt heinous affronts and offences againſt God? 'tis S. *Paul*'s reaſoning *We that are ſtrong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak——for even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf, but as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee, fell on me.* Can we hear our *Lord* ſay, *This is my command, that ye love one another, as I have loved you*, and *Hereby ſhall all men know, that ye are my diſciples, if ye love one another?* Can we hear S. *Paul* exhorting, *Walk in love, as Chriſt alſo hath loved us, and hath given himſelf for us, an offering and a ſacrifice to God for a ſweet ſmelling ſavour?* Can we conſider S. *John*'s arguing, *Beloved, if God ſo loved us, then ought we alſo to love one another; Hereby we perceive the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us, wherefore we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren?* Can, I ſay, we conſider ſuch diſcourſes, without being diſpoſed to comply with them for the ſake of our crucified Saviour; all whoſe life and death were nothing elſe but one continual recommendation and enforcement of this duty!

Rom. 15. 1. John. 15. 12. 13. 35. Epheſ. 5. 2. 1 John. 11. 3. 16. 1 Pet. 4. 1.

10. Farthermore, what can be more operative than this conſideration, toward breeding a diſregard of this world with all its deceitfull vanities and miſchievous delights, toward reconciling our minds to the worſt condition, it can bring us into, toward ſupporting our hearts under the heavieſt preſſures of affliction it can lay upon us; How can we refuſe, in ſubmiſſion to God's pleaſure, to bear contentedly a ſlight grievance, when he, as he gladly did, bore a croſs infinitely more grievous

to

to carnal will and ſenſe, than any that can befall us? Can we expect, can we affect, can we deſire great proſperity, when as the Son of God, our Lord and Maſter did only taſte ſuch adverſity? Who can admire thoſe ſplendid trifles which our Lord did never regard in his life, which at his death did only ſerve to mock and abuſe him? Who can reliſh thoſe ſordid pleaſures, of which he living did not vouchſafe to taſte, and the contraries whereof he dying choſe to feel in all extremity? Who will dare to vilifie, to diſdain, to reject a ſtate of ſorrow, or diſgrace, which he by a voluntary ſuſception of it hath ſo dignified and graced; by which we reſemble, and become conformable to him; by which we concur and partake with him: yea by which we may promote, and in a ſort complete his deſigns; *filling up* (as S. *Paul* ſpeaketh) *that which is behind of the afflictions of Chriſt in our fleſh?* Who now can much prefer being eſteemed, applauded, approved or favoured by men, before infamy, reproach, deriſion or perſecution from them, eſpecially when theſe do follow conſcientious adherence to righteouſneſs? who can be very ambitious of worldly honour, or repute, covetous of wealth, or greedy of pleaſure, who obſerveth the onely Son of God chuſing rather to hang upon a croſs, than to ſit upon a throne; inviting the clamours of ſpite and ſcorn, rather than acclamations of bleſſing and praiſe, deveſting himſelf of all ſecular pomp, plenty, conveniences and ſolaces; embracing the garb of a ſlave, and the repute of a malefactour, before the dignity and reſpect of a Prince, which were his due, and which he eaſily could have obtained? Can we imagine it a very happy thing to be high and proſperous in this world, to ſwim here in affluence and pleaſure; can we take it for a miſery to be mean and low, to conflict with any wants or ſtraits here, ſeeing the fountain of all happineſs did himſelf condeſcend to ſo forlorn a ſtate, and was pleaſed to become ſo deep a ſufferer? If with the eyes of our mind we do behold our Lord hanging naked upon a gibbet, beſmeared with his own blood, groaning under extream anguiſh of pain, encompaſſed with all ſorts of diſgraceful abuſes, *yielding* (as the *Prophet* foretold of him) *his back to the ſmiters, and his cheeks to them who plucked off the hair, hiding not his face from ſhame and ſpitting*; will not the imagination of ſuch a Sight dim the luſtre of all earthly grandeurs and beauties, damp the ſenſe of all carnal delights and ſatisfactions, quaſh all the glee which we can find in any wild frolicks, or riotous merriments?

Rom. 8 17. Phil. 3. 10. Apoc. 1. 9. 1 Pet. 4. 13. Col. 1. 24. Ἀνταναπληρῶν τὰ ὑστερήματα.

Cogitemus crucem ejus, & divitias luxum putabimus. Her. Ep. 2. (ad Nepot.) *Quis beatam vitam eſſe arbitretur in iis, quæ contemenda eſſe docuit filius Dei?* Aug. de Ag. Ch. c. 11.

Iſa. 50.

11. It is ſurely a great commendation of afflictions, and a ſtrong conſolation under them to ponder well this point; for if hardſhip was to our Lord a ſchool of duty, *he* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith,) *learning obedience from what he ſuffered*; if it was to him an inſtrument of perfection, as the ſame *Apoſtle* implyeth, when he ſaith, that *it became God to perfect the Captain of our ſalvation by ſuffering*; if it was a means of procuring the divine favour even to him, as thoſe words import, *Therefore the Father loveth me, becauſe I lay down my life*; if it was to him a ſtep unto glory, according to that ſaying, *Was not Chriſt to ſuffer, and ſo to enter into his glory?* yea if it was a ground of conferring on him that ſublimeſt pitch of dignity above all creatures as we are taught; for *becauſe* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *he was obedient to death, even the death of the croſs, therefore did God exalt him, and gave him a name above every name*; and, *We ſee Jeſus* (ſaith the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews*) *for the ſuffering of death crowned with glory and honour*; and, *worthy* (cryeth out the heavenly ſociety in the *Revelations*) *is the Lamb that was ſlain* (and *who redeemed us to God by his blood*) *to receive power, and*

Ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθε. Heb. 5. 8. Heb 2. 10. Joh. 10. 17. Luc. 24. 26. Phil. 2. 9. Heb. 2. 9. Rev. 5. 12. (9.)

Rom. 5. 3. Col. 1. 24. Matt. 5. 12. Luc. 6. 23. Phil. 1. 29. Act. 5. 41. Jam. 1. 2. Heb. 10. 34. 1 Pet. 1. 7. Heb. 12. 1 Cor. 1. 4.

riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing; if affliction did miniſter ſuch advantages to him; and if by our conformity to him in undergoing it with like ſubmiſſion, humility and patience, it may afford the like to us, what reaſon can there be that we ſhould any-wiſe be diſcompoſed, diſcouraged or diſconſolate under it: much more reaſon ſurely there is, that with S. *Paul*, and all the Holy *Apoſtles*, we ſhould boaſt, rejoice and exult in our tribulations; far more cauſe we have with them to eſteem it a favour, a privilege, and an ornament to us, than to be diſcontented, or diſpleaſed therewith. To doe thus is a duty incumbent on us as Chriſtians; for *He* (ſaith our *Maſter*) *that doth not take up his croſs and follow me, is not worthy of me*;

Luc. 14. 27. 9. 23. Matt. 10. 38. 16. 24.

He that doth not carry his croſs, and go after me, cannot be my diſciple: He that doth not willingly take the Croſs, when it is preſented to him by God's hand, he that doth not contentedly bear it, when it is by providence impoſed on him, is no-wiſe worthy of the honour to wait on Chriſt, he is not capable to be reckoned among the diſciples of our heavenly Maſter; He is not worthy of Chriſt, as not having the courage, the conſtancy, the ſincerity required of a Chriſtian; of one pretending to ſuch great benefits, ſuch high privileges, ſuch excellent rewards, as Chriſt our Lord and Saviour doth propoſe; He cannot be Chriſt's diſciple, ſhewing ſuch incapacity to learn thoſe needful leſſons of humility and patience dictated by him; declaring ſuch an indiſpoſition to tranſcribe thoſe copies of ſubmiſſion to divine will, ſelf-denyal and ſelf-reſignation ſo fairly ſet him by the inſtruction and example of Chriſt: *For as much then as Chriſt hath ſuffered for us in the fleſh, arm your ſelves likewiſe with the ſame mind*; and, *Chriſt ſuffered for us, leaving us an example that we ſhould follow his ſteps*, ſaith S. *Peter*.

Matt. 11. 29. Ὑπογεγραμμὸν ὑπολιμπάνων. 1 Pet. 2. 21.

1 Pet. 4. 1.

1 Pet. 2. 21.

12. The willing ſuſception, and the chearful ſuſtenance of the croſs is indeed the expreſs condition, and the proper character of our Chriſtianity; in ſignification whereof it hath been from immemorial time a conſtant uſage to mark thoſe who enter into it with the figure of the croſs. The croſs, as the inſtrument, by which our peace with God was wrought, as the ſtage whereon our Lord did act the laſt part of his miraculous obedience, conſummating our redemption; as the field, wherein the *Captain of our ſalvation* did atchieve his noble victory, and erect his glorious trophees over all the enemies thereof, was well aſſumed to be the badge of our profeſſion, the enſign of our ſpiritual warfare, the pledge of our conſtant adherence to our crucified Saviour; in relation to whom our chief hope is grounded, our great joy and ſole glory doth conſiſt; for *God forbid*, ſaith S. *Paul*, *that I ſhould glory ſave in the croſs of Chriſt*.

Naz. *Or.* 38. *ad fin.*

Τὸ τρόπαιον τῦ σταυρῦ. *Apoſt. Conſt.* 8. 12.

Ἐμοὶ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι. Gal. 6. 14. 1 Cor. 1. 23.

Let it be *to the Jews a ſcandal*, or offenſive to their fancy prepoſſeſſed with expectations of a *Meſſias* flouriſhing in ſecular pomp and proſperity; let it be *folly to the Greeks*; or ſeem abſurd to men imbued (puff'd up, corrupted) with fleſhly notions and maximes of worldly craft, diſpoſing men to value nothing, which is not grateful to preſent ſenſe or fancy; that God ſhould put his own moſt beloved Son into ſo very ſad and deſpicable a condition; that ſalvation from death and miſery ſhould be procured by ſo miſerable a death; that eternal joy, glory and happineſs ſhould iſſue from theſe fountains of extream ſorrow and ſhame; that a perſon in external ſemblance, devoted to ſo opprobrious and ſlaviſh uſage, ſhould be the Lord and Redeemer of mankind, the King and Judge of all the World; Let this doctrine, I ſay, be

Orig. *in* Celſ. *lib.* 2. *p.* 79.

be ſcandalous and diſtaſtful to ſome perſons tainted with prejudice, let it appear ſtrange and incredible to others blinded with ſelf-conceit; let all the proud, all the profane, all the inconſiderate part of mankind ſlight and reject it; yet to us it muſt appear grateful and joyous; to us, it is πιστὸς λόγος, *a faithful* (and credible) *propoſition, worthy of all acceptation, that Jeſus Chriſt came into the world thus to ſave ſinners*; to us, who diſcern by a clearer light, and are endued with a purer ſenſe, kindled by the divine ſpirit; from whence with comfortable ſatisfaction of mind we may apprehend and taſte, that God could not in a higher meaſure, or a fitter manner illuſtrate his glorious attributes of goodneſs and juſtice; his infinite grace and mercy toward his poor creatures; his holy diſpleaſure againſt wickedneſs; his impartial ſeverity in puniſhing iniquity and impiety; or in vindicating his own honour and authority; than by thus ordering his Son to ſuffer for us; that alſo true vertue and goodneſs could not otherwiſe be taught, be exemplifyed, be commended and impreſſed with greater advantage.

1 Tim. 1. 15. 2 Tim. 2. 11.

Grot. *de Ver.* 4. 12.

We might alledge the ſuffrages of eminent Philoſophers, perſons eſteemed moſt wiſe by improvement of natural light; who have declared, that perfection of vertue can hardly be produced, or expreſſed otherwiſe than by undergoing moſt ſharp afflictions and tortures; and that God therefore, as a wiſe Father, is wont with them to exerciſe thoſe whom he beſt loveth; we might alſo produce inſtances of divers perſons, even among *Pagans*, moſt famous and honourable in the judgment of all poſterity for their ſingular vertue and wiſdom, who were tryed in this furnace, and thereby ſhone moſt brightly; their ſuffering by the iniquity and ingratitude, by the envy and malignity of their times in their reputation, liberty and life; their undergoing foul ſlanders, infamamous puniſhments, and ignominious deaths, more than any other practices of their life, recommending them to the regard and admiration of future ages; although none of them, as our Lord, did ſuffer of choice, or upon deſign to advance the intereſts of goodneſs, but upon conſtraint, and irreſiſtible force put on them; none of them did ſuffer in a manner ſo ſignal, with circumſtances ſo rare, and with events ſo wonderful; yet ſuffering as they did was their chief glory; whence it ſeemeth, that even according to the ſincereſt dictates of common wiſdom this diſpenſation was not ſo unaccountable; nor ought the *Greeks* in conſiſtency with themſelves, and in reſpect to their own admired Philoſophy, to have *deemed our doctrine* of the croſs, *fooliſh*, or unreaſonable.

Plat. *de Rep.* 2. (*p.* 594.)

Magnum exemplum, niſi mala fortuna non invenit. —— Sen. *de Prov.* 3.

Plut. *de Stoic. contr. p.* 1931.

Socrates, Phocion, Thraceas, Ariſtides, *&c.*

Vid. Ælian. Var. 11. 9. 2. 43.

Cicuta Socratem magnum fecit, &c. Sen. *Ep.* 13. *&* 67, *&* 104.

(Sen. *Ep.* 81. *Ep.* 113.

Rutilii innocentia ac virtus lateret, niſi accepiſſet injuriam; dum violatur effulſit. Sen. *Ep.* 79.

To conclude; ſince thereby a charity and humanity ſo unparallell'd (far tranſcending theirs who have been celebrated for devoting their lives out of love to their Country, or kindneſs to their friends) a meekneſs ſo incomparable, a reſolution ſo invincible, a patience ſo heroical were manifeſted for the inſtruction and direction of men; Since never were the vices, and the vanities of the world (ſo prejudicial to the welfare of mankind) ſo remarkably diſparaged; ſince never any ſuffering could pretend to ſo worthy and beneficial effects; the expiation of the whole worlds ſin, and reconciliation

ciliation of mankind to God, such as no performance beside, nor any other sacrifice did ever aim to procure, since, in fine, no vertue had ever so glorious rewards, or Sovereign dignity to him that exercised it, and eternal happiness to those who imitate it; Since, I say, there be such excellent uses, and fruits of the cross born by our *Blessed Saviour*, we can have no reason to be offended at it, or ashamed of it; but with all reason heartily we should approve, and humbly adore as well the deep wisdom of God, as all other his glorious attributes, illustriously displayed therein; to whom therefore as is most due let us devoutly render all thanks, all praise and glory.

Apoc. 1. 5. And, *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God, and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*

Apoc. 5. 13. *Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever,* Amen.

Dead and Buried.

SERMON XXVII.

1 COR. XV. 3.

For I delivered unto you first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.

SAint *Paul* meaning in this *Chapter* to maintain a very fundamental Point of our Religion (*the resurrection of the dead*) against some *Infidels* or *Hereticks*, who among the *Corinthians*, his scholars in the faith, did oppose it; doth, in order to the proof of his assertion, and refutation of that pernicious errour, premise those doctrines, which he having received both from relation of the other *Apostles*, and by immediate revelation from God himself, had delivered unto them, ἐν πρώτοις, *in the first place*, or among the prime things; that is as most eminent and important points of Christian doctrine; the truths whereof consequently (standing upon the same foundations with Christianity it self, upon Divine Revelation, and Apostolical testimony) could no-wise be disputed of, or doubted by any good Christian. Of which doctrines

ctrines (the collection of which he ſtyleth *the Goſpel*; that *Goſpel*, by embracing and retaining which, they *were*, he ſaith, *to be ſaved*) the *firſt* is that in our *Text*, concerning the *death of our Lord*) undergon by him for our ſalvation: which point as of all others in our Religion it is of peculiar conſequence, ſo it much concerneth us both firmly to believe it, and well to underſtand it; for it is *by faith in his bloud* that we are *juſtified*, and by *knowing Chriſt crucified* we ſhall be chiefly edified; *the word* imparting this knowledge being *the power of God to ſalvation*. It therefore I mean now, by God's aſſiſtance, to explain and apply; the which I ſhall doe generally and abſolutely; without any particular accommodation of my diſcourſe to the words of this *Text*; yet ſo as to comprehend all the particulars obſervable in them. The death of our Lord then is my ſubject, and about it I ſhall conſider, 1. Its nature, or wherein it did conſiſt. 2. Some peculiar adjuncts and reſpects thereof, which commend it to our regard, and render it conſiderable to us. 3. The principles and (impreſſive and meritorious) cauſes thereof. 4. The ends which it aimed at; together with the fruits and effects of it. 5. Some practical influences, which the conſideration thereof may, and ſhould have upon us.

Rom. 3. 25. 1 Cor. 2. 2. 1. Rom. 1. 16. Philip. 3. 10.

1. As for the nature of it we muſt affirm, and believe aſſuredly, that it was a true and proper death; in kind not different from that death, to the which all we mortal creatures are by the law and condition of our nature ſubject, and which we muſt all ſome time undergo; for, *What man is he that liveth and ſhall not ſee death; that ſhall deliver his ſoul from the hand of the grave? that death*, which is ſignifyed by ceſſation from vital operations (of all motions natural, or voluntary, of all ſenſe and knowledge, appetite and paſſion) *that death*, which is cauſed by violent diſunion, or diſlocation, by diſtempering, or however indiſpoſing the parts, humours, ſpirits of the body, ſo that the ſoul can no longer in them and by them continue to exerciſe thoſe functions, for which its conjunction thereto was intended, and cannot therefore fitly reſide therein; *that death*, which is ſuppoſed to conſiſt in the diſſolution of that vital band, whatever it be, whereby the ſoul is link'd and united to the body; or in that which is thereupon conſequent, the ſeparation, department and abſence of the ſoul from the body; each of that couple, upon their divorce, returning home to their original principles as it were; the body *to the earth from whence it was taken*, and *the ſpirit unto God who gave it*. Such cauſes antecedent are ſpecifyed in the ſtory; ſuch ſigns following are plainly implyed, ſuch a ſtate is expreſſed in the very terms, whereby our death is commonly ſignifyed: the ſame extremity of anguiſh, the ſame dilaceration of parts, the ſame effuſion of bloud, which would deſtroy our vital temper, quench our natural heat, ſtop our animal motions, exhauſt our ſpirits, and force out our breath, did work upon him; neceſſarily producing the like effects on him, as who had aſſumed the common imperfections and infirmities of our nature; in regard to which violences inflicted upon him, he is ſaid, ἀπακτείνεσθαι, *to be killed or ſlain*; διαχειρίζεσθαι, *to be diſpatched*, ἀναιρεῖσθαι, *to be made away*, ἀπολέσθαι, *to periſh*, or be deſtroyed; ἐξολοθρεύεσθαι, *to be cut off* (as it is in *Daniel*) σφάττεσθαι, *to be ſlaughtered*; θύεσθαι, *to be ſacrificed*; which words do all of them fully import a real and proper death to have enſued upon thoſe violent uſages toward him.

Pſal. 89. 48.

— Ἐπεὶκε πρῶτα λίπη λευκὸν ὀστέον θυμὸς,
Ψυχὴ δ' ἠὺτ' ὄνειρος ἀποτετμημένη πέτηται.
Hom. *Odyſſ.* λ.

Geneſ. 3. 19. Eccleſ. 12. 7. Pſal. 104. 29.

Act. 3. 15. 8. 33. Dan. 9. 26. Iſa. 53. 8. Joh. 18. 4. 11. 5. Apoc. 5. 9.

And

And by the ordinary signs of death, apparent to sense, the soldiers judg'd him dead, and therefore, ὡς εἶδον ἤδη τεθνηκότα, *seeing him already dead,* Joh. 19. 33. *they forbare to break his legs*; by the same all the World was satisfy'd thereof, both his spitefull enemies, that stood with delight, waiting for this utmost success of their malicious endeavours to destroy him, Mark. 14. 41. Luc. 23. 27. John 19. 25. and his loving friends, who with compassionate respect attended upon him through the course of his suffering; and those who were ready to perform their last offices of kindness, in procuring a decent interment of his body.

His transition also, and abiding in this state, are expressed by terms declaring the propriety of his death, and its agreement with our death: Mark 15. 37. S. *Mark* telleth us, that ἐξέπνευσε, *animam efflavit*, he expired, breathed out his soul, or his last breath; Matt. 27. 50. Joh. 19. 30. S. *Matthew* ἀφῆκε τὸ πνεῦμα, *animam egit*, he let go his spirit, or *gave up the ghost*; S. *John*, παρέδωκε τὸ πνεῦμα, Luc. 23. 46. *he delivered up his spirit* into God's hand; the which Saint *Luke* expresseth done with a formal resignation, *Father*, said he, *into thy hands I commend* (or I depose) *my spirit*; he doth also himself frequently express his dying by *laying down his life*, and *bestowing it as a ransome*, John 15. 13. 10. 15, 18. 13. 37. 1 Joh. 3. 6. which sheweth him really to have parted with it.

His death also (as ours is wont to be denoted by like phrases) is termed ἔξοδος, *excessus è vivis*, a going out of life, or from the society of men (for *Moses* and *Elias* are said *to tell*, τὴν ἔξοδον αὐτοῦ, Luc. 9. 31. 2 Pet. 1. 15. *his decease, which he should accomplish at Jerusalem*) and μετάβασις, a passing over, or translation from this into another world (*When*, saith S. *John*, *Jesus knew that his time was come*, ἵνα μεταβῇ, *that he should depart from this world.*) His death also was enigmatically described by the *destruction*, or demolishment *of his* bodily *Temple*, answerable to those circumlocutions concerning our ordinary death; *the dissolution of our earthly house or tabernacle*, or transitory abode, in S. *Paul*, the ἀπόθεσις τοῦ σκηνώματος, laying down, or putting off our tabernacle, in S. *Peter*.

Ἄφιξις. Act. 20. 29. Joh. 13. 1. Joh. 2. 19. Matt. 26. 61. 2 Cor. 5. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 14.

It were also not hard to shew, how all other phrases, and circumlocutions, by which humane death is expressed, either in Holy *Scripture*, or in usual language, or among *Philosophers*, and more accurate speakers, are either expresly applyed, or by consequence are plainly applicable to the death of our Saviour, such for instance as these in Scripture; 1 Tim. 4. 6. Phil. 1. 23. Luc. 2. 29. 2 Cor. 5. 8. Acts 13. 36. ἀνάλυσις, being resolved into our principles, or the returning of them thither whence they came; ἀπόλυσις, a being freed, licensed, or dismissed hence; ἐκδημία ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος, a going, or abode abroad; a peregrination, or absentment *from the body*; an ἔκδυσις, putting off, or being devested of the body; an ἀφανισμός, disappearance, or cessation in appearance to be; a *going hence, and not being seen*; *a falling on sleep, resting from our labours, sleeping with our fathers*, being *added*, and *gathered to our fathers*; being *taken, or cut off out of the land of the living*; *going down into the pit*; *lying down, resting, sleeping in the dust*; *making our bed in darkness*: these and the like phrases occurring in scripture (which might be parallell'd out of vulgar speech, and out of learned discourses) describing either the entrance into, or the abiding in the state of that death, to which all men are obnoxious, might easily be shewed applicable to the death of our Saviour. His resurrection doth imply the reality of his death; for otherwise it had not been miraculous, it had not been a pledge of our resurrection. But I will not farther needlessly insist

Gen. 25. 8. 49. 33, &c. Psal. 39. 13. 52. 5. 28. 1. 143. 7. 88. 4. Jer. 11. 19. Isa. 38. 18. 26. 19. Ezek. 26. 20. Dan. 12. 12. Job 7. 21. 17. 16. 20. 11, 21. 26. 17. 13.

insist upon explicating, or confirming a point so clear, and never misunderstood, or question'd, except by some wild and presumptuous Hereticks.

Our Saviour's death then was a true, real and proper death, suitable to that frail, passible and mortal nature, which he vouchsafed to undergo for us; to the condition of *sinfull flesh, in the likeness whereof* he *did appear*; severing his soul and body, and remitting them to their original sources; his passion was indeed *ultimum supplicium*, an extreme capital punishment, the highest in the last result, which in this world either the fiercest injustice, or the severest justice could inflict: for, *to kill the body* is (as our *Lord* himself taught) the utmost limit of all humane power and malice; the most and worst that man can doe; they have not περισσότερον τι, any thing beyond that which they can attempt upon us; and so far did they proceed with our Lord. Such was the nature of his death; such indeed as was requisite for the accomplishment of the ends and effects designed thereby. Rom. 8. 3. Matt. 10. 28. Luc. 12. 4.

2. Let us now consider those peculiar adjuncts and respects of our Lord's death (together with his whole passion, whereof his death was the chief part, and final completion) the which do commend it to our regard, and amplify the worth thereof: such are, 1. Its being a result of God's eternal resolution and decree. 2. Its being a matter of free consent and compact between God the Father and his onely Son. 3. Its being anciently prefigured and predicted. 4. Its being executed by God's hand and providence guiding and governing it; and by man's action concurring. 5. Its being the death of a person so holy and innocent, so high and excellent, of God's Son, of God the Son.

1. It was a result of God's eternal counsel and decree; it was no casual event, no expedient suddenly devised, or slipt from providence, but a well-laid design, from all eternity contrived by divine wisdom, resolved upon by divine goodness. As God did (by the incomprehensible perfection of his nature) from thence foresee our lapse, and misery, so he did as soon determine our remedy and means of salvation. As the whole of that mysterious dispensation concerning Christ, so especially did this main part thereof proceed κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων, *according to an eternal purpose* (as S. *Paul* speaketh;) for our Saviour was a *Lamb slain* (in designation irrevocably slain) *from the foundation of the world*; as it is said in the *Revelation*: And, *we* (saith Saint *Peter*) *were redeemed by the pretious bloud of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot,* προεγνωσμένου μὲν, *fore ordained indeed before the foundation of the world.* And our Saviour *went* (as he telleth us himself) to suffer, κατὰ τὸ ὡρισμένον, *according to what was determined*; and, *It was by the determinate counsel, and foreknowledge of God* (saith S. *Peter*) *that he was delivered up into those wicked hands* that slew him; nor did the conspiracy of *Herod and Pilate, with the nation and people of the Jews* effect any thing about it, beyond ὅσα ἡ χεὶρ, καὶ ἡ βουλὴ σου προώρισε γενέσθαι, *whatever the hand and counsel of God* (or God's effectual purpose) *had predetermined to come to pass*. Such an especial care, and providence of God, concerning this matter, so expresly and so frequently recommended to our observation, do argue the very great moment and high worth thereof. What God declareth himself to have had so early, and earnest a care of, must be matter of highest consideration and importance. Ephes. 3. 11. Apoc. 13. 8. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Luk. 22. 22. Acts 2. 23. 4. 28.

2. It was a matter of free consent and compact between God and his Son. God did freely and graciously (out of mercifull regard to our welfare)

welfare) proffer, that if he would pleaſe to undertake to redeem his (loſt and enſlaved) creature an honourable and comfortable ſucceſs to his enterpriſe; that he would accept his performances, and that the deſign ſhould proſper in his hand: he did willingly embrace the propoſal, and applyed himſelf to the performance: *When thou ſhalt make thy ſoul an offering for ſin, thou ſhall ſee thy ſeed, and prolong thy days, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in thy hand; thou ſhalt ſee of the travel of thy ſoul, and ſhalt be ſatisfied*; that, in the Prophet's language was God's propoſition; and *Lo I come to doe thy will O God*; that was our Saviour's reply in correſpondence and conſent thereto. God, in conſideration of what our Lord would obediently ſuffer, did (as our *Saviour* telleth us) διατίθεσθαι βασιλείαν, *covenant to him a kingdom*; committing a ſovereign authority, aſſigning an univerſal dominion to him; in virtue of which tranſaction it was, that *Jeſus for the ſuffering of death, was crowned with glory and honour*; that, *becauſe he poured out his ſoul unto death, God divided him a portion with the great*; that *he being obedient to the death, God exalted him, and gave him a name above all names.* In this regard are God's elect and faithfull people ſaid to be given unto him as a retribution to him, *who gave himſelf for them* (*Thine they were*, ſaith our *Lord* to his Father, *and thou gaveſt them me*;) hence are we ſaid to be *bought with a price*; hence is *the Church purchaſed by his bloud*; there was therefore a covenant and bargain driven between God and his Son concerning this affair; and of huge conſideration ſurely muſt that affair be, wherein ſuch perſons do ſo deeply intereſt themſelves, trafficking, and (as it were) ſtanding upon terms with one another.

Iſa. 53. 9, 10. Heb. 10. 7, 8. Luc. 22. 29. Heb. 2. 9. Iſa. 53. 12. Phil. 2. 8, 9. Rom. 14. 9. John 17. 6. Gal. 3. 13. 1 Cor. 6. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Act. 20. 28.

3. That the great excellency and efficacy of our Saviour's death and paſſion might appear, it was by manifold Types foreſhadowed, and in divers Prophecies foretold. Indeed moſt of the famous paſſages of providence (eſpecially the ſignal afflictions of eminent perſons repreſenting our Saviour) do ſeem to have been prefigurations of, or preludes to his paſſion. The bloud of the righteous Protomartyr *Abel*, ſhed by an envious brother, for acceptable obedience performed by him to God's will, and *crying to heaven*, might prefigure that bloud, which cryed alſo, although with another voice, *ſpeaking better things than the bloud of Abel*; not ſad complaints, and ſuits for vengeance, but ſweet entreaties and interceſſions for mercy. *Iſaac*, the onely Son, *the ſon of promiſe*, his oblation in purpoſe, or *death in parable*, as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* ſpeaketh, did plainly repreſent our Saviour, the promiſed ſeed, his being really offered, and afterward miraculouſly reſtored to life. *Joſeph* his being ſold, and put into ſlavery by his envious brethren, being ſlanderouſly accuſed, and ſhut in priſon (*whoſe feet they hurt with fetters, the iron entred into his ſoul*) and this by God's diſpoſal, in order to his exaltation; and that he might be a means of preſerving life, and preparing a convenient habitation for the children of *Iſrael*, doth well reſemble him, who *by ſuffering entred into his glory*; who *thereby being perfected, became authour of ſalvation to his brethren*, all *true Iſraelites*; who *went to prepare manſions* of reſt and light, a heavenly *Goſhen* for them. *David*'s perſecutions foregoing his royal dignity and proſperous ſtate; which he expreſſeth in ſuch ſtrains as theſe; *The ſorrows of death compaſſed me, and the flouds of ungodly men made me afraid*; *the ſorrows of hell compaſſed me about, and the ſnares of death prevented me*; how they may adumbrate the more real extremities of our Lord's afflictions, previous to his glorious exaltation, I leave you to conſider; as alſo the

Gen. 4. 10. Luc. 11. 51. Heb. 12. 24. 11. 4. Heb. 11. 7. 19. Pſal. 105. 18. Gen. 45. 5. Luc. 24. 26. Heb. 5. 9. Joh. 14. 2. Pſal. 18. 4.

reſt

reſt of ſuch paſſages having a myſterious importance accommodable to this purpoſe. However, all the ſacrifices of old inſtituted by God, we may with fuller confidence affirm to have been chiefly preparatory unto, and prefigurative of this moſt true and perfect ſacrifice; by virtue whereof indeed thoſe ὑποδείγματα, and σκιαὶ, umbratick repreſentations (or inſinuations) did obtain their ſubſtance, validity and effect: Heb. 9. 23. 8. 5. if they did not ſignifie this in deſign, they could ſignifie nothing in effect; for as *without ſhedding of blood there was no remiſſion* (God's anger would not be appeaſed, nor his juſtice ſatisfied without it; it being *blood, which* according to God's preſcription, did *make atonement for the ſoul*) as the appointment of thoſe ſacrifices did ſpeak and ſignify; ſo *it was impoſſible that the blood of bulls, and goats, ſhould take away ſin*; that thoſe *legal gifts and ſacrifices ſhould perfect the conſcience of him that did the ſervice*; that is, ſhould entirely aſſure him of pardon and impunity, or raiſe in him a ſtrong and clear hope of God's favour: the lives of beaſts were not in value anſwerable, nor could fitly be ſubrogated in ſtead of mens ſouls, which had offended, and thence were liable to death; the effuſion of their blood could not reaſonably ſatisfie a man's conſcience, ſenſible of guilt, and fearful of God's diſpleaſure, that by it God was fully appeaſed; they muſt therefore refer unto a κρείττων θυσία, *a more excellent ſacrifice*; one more ſufficient in it ſelf, and more acceptable to God; in virtue of which, and in regard thereto ſin might be thoroughly expiated, God's wrath might be propitiated, divine vengeance might be removed, the mind of man therefore might be comforted and contented. The High-Prieſts entrance once a year into the Holy of Holies, *not without blood to atone for his own, and the peoples ignorances* (or miſcarriages) did imply, that our *great High-Prieſt* ſhould make one bloody atonement for the offences of mankind, and paſſing through the veil of mortal fleſh, ſhould enter into the true *Sanctum Sanctorum* of heaven, there to *appear in the preſence of God for us*; exhibiting the virtue of his meritorious paſſion, together with his effectual interceſſion for mercy toward us. Eſpecially the *Paſchal Lamb*, in its ſubſtance (as a lamb, meek and gentle) in its quality (as without blemiſh and ſpot, pure and innocent) in its manner of preparation and dreſſing (being killed by all the aſſembly, having its blood ſprinkled upon the doors of every houſe, being roaſted with fire, having bitter herbs for its ſauce) with other obſervable circumſtances about it, was a moſt appoſite emblem of *Chriſt, our Paſs-over*; who not only by his death did ſignifie, and mind us of, but did really atchieve our deliverance from the myſtical *Egypt*, our ſtate of ſpiritual bondage. So did ancient types exhibit, and repreſent; plain predictions alſo did expreſs the ſame death and ſuffering of our Lord: *Thoſe things* (ſaith S. *Peter*) *which God before had ſhewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, he hath ſo fulfilled*; προκατήγγειλε not one Prophet only, not ſome few; but *all*, ſaith he (that is, either plainly, or covertly, either directly or by conſequence) *have foreſhewed* (or foretold) it: it is our negligence, or ſtupidity, if we do not diſcern it in them; as our Lord intimated, when he thus ſpake to his diſciples: *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken*; *ought not Chriſt* (ought he not according to their prefigurations, and predictions) *to have ſuffered theſe things, and ſo to enter into his glory?* That *David*, an illuſtrious repreſentative of the *Meſſias*, doth often deſcribe as belonging to himſelf, mortal agonies and ſufferings, not well applicable κατὰ λέξιν, or in direct hiſtorical meaning to his own perſon, and therefore in reaſon, according to a more high

Heb. 9. 22. Levit. 17. 11. Heb. 10. 4. 9. 9, 15. 10, 11. Heb 9. 23. Heb. 9. 7. 10. 24. 1 Cor. 5. 7. Acts 3. 18. Luc. 24. 25, 26. 18. 31. Act. 13. 27. 26. 22. Pſal. 22. 109. &c.

and perfect sense, to be understood of the *Messias* himself; that *Daniel* plainly foretelleth, that in a certain time the *Messias should be cut off*: that *Isaias* doth in several places insinuate; and in the famous 53. *Chapter* of his Prophecy doth clearly describe the manner and kind of our Saviour's passion, is so evident, that even those of the *Jewish* Doctors, who have been most earnest opposers of our Lord, have been forced to acknowledge, that there is to be as well one *Messias* to suffer, as another to prosper, and reign in glory; being so gross as not to apprehend, or so perverse as not to acknowledge the consistency between antecedent suffering, and consequent glory; between a night of *darkness* and sorrow, and a day of light and joy breaking out from it; not being able, or willing to distinguish between an external pomp in this world, and an external majesty in the future state. But unto us God's so forward care, *by the Spirit of Christ in his Prophets*, προμαρτύρεσθαι, *to fore-witness* (as S. *Peter* speaketh, or to testifie before hand) *the sufferings of our Saviour, and the glories succeeding*, doth imply, with what diligence of attention we should regard; with what firmness of faith we should embrace, with what satisfaction of heart we should entertain this great and admirable dispensation.

Luc. 22. 53.

1 Pet. 1. 11.

4. We may consider, that this death was compassed by God's especial providence, directing and disposing it, although not without the active concurrence of men: the treacherous disposition, and covetous appetite of *Judas*; the envious humour, and blind zeal of the Scribes and Priests; the wanton fickleness, and wild rudeness of the people; the fearful and selfish temper of the Governour were but instruments, whereby God's *own hand* did inflict this sore chastisement upon his Son for us: It was *the Lord* that *laid upon him the iniquities of us all, by God he was stricken, smitten and afflicted*; *Pilate*, 'tis said, *had no power* to doe what he did, *but what was given him from above*; The *Jews* with their *Rulers* proceeded rashly and ignorantly; otherwise, as S. *Paul* affirmeth, *they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*; but God advisedly, as S. *Peter* told them, *did accomplish it*; *He did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us*: he as it were suspended his bowels of pity toward him, he withdrew his face of kindness from him, out of compassion and benignity toward us; he used him severely, that he might deal favourably with us.

Acts 4: 28. Isa. 53. 6, 4. John 19. 11. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Acts 3. 17. 13. 27. Rom. 8. 32.

Yet did man actively concur therein; all mankind in a sort, by its representatives, was involved as principally in the guilt for which, so in the guilt by which he suffered; there was a general conspiracy of *Jew* and *Gentile* practised against the life of their common Saviour. *Of a truth*, saith S. *Peter*, *against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, were gathered together both Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and with the people of Israel*: In the *Jews* the horrid ingratitude of men, in the *Gentiles* their wretched infirmity did appear; the which, by their active efficacy toward our Lord's death, did signifie the meritorious influence they also had upon it; that it was our iniquity and corruption which did cause it: so as a work of divine providence (the most admirable work ever accomplished by providence) as an act of humane pravity (the most heinous act ever committed by men) is the death of our Lord considerable.

Acts 4. 27.

5. But more immediately the quality and condition of our Saviour's person do most commend to us, and advance the worth of his death: If, as the *Psalmist* saith, *Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints*; if the spotless candour, and unblemished integrity of a Lamb

Psal. 116. 15. 72. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 19.

do

do make its *blood precious*, and qualifie it for an acceptable ſacrifice; How valuable to God ſhall be the death of a perſon ſo perfectly holy and innocent; who did not ſo much as *know ſin*; *in whoſe mouth no guile was ever found*; who was *holy*, *harmleſs*, *undefiled*, *removed* (at infinite diſtance removed) *from ſinners?* who *needed not to offer ſacrifices for his own ſins*; whoſe death therefore for others were apt to be more available and acceptable. Again, If the life of a King be (as King *David*'s people told him) *worth ten thouſand lives*; if it be a moſt enormous crime, and higheſt treaſon to imagine his death; How valuable muſt be the death of a perſon, ſo incomparably tranſcendent in dignity? *of the Lord of glory*, *of the Prince of life*; *Ye denyed the Holy and the Juſt one*; *ye ſlew the Prince of life*; —— *They crucified the Lord of glory*; ſo the *Apoſtles* do aggravate the buſineſs. But a farther height, a perfect immenſity indeed, of worth and efficacy, muſt needs accrue to the death of our Saviour, from his being the ſon of God; from his being God (One, and the ſame in nature with his Almighty, and All-glorious Father) for it is *the blood of Chriſt*, *the ſon of God*, *which purgeth us, from all ſin*; yea, *God* himſelf *did* (as S. *Paul* ſaith in the *Acts*) *purchaſe the Church with his blood*; it is *the great God, and our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, who gave himſelf for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity*: and, *Hereby* (ſaith S. *John*) *perceive we the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us*: That the immortal God ſhould die, that the moſt High ſhould be debaſed to ſo low a condition, as it cannot be heard without wonder, ſo it could not be undertaken without huge reaſon, nor accompliſhed without mighty effect: Well indeed might ſuch a condeſcenſion ſerve to advance us from the baſeſt ſtate to any pitch of honour and happineſs; well might one drop of that Royal blood of heaven ſuffice to purchaſe many worlds, to ranſome innumerable lives of men, to expiate an infinity of ſins, however grievous and foul. But ſo much for the peculiar adjuncts, and reſpects of our Lord's death.

2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 2. 22. 1 John 3. 5. Iſa. 53. 9. Heb. 7. 26, 27. 2 Sam. 18. 3. 21. 17. Acts 3. 15. 1 Cor. 2. 8. 1 John 1. 7. Apoc. 1. 5, 6. Acts 20. 28. Tit. 2. 14. 1 John 3. 16.

3. Let us now conſider the cauſes, and principles, whence it proceeded; which moved God to determine it, and our Lord to undertake it; they were in both acts moſt voluntary and free: of the Father it is ſaid, *It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him*; and, *Behold* (ſaith our Lord in the *Pſalm*) *I come to doe thy will, O God*; that is, as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* expoundeth it, to offer, not the blood of beaſts in ſacrifice, but my own body according to thy will and appointment; And, *This commandment* (ſaith he in S. *John*) *I received of my Father, to lay down my life*; and, *The Cup* (ſaith he again) *which my Father hath given me, Shall I not drink it?* ſo on the Father's part, and on our Saviour's likewiſe it was no leſs voluntary; for, *None* (ſaith he) *taketh my life from me*: (that is, It is not from any neceſſity or compulſion that I do part with it) *but I lay it down of my ſelf*; (with abſolute choice and freedom) *I have power to lay it down, and I have power to reſume it*; and, *The bread*, ſaith he, *which I ſhall give, is my fleſh, which I ſhall give for the life of the world*; *The Son of man came to give his life a ranſome for many*; the yielding his fleſh to death, the paying his life a ranſome, were deeds of gift, perfectly free: and that both in regard to God the Father, and the Son, this performance was voluntary, S. *Paul* together thus expreſſeth; *Who gave himſelf for our ſins, that he might deliver us from this preſent evil world, according to the will of God, and our Father*; ſo this death iſſued from the joint wills of God, and his Son: But as the volitions of every intelligent and wiſe agent do always proceed from ſome principle inclining, or are directed according to ſome impulſive

Iſa. 53. 10. Pſ. 40. 7, 9. Heb. 10. 7. John 10. 18. John 18. 11. John 10. 18. John 6. 51. Matt. 21. 28. Gal. 2. 20, &c. Tit. 2. 14. Gal. 1. 4.

cauſe moving to them, ſo divers principles, and cauſes of theſe voluntary acts are declared in Scripture; the chief of which are reducible to theſe *two*; *one* internally diſpoſing God's goodneſs; the *other* externally inviting man's diſtreſs: The caſe ſtood thus: Mankind lying in a ſad and forlorn eſtate, oppreſſed by *Satan*, enſlaved to ſin, ſubject to a rigorous law, expoſed to the ſeverity of juſtice, tormented by the ſenſe of guilt, fearful of divine wrath and due vengeance; in ſhort, by the ſentence of heaven, and by the ſuffrage of conſcience within, condemned to puniſhment unavoidable, and to intolerable miſery: Man, I ſay, lying in ſo deſperately uncomfortable a condition, God's infinite goodneſs regarded his poor creature, his *bowels of compaſſion* yerned toward him, a deſire of relieving ſprang up in his will; thence was he moved to provide ſuch a remedy, ſutable and ſufficient for his delivery; for the removing all thoſe miſchiefs, and curing all thoſe diſtempers: the main ſource of all this wonderfull performance (as of all other providential diſpenſations, and works *ad extra*) was that moſt excellent perfection of God; which, in regard to this matter, is ſometime termed χρηστότης, benignity or bounty; implying the great benefit and advantage we do thence receive; ſometimes grace, or favour, ſignifying the pure freeneſs in diſpenſing it, without any deſign of profit to himſelf, or any deſert on our part (*By the grace of God he taſted death for every man*) ſometimes mercy, denoting our bad deſerts, or obnoxiouſneſs to juſtice and puniſhment; ſometimes pity, ſignifying the great need we had thereof, by reaſon of our extream diſtreſs and miſery. Commonly alſo it is, by the moſt obliging and endearing name ſtiled love, and philanthropy, intimating the earneſt regard and benevolence God had to us as his creatures, and as capable of being benefitted and bettered by him: *Herein* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *God commended his love toward us, in that we being yet ſinners, Chriſt died for us.* And, *God* (ſaith S. *John*) *loved us, and ſent his Son to be a propitiation for us*; and, *God* (ſaith our *Lord* himſelf) *ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son——that the world might be ſaved by him.*

Διὰ σπλάγχνα ἐλέους. Luc. 1. 78.

Terr. 3. 4. Rom. 2. 4. Eph. 2. 7. Heb. 2. 9. Rom. 3. 24. 2 Cor. 8. 9. Eph. 2. 8, 5. Eph. 1. 7. Tit. 3. 5. Luc. 1. 78. Eph. 2. 4. Heb. 2. 17. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Tit. 3. 4. Rom. 5. 8. Eph. 2. 4. 1 John 4. 9, 10. John 3. 16, 17.

By the way it is worth obſerving, that there is diſtinguiſhable a three-fold love of God toward men, intimated in Scripture. 1. A general love to mankind, antecedent to the ſending our Lord, and his performances, being the ground of God's deſigning them; which may be called a love of pity, or mercy toward poor man lying under condemnation and diſtreſs; this is that φιλανθρωπία τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεοῦ, *philanthropy of God our Saviour, which appeared in ſaving us* (that is in granting us the capacity and means of ſalvation) *not by works of righteouſneſs, which we had done, but by his mercy*; the *love* which *he commended, in that while we were ſinners Chriſt dyed for us.* 2. A love, immediately conſequent upon our Lord's performances and ſufferings, and procured by them; whereby God is ſo far pleaſed with men, and reconciled to the world, that he *deſireth all mens ſalvation*, and offereth to them terms and means thereof; in regard to which our Lord is ſaid to be the Saviour of the world, and Redeemer of all men; of which love S. *Paul*, ſpeaketh, when he ſaith, that *being enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*; and that *God was in Chriſt reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their ſins*; and that *God having made peace by the blood of his croſs, did reconcile by him all things unto himſelf, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven*; the which may be called a love of reconciliation and favour; or the *grace* of God which *came by Jeſus Chriſt.*

Tit. 3. 4.

Rom. 5. 8.

1 Tim. 2. 4. Tit. 2. 11.

1 Tim. 2. 6, 4. 10. Rom. 5. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Coloſ. 1. 20. John 1. 17. Acts 10. 33. Rom. 11. 32. Luc. 2. 14. 1 Tim. 2. 4.

3. A

3. A peculiar love of friendſhip, and complacence, which God beareth toward all thoſe, who do ſincerely turn, and ſtedfaſtly adhere to him, repenting of their ſins, and embracing the Goſpel; and perſiſting in obedience to his Laws; ſuch God is every where repreſented to affect with tendereſt love, as his faithful ſervants, his good friends, and dear children; being *eſpecially the Saviour of them:* this diſtinction is obſervable for our better underſtanding the paſſages of ſcripture concerning this matter; in which God is ſometime repreſented as bearing a general love to all men, ſometimes as more eſpecially loving the faithful and good men. 1 Tim. 4. 10.

The like principles and impulſive cauſes are ſaid to move our Lord to undertake, and undergo death for us; it was goodneſs, and love toward us that inclined him thereto: *Chriſt* (ſaith S. *Paul) loved us, and delivered up himſelf for us an offering, and ſacrifice to God. He loved the Church, and delivered up himſelf for it; He loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his blood. Hereby we perceive the love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us; I live* (ſaith S. *Paul* again) *by the faith of the Son of God, who loveth me, and gave himſelf for me.* Eph. 5. 2. Eph. 2. 25. Apoc. 1. 5. 1 John 3. 16. (John 15. 13.) Gal. 2. 20.

Such were the principles diſpoſing, and cauſes in a ſort moving; to which we may add our ſins, as the meritorious cauſes of our Saviour's death: *He died for our ſins; he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities.* He died for us, not only as for men, not only as for wretched men, but as for unjuſt and ſinful men; as for enemies, and ſtrangers to God; ſuch as had grievouſly diſpleaſed God, had incurred heinous guilt, had deſerved, and were become obnoxious to ſevereſt puniſhment; ſo ſtanding in need of reconcilement, propitiation and redemption. Had we been innocent and guiltleſs, there had wanted ſufficient cauſe, or juſt reaſon for his death; God would not have been angry, juſtice could have had no pretence, or hold; we ſhould not have been liable to ſuffer our ſelves, nor could he have ſuffered for us. Death is the debt, or *wages due to ſin*; which he therefore payed, becauſe we owed it, and could not diſcharge it: *All we* (as it is ſaid in the *Prophet) have gone aſtray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord* (therefore) *hath laid on him the iniquity of us all:* Our ſins were not only indirect, or remote occaſions of his death, but did procure it in way of deſert: even as they would have been meritorious cauſes of our death had he not undertaken for us, ſo were they the like cauſes of his death, who died for us, and in our ſtead; who * *was made ſin* (that is, a ſinner, or a ſacrifice) *for us*; who *gave himſelf* ἀντίλυτρον, *a ranſome in ſtead of us all*; paying his blood a price for us, and redeeming us thereby from all the penalties and inconveniences we were liable to; *buying us from the curſe, by becoming a curſe for us*; who *had upon him the chaſtiſement of our peace*; and *did offer up his ſoul an offering, and ſacrifice for our ſins*; thereby *expiating them*, propitiating God's wrath, and reconciling God unto us, *purging us* from guilt, and procuring entire remiſſion for our ſins; the which conſiderations do ſufficiently argue our ſins in way of deſert, to have been the cauſes of his death. 1 Cor. 15. 3. Heb. 10. 12. Iſaiah 53. 5, 6. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Rom. 5. 6, 8, 10. 1 Pet. 3. 16. Rom. 6. 23. Iſa. 53. 6, 4, 11. * 2 Cor. 5. 21. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Matt. 20. 28. 1 Cor. 6. 20. 7 23. Heb. 9. 12. Gal. 3. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 18. Rom. 3. 24. 2 Pet. 2. 1. Eph. 1. 7. Coloſ. 1. 14.

Iſa. 53. 5, 10. Heb. 10. 12. 1 John 2. 2. 4. 10. Rom. 3. 25. Heb. 2. 17. Rom. 5. 10, 11. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Eph. 2. 16. 1. 7. Heb. 9. 14, 23, 26. John 3. 36. Matt. 26. 28. Col. 1. 14. 1 John 1. 7. Apoc. 1. 5.

Now for the ends which our Lord's death aimeth at, and the effects which it produceth (theſe we joyn, becauſe in reality they are the ſame) they, in Scripture-reckoning and expreſſion, are various and many:

many: the most general are these, comprehending divers others subordinate to them.

1. The illustration of God's glory, by demonstrating and displaying therein his most excellent attributes and perfections, so doth S. *Paul* teach us: *Whom God* (saith he) *hath set forth a propitiation by faith in his bloud, εἰς ἔνδειξιν τῆς δικαιοσύνης αὐτοῦ, for a demonstration of his righteousness*, that is, as I take it, of his goodness, his justice, his fidelity, his constancy, of all those commendable perfections, which are expressed in dealing with others; and our Lord, his passion being instantly to follow, made this reflexion; *Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him:* and, *I have glorified thee upon earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to doe.* God did therein shew himself most highly good and gracious, in so providing for the welfare of those who deserved nothing of him, who deserved ill of him, who had offended and injured him very heinously: he manifested himself most strictly just, in not suffering iniquity to go unpunished, but rather than so, exposing his own dear Son to punishment, and in him chusing himself to suffer; he declared his wisdom in contriving so admirable an expedient, whereby both his goodness might be exercised, and his justice not infringed; he shewed his veracity, fidelity and constancy, in executing by his providence what he before had designed and promised, although so grievous and bitter to the Son of his love; he therein also laid a ground of declaring his All-mighty power, in raising him from the dead, as likewise of his goodness and justice in exalting him: thus by our Saviour's death was the divine glory much illustrated, and our good consequently promoted; for that we therein contemplating him so amiable for goodness, so terrible for justice, so venerable for all excellency, may be induced thence to love him, to dread him, to worship and reverence him, as it becometh us, and as it is necessary for us in order to our happiness.

Rom. 3. 5. Col. 1. 27. Eph. 2. 7. (Joh. 21. 20.) Joh. 13, 31. 17. 4.

2. The dignifying, and exaltation of our Lord himself; by acquiring unto him in a manner a new right unto, and enstating him in an universal dominion, in a transcendent glory, in perfect joy accruing to him by remuneration for so excellent an instance of submission, and obedience to God's will. This is that which our Lord foresaw, and foretold: *If God was glorified in him, then will God glorifie him in himself; and shall streightway glorifie him.* And, *To this end* (saith S. *Paul*) *Christ died, that he might be the Lord of the dead and living.* And, *For the suffering of death he was crowned with glory, and honour*, saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*. And, *He was obedient to the death, therefore God exalted him*; and, *the Prince of our Salvation was perfected by suffering*; and, *For the joy that was set before him he endured the cross*; and, *He* (said the *Prophet* of him) *shall see the travel of his soul, and be satisfied.* And, *Worthy* (say the *heavenly host* in the *Apocalypse*) *is the lamb that is slain* (*worthy* is he, *for that he was slain, and did redeem us to God by his bloud*) *to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.*

Joh. 13. 32. 17. 5. Rom. 14. 9. Heb. 2. 9. Phil. 2. 8, 9. Heb. 2. 10. Heb. 12. 2. Apoc. 5. 12, 9. (Tit. 2. 14.)

3. The salvation of mankind; the which he was designed to procure by his death, and in many respects he did promote it thereby.

He did it by appeasing that wrath of God, which he naturally beareth toward iniquity, and reconciling God to men, who by sin were alienated from him; by procuring a favourable disposition, and intentions of grace toward us. *While we were sinners* (saith S. *Paul*) *Christ died*

Rom. 5. 8. 10.

died for us (and sinners, or wicked men God cannot like or endure: *Thou art not*, saith the *Psalmist*, *a God that hast pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee; the foolish shall not stand in thy sight; thou hatest all workers of iniquity:* and, *The wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth*; yet for us, being such, Christ died, removing thereby that just hatred and displeasure; as S. *Paul* presently after expresseth, and expoundeth it: *When*, saith he, *we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son)* and otherwhere, *God* (saith he) *was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*; the non-imputation of our sins is expressed as a singular effect, an instance, an argument of his being in mind reconciled, and favourably disposed toward us: and again; *He died to reconcile both (Jews* and *Gentiles) unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby*; that is, God being thereby reconciled to all people, they became thence united together in the common relation of friends, and fellow-servants to God; becoming, as it there follows, *fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God* (or allyed unto him by spiritual relations.)

Psalm 5. 4. 11. 5. 34. 16. Habak. 1. 3. Isaiah 3. 8. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Eph. 2. 16. Colos. 1. 20, 21, &c. Eph. 2. 19. Οἰκεῖοι τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Again, It furthered our salvation, by purchasing the remission of our sins, and justification of our persons; our freedom from condemnation and punishment, our appearance as upright, and acceptable in God's sight; upon the conditions of faith and repentance propounded in the *Gospel*; in regard to which effects he is said thereby to redeem us from our sins, to bear them, to take them away, to expiate them, to cleanse, to purge, to sanctify us from them: *Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Who shall condemn them? It is Christ that died:* that is, Christ's death hath freed them from all liableness to guilt and condemnation. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us*; that is, he by undergoing an accursed kind of death hath purchased an indemnity and impunity for the transgressors of God's law: and, *Being justified by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath*; that is, from the effects of God's just displeasure, condemnation and punishment: and, *In whom* (saith S. *Paul* again clearly) *we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace:* and, *My blood* (saith our Lord) *is the blood of the New-Testament, which was shed for many for the remission of sins:* and, *Christ* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *was once offered to bear the sin of many* (or of the many, the multitude of men) *Now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας, for the abolition of sin by the sacrifice of himself:* and, *Behold* (saith S. *John* the *Baptist*) *the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world:* and, *The blood of Christ doth* (saith S. *John*) *cleanse us from all sin; He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; He is a propitiation for our sins, and not for our sins only, but for the sins of the whole world:* and, *Jesus, that by his blood he might sanctifie the people; did suffer out of the gate. He delivered himself up for the Church, that he might sanctifie it — that he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy, and without blemish.*

Rom. 8. 34. Gal. 3. 13. (1 Pet. 2. 24.) Rom. 5. 8. Ephes. 1. 7. Col. 1. 14. Matth. 26. 28. Heb. 9. 27. 26. 28. 7. 27. John 1. 29. Heb. 10. 4. 11. 1 John 1. 7. Apoc. 1. 5. 1 John 2. 2. 4. 10. Heb. 13. 12. Eph. 5. 25, 27.

Our Lord also by his death procured our salvation, as having thereby purchased for us means sufficient to free us from the power and dominion of sin, to purifie our hearts, and sanctifie our lives; for, *He gave himself* Tit. 2. 14.

himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works: and, *He gave himself for our sins, that he might redeem us from this present evil world*; and, *We were redeemed, not with corruptible things, with silver, or with gold; but with*
1 Pet. 1. 18, 19. *the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish, and without spot, from our vain conversation, delivered from our fathers*; and, *He by his own*
1 Pet. 2. 24. *self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin should*
Rom. 6. 2, 6, 8, 11. *live unto righteousness. We are with him dead to sin; our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

In subordination to, coincidence, or concurrence with the principal designs and effects, our Lord also died for the reparation of God's honour, which we by contempt of his authority, and violation of his law had impaired, but our Saviour by so signal an obedience thereto did repair; for the recovery of God's right, which was infringed by withdrawing so great and noble a part of his creation from its due allegiance and service; the which he recovered and restored to him; for the satisfaction to God's justice, provoked by so heinous impieties and iniquities; the which was abundantly performed by so infinitely valuable a compensation, and sacrifice offered thereto.

Heb. 10. 29. Matt. 26. 28. 1 Cor. 11. 25. Also for ratification of the new Covenant between God and us; whence his blood is called, *the blood of the Covenant, the blood of the New Testament.*

Colos. 1. 20. Eph. 2. 25. For the pacifying and reconciling all things in heaven and earth; removing all causes of dissention and distance; inducing obligations to concord and charity:

1 Cor. 15. 55. Heb. 2. 14. Καταργήσας. For pulling out *the sting*, and removing the terrours *of death*; *destroying* (or defeating) *him that had the power of death, and delivering them, who through the fear of death are all their life-time subject to death.*

Colos. 2. 19. John 12. 31. 16. 11. For the suppressing, vanquishing, and *triumphing over the powers of hell* and darkness, the which he did, as S. *Paul* telleth us, atchieve *upon his cross:* and by his death he telleth us, that the *Prince of this world* was *condemned*, and *cast out.*

For engaging us to the practice of all righteousness and obedience (especially to the most excellent, high and hard parts thereof, charity, humility, meekness, patience, self-denial, utmost constancy and perseverance) both from our obligation in regard to what he suffered for us, and in imitation of his example. For, *we should run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of*
Heb. 12. 1, 2. *our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame:* and, *Christ having suffered for us in the flesh, we should* (saith S. *Peter*) *arm our selves with the same mind,* —— *so as no longer*
1 Pet. 4. 1, 2. *to live the rest of our time in the flesh to the lust of men, but to the will of God.*

Lastly, for attestation unto, and confirmation of divine truth; sealing by his blood that heavenly doctrine which he taught, and *witness-*
1 Tim. 6. 13. *ing before Pontius Pilate a good confession:* he was the Prince of Martyrs; who, as *he for this end* (as he told *Pilate*) *was born, and for this*
John 18. 37. *end came into the world, that he might bear witness to the truth*, so he especially did accomplish that glorious design by his death; *enduring*
Heb. 12. 3, 4. *the contradiction of sinners against himself, resisting unto blood in combating against sin*; by *his blood* indeed all other witnesses of truth, did (as
Revel. 12. 11. it is said in the *Revelation*) accomplish their warfare, and *obtain victory:*

ry: his blood purchaſed for them their reſolution and ſtrength; his promiſes ſupported them, his example did animate them, to the profeſſion and maintenance of truth, in the greateſt dangers, and moſt violent aſſaults.

Such ends did the death of our Lord regard, ſuch fruits did grow from it, which the time permitteth us but thus curſorily to touch.

5. Now for the practical influences the conſideration of this Point ſhould have upon us, they are many and great; but we now can onely name, or inſinuate them.

1. It ſhould beget in us higheſt degrees of love and gratitude toward God, and toward our Saviour, in regard to this higheſt expreſſion of love, and inſtance of beneficence toward us. Greater love God could not have ſhewed, than in thus deſtinating, and offering up his only deareſt Son to death (a moſt painful and ſhameful death) for our ſake; and, *Greater love* (he told us himſelf) *than this hath no man, than that one ſhould lay down his life for his friends*; no man hath greater, except himſelf, who even laid his life down for his enemies and perſecutors: And love ſo incomparably, ſo extreamly great, doth ſurely require correſpondent degrees of love and thankfulneſs. John 15. 13. Rom. 5. 10.

2. It ſhould raiſe in us great faith, and hope in God, excluding all diſtruſt and deſpair, that God will not beſtow upon us whatever is needfully, or conveniently good for us; for *He*, (as S. *Paul* argueth) *who did not ſpare his own ſon, but delivered him up for us all, how ſhall he not with him alſo freely give us all things?*

3. Particularly, it ſhould comfort us, and ſatisfie our conſcience in regard to the guilt of our ſins, however contracted, ſuppoſing that we do heartily repent of them; for that *there is no condemnation to them that are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit*; and, that *Being juſtified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; by virtue of his death we ſincerely repenting are freed from all condemnation, we truely believing have a firm and ſure peace with God: *Who ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? Who is he that condemneth*, ſeeing *it is Chriſt that hath dyed?* We are very blameably incredulous, if having ſuch an aſſurance from God, and ſuch an engagement upon him we diſtruſt his mercy. Rom. 8. 1. 5. 1. Rom. 8. 34.

4. It diſcovereth unto us the heinouſneſs of our ſins, and thence ſhould breed in us a vehement deteſtation, together with a great dread of them; a deteſtation of them, as having provoked God to ſuch a pitch of diſpleaſure, cauſing him to deal thus ſeverely with his own beloved Son; as having brought ſo heavy ſuffering upon a perſon ſo infinitely high in dignity, excellent in worth, kind and gracious to us; a dread of them, as expoſing us, if we do not avoid and forſake them, to the moſt grievous pains and miſeries; for, *if theſe things were done to a green tree* (if ſuch puniſhments were inflicted upon one ſo innocent, ſo worthy, ſo little obnoxious to the fire of divine wrath and vengeance) *What ſhall be done to the dry*? that is, What will become of us, who are ſo guilty, ſo combuſtible by that fire, if we by preſumptuous commiſſion of ſin, and impenitent continuance therein, do incenſe God againſt us? Luc. 23. 31.

5. It ſhould work in us a kindly contrition and remorſe for our ſins, which were indeed the murtherers of ſo good a friend, and loving a Saviour: others were but inſtruments, they were the principal authours of his death; they moſt truely betrayed him, they accuſed him, they condemned

demned him, they lifted him up to the accurſed tree: they moved God, and enabled men to inflict this horrible puniſhment on him.

6. It ſhould deterr us from them, and engage us moſt carefully to avoid them, as thoſe which in a ſort do exact another death from him; *crucifying him afreſh* (as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* telleth us) *vilifying and defiling the precious blood of the covenant* (as he likewiſe teacheth.)

Heb. 6. 9. 10. 29.

7. It ſhould engage us to a patient ſubmiſſion and reſignation of our ſelves to the will and providence of God; *foraſmuch as Chriſt hath ſuffered for us in the fleſh, we ſhould* (as S. *Peter* adviſeth) *arm our ſelves likewiſe with the ſame mind*; and, *Let* (exhorteth S. *Paul*) *the ſame mind be in us that was in Chriſt Jeſus; who being in the form of God humbled himſelf, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs*: We ſhould not diſdain, nor upon any account be diſpleaſed, or unwilling in bearing any croſs, or affliction, to follow the pattern of our great Maſter; *looking unto Jeſus, the authour and finiſher of our faith, who for the joy that was ſet before him, endured the croſs.*

Heb. 12. 1.

8. It doth alſo oblige us to the deepeſt mortification in conformity to his death: we ſhould be *with him* (or after him) *crucified* to the luſts and affections of the fleſh, to the faſhions, glories, deſires and delights of the world; *knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him; that the body of ſin might be deſtroyed, that henceforth we ſhould not ſerve ſin.*

Phil. 3. 20. Gal. 5. 24. Gal. 2. 20. 1 Pet. 4. 2. Col. 3. 3, 5. Rom. 6. 5, 6.

9. It is alſo a ſtrong engagement to the fulleſt meaſure of charity toward our brethren; for, *If* (ſaith S. *John*) *God ſo loved us* (as to give his own Son to die for us) *then ought we to love one another*, in a degree anſwerable to ſuch an obligation and pattern: *If* (added the ſame *Apoſtle*) *he laid down his life for us, then ought we alſo to lay down our lives for the brethren.*

1 John 4. 11. 3. 16.

10. In fine, we hence appear obliged to yield up our ſelves wholly to the ſervice of our Saviour; to the promoting of his intereſt and glory: ſince, *we* (as S. *Paul* admoniſheth us) *are not our own, being bought with a price*; and muſt *therefore glorifie God in our body, and in our ſpirit, which are God's*, by a purchaſe ſo dear and precious; ſince, as that Apoſtle again mindeth us, *Chriſt died for all, that they which live might not live to themſelves, but to him that died for them*; this being, let us not wrong *the Lord who bought us*, by witholding his due, the price of his deareſt blood; let us not abuſe him, by defeating his purpoſe, no leſs advantagious to our ſelves, than honourable to him; but as by being our Saviour, he hath deſerved to be our Lord, ſo in effect let him ever be; let us ever believe him ſo in our heart, confeſs him with our mouth, and avow him in our practice; which that we may doe, God of his infinite mercy, by his holy grace, vouchſafe unto us, through *Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.* Amen.

1 Cor. 6. 20. 7. 23. 2 Cor. 5. 15. 2 Pet. 2. 1.

Apoc. 1. 5. *Now, Unto him that loved us, and waſhed us from our ſins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings and Prieſts unto God; and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.*

Apoc. 5. 12. *Worthy is the lamb, that was ſlain, to receive power, and riches, and wiſdom, and ſtrength, and honour, and glory, and bleſſing.*

Apoc. 5. 13. *Bleſſing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that ſitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.* Amen.

SER-

He descended into Hell.

SERMON XXVIII.

ACTS II. 27.

Because thou wilt not leave my soul in Hell.

SAint *Peter* in his Sermon to the *Jews* cites these words of the *Psalmist* to prove the Resurrection of *Christ*. And because upon these words our Saviour's *descent into Hell* seem to be grounded, I shall from this *Text* take occasion to discourse of this *Article* of the *Creed*, Κατελθόντα εἰς ᾅδου, *He descended into hell.*

This *Article* is of later standing in the *Creed*, and doth not appear to have had place in any of the most ancient ones publick or private; excepting that of *Aquileia*; into which also perhaps it might have been inserted not long before *Ruffinus* his time; and the meaning thereof hath always (both in more ancient times among the *Fathers*, and afterwards among the *Schoolmen*, and lately among *modern Divines*) been much debated, having yielded occasion to many prolix and elaborate discourses; To recite the several opinions about it, or different explications thereof, with the reasons produced to maintain or disprove them, were a matter of greater time and pains than I can well afford; and to decide the controversies about it, a matter of greater difficulty than I could hope to atchieve. Wherefore (both upon these accounts, and because I rather chuse to insist upon matters more clear in their nature, and more practical in consequence) I should be willing altogether to wave this obscure and perplexed subject; yet however somewhat to comply with expectation, I shall touch briefly upon some things seeming conducible to the clearing, or to the ending of the controversies about it.

Now whereas there may be a three-fold inquiry; *one* concerning the meaning of these words (*He descended into hell*) intended by those who inserted them; *another* concerning the most proper signification of the words themselves; a *third* concerning the meaning, they are in consistency with truth capable of;

1. The *first* I resolve, or rather remove, by saying, it seems needless to dispute, what meaning they, who placed the words here, did intend; since, 1. It is possible, and by many like instances might be declared so, and perhaps not unlikely, that they might both themselves upon

probable grounds believe, and for plausible ends propound to the belief of others this proposition, without apprehending any distinct sense thereof; as we believe all the Scriptures, and commend them to the faith of others, without understanding the sense of many passages therein: And since, 2. Perhaps they might by them intend some notion not certain, or not true, following some conceits then passable among divers, but not built upon any sure foundation (like that of the *millennium*; and the necessity of infants communicating, *&c.* which were anciently in great vogue, but are now discarded) and since, 3. To speak roundly, their bare authority, whoever they were (for that doth not appear) could not be such, as to oblige us to be of their minds, whatever they did mean or intend; they perhaps were such, to whom we might owe much reverence, but should not be obliged to yield entire credence to their opinions. But farther, 4. Were I bound to speak my sense, I should say, that, supposing they had any distinct meaning, they did intend to affirm, that our Saviour's soul, did by a true and proper kind of motion descend into the regions infernal, or beneath the earth; where they conceived the souls of men were detained; for this appears to have been the more general, and current opinion of those times, which it is probable they did comply with herein, whencesoever fetched, however grounded.

2. As to the *second* inquiry, concerning the signification of the words, what may be meant by *He descended*; whether our Saviour himself, according to his humanity, or his soul, or his body, called *He* by *Synechdoche*; what by *descended*, whether (to omit that sense, which makes the whole sentence an allegory, denoting the sufferance of infernal or hellish pains and sorrows, as too wide from the purpose; whether, I say) by *descending* may be signified a proper local motion toward such a term, or an action so called in respect to some such motion accompanying it; or a virtual motion by power and efficacy in places below: what by *Hell*, whether a state of being, or a place; if a place, whether that where bodies are reposed, or that to which souls do go; and if a place of souls, whether the place of good and happy souls, or that of bad and miserable ones; or indifferently, and in common of both those; for such a manifold ambiguity these words have, or are made to have; and each of these senses are embraced, and contended for: I shall not examine any of them, nor farther meddle in the matter, than by saying,

1. That the *Hebrew* word *Sheol* (upon the true notion of which the sense of the word *Hell* (or *Hades*) in this place is conceived to depend) doth seem originally, most properly, and most frequently (perhaps constantly, except when it is translated, as all words sometimes are, to a figurative use) to design the whole Region protended downward from the surface of the earth to a depth (according to the vulgar opinion, as it seems anciently over the world) indefinite and unconceivable; vastly capacious in extension, very darksome, desolate, and dungeon-like in quality (whence it is also frequently stiled the *pit* [a] the *lowest pit*, [b] the *abyss*, [c] the *depths of the earth*, [d] the *darkness*, * the *depths of hell*.) I need not labour much to confirm the truth of this notion, since it is obvious, that this *Sheol* (when most absolutely and properly taken,

Nobis inferi—— in fossa terræ & in alto vastitas, & in ipsis visceribus ejus abstrusa profunditas. Tertul. *de* An. 55.

'Απώλεια. Prov. 15. 11.
Διαφθοραί. Prov. 27. 20.

[a] Isa. 38. 18. Psal. 88. 6. Eccles. 21. 11.
[b] Psal. 71. 20. John 2. 6. Rom. 10. 7.
[c] Psal. 71. 20.
[d] Job 17. 13. Psal. 143. 3. Eccl. 6. 4. 1 Sam. 2. 9.
* Prov. 9. 18.

taken, the circumstances of discourse about it implying so much) is commonly opposed to *heaven*, not only in situation, but in dimension and distance; as when *Job* speaking of the unsearchableness of the divine perfections, saith; *It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do; deeper than hell, what canst thou know?* and the Prophet *Amos*, *Though they dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them; though they climb into heaven, thence will I bring them down.* Job 11. 8. Amos 9. 2. (Psalm 139. 8.) (Deut. 32. 22. Isaiah 57. 9.)

2. I say farther, because the bodies (or visible remainders) of persons dying do naturally fall down, or are put into the bosome of this pit, which is therefore an universal grave, and receptacle of them, therefore to dye is frequently termed καταβαίνειν εἰς ᾅδου, or καταγεσθαι εἰς ᾅδου, *to descend*, or to be brought down into this *hell*; which hapning to all men without exception (for, as the *Psalmist* says, *there is no man that shall deliver his soul* (or his life, or himself) *from the hand of* this all-grasping *hell*) therefore it is attributed promiscuously to all men, good and bad alike; *I will go down*, saith good *Jacob*, *unto the grave, unto my son mourning* (καταβήσομαι εἰς ᾅδου, I will go down to *Sheol*, this common grave of mankind) and so frequently of others. Whence this *Hell* is apt figuratively to be put for, and to signifie equivalently with death it self; and it is once by the LXX. so translated (and S. *Peter* seems to use the phrase * after them) for death, I say, or for the law, condition and state of death: as in that of *Hezekiah* in the Prophet *Esay*, * *Sheol cannot praise thee; death cannot celebrate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth:* where οἱ ἐν ᾅδου, and οἱ ἀποθανόντες (as the *Greek* renders *Sheol*, and *death*) are the same, and opposed to the living, of whom it is said; *The living, the living he shall praise thee.* Pslam 89. 48. Gen. 37. 35. 44. 29, 31. * 2 Sam. 22. 6. Acts 2. 24. Ὠδῖνες θανάτου The sorrows of hell compassed me about. * Isa. 38. 18. Death and Hades are frequently joyned as synonymous. Eccluf. 48. 5. Macc. 6. 23, &c.)

3. I say further, that this word, according to ancient use, seems not to signify the place, whither mens souls do go, or where they abide; &c.) for that

1. It can hardly be made appear, that the ancient *Hebrews* either had any name appropriated to the place of souls, or did conceive distinctly, which way they did go; otherwise than that, as the *Preacher* speaks, *they returned unto God who gave them*; and that they did abide *in God's hand*; especially the souls of the just, according to that in the Book of *Wisdom*: *The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them.* And for that, Eccles. 12. 7. Wisd. 3. 1. (Deut. 33. 3)

2. It seems, they did rather conceive the souls of men, when they died, to go upward than downward; as the *Preacher* again intimates, when he differenceth the spirit of man dying from the soul of beasts; *the soul of beasts descending with its body to the earth*; the *spirit of man ascending unto God*, to be disposed by him according to his pleasure and justice. And by *Enos* his *being taken to God* (whose special residence is expressed to be in heaven above) and by *Elias* his translation *up into heaven* (as it is in the Text of the history) 'tis probable, they did rather suppose the souls of the righteous to ascend, than to be conveyed downward into subterraneous caverns, those μυκοὶ ᾅδου *(closets of hell)* as the Book of *Wisdom* calls them; that βάθος ᾅδου, *(deep pit of hell)* as it is in *Ben-Sirach*; to ascend, I say, whether into the supreme heaven, or no, is not material; but some whither above, nearer unto God's most special residence, into a happy place. Eccles. 3. 21. Gen. 5. 24. 2 Kings 2. 11. Sap. 17. 24. Ecclus. 21. 10, 11. Οὐρανὸς ἅγιος ἐστι. ἅγιος ὢν. Chryl. *ad* Heb. 9 8. Eph. 3 15. Heb. 11. 16. 12, 22.

3. I add, that if those ancients had by *Sheol* meant the receptacle or mansion of souls, it is not likely they would have used such expressions as those: *The grave (Sheol) cannot praise thee, death cannot celebrate*

brate thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth; so *He-*
Isaiah 38. 18. *zekiah* spake; *In death there is no remembrance of thee, in SHEOL who*
Psalm 6. 6. *shall give thee thanks?* so *David* said; and, *There is no works, nor de-*
Eccles. 9. 10. *vise, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in SHEOL, whither thou goest*; so the *Preacher*; who hardly it seems could say so, if by *Sheol* he meant the place of souls; except he should also mean, that souls after death became deprived of all life and sense. The son of *Sirach* likewise speaks in the
Eccles. 17. 27. same manner: ὑψίστῳ τίς αἰνέσει ἐν ᾅδῃ; *Who shall praise the most High in hell, in stead of them which live and give thanks? Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, as from one that is not; the living and sound in heart shall praise the Lord.*

I must confess, that afterwards (even before our Saviour's time) the word ᾅδης was assumed by the *Jews*, to design (as it did among the *Greeks*) either the place of souls in common, or more strictly the place of souls condemned to punishment and pain, for their bad lives here: *Josephus* doth often use the word in the first of these senses; and in the
Luc. 16. 23. *New Testament* it seems peculiarly applied to the latter; as in the parable of the rich man, who being ἐν τῷ ᾅδῃ, *in hell and torments*, did thence *lift up his eyes, and behold a far off Lazarus in Abraham's bosome*; but we cannot hence infer the same concerning the ancient meaning of the word *Sheol*; especially considering how the *Jews*, after the prophetical days, in their dispersions becoming acquainted with the world, did borrow some notions and expressions from elsewhere; which expressions our Saviour and his Apostles might well retain, when they were suitable and accommodable unto truth.

3. But however it be determined concerning the proper sense in general of this principal word in the Proposition, and of the rest depending thereon, as to their signification here; I do thus, as to the present case, and the last main question propounded about the meaning, whereof the words are capable with truth, answer briefly.

1. If we do interpret the *descent into hell* here affirmed of our Saviour's interment, or being laid in the bosome of that universal grave we before spake of; or, if (in a notion little differing from that) we take these words for a phrase (taking its ground thence in the manner fore-mentioned) importing no otherwise than when it was spoken of *Jacob* and others, that our Saviour did really pass into the state of death; we are sure therein not to err; the Proposition so understood being most certainly true: we shall also hereby be able fairly to satisfy the first, and best (if not the only) reason of this Proposition being commended to our belief. For that place in the *Acts* which seems to have been the occasion, and the main ground of this Proposition being asserted in these terms, doth not refuse, but commodiously admits this interpretation: for, our Saviour's *soul not being left in Hell, and not seeing corruption*, is plainly by S. *Peter* himself interpreted of his resurrecti-
Acts 2. 31. on: *David* (saith he) *foreseeing this, spake of Christ's Resurrection*
Acts 13. 34. and, in like manner, by S. *Paul*; *As concerning, that he raised him from the dead, now no more to see corruption*, he said in this wise——that speech, I say, *Our Saviour's soul not being left in Hell*, and, *not seeing corruption*, is by the Apostles interpreted to denote our Saviour's resurrection; that is, his being freed from the bands of death, and raised from the grave, before his flesh had underwent corruption; and it is opposed unto *David*'s continuing in death, and seeing corruption his body being corrupted and consumed in the grave; the *Apostles* not designing to assert or prove more, than our Lord's Resurrection: *Da-*
vid

vid, argue they, fell on sleep, and hath continued till now in that state; *David* remained unto this day in the grave, and so his body being reduced to dust saw corruption; ἐτελεύτησε καὶ ἐτάφη; *he dyed, and was buried*, without any reversion; therefore that speech of his in the *Psalm* must not fully and ultimately be understood of him, to whom they did not so exactly agree: but of such an one, who did not abide in that deadly sleep; whose flesh, being opportunely raised, did avoid the sight (or undergoing) of corruption. And whereas it is said, τὴν ψυχήν μου, my soul, or my life; nothing can be thence drawn greatly prejudicial to this exposition; for (to omit that bolder exposition of *Beza*, who sometime did by the soul understand the dead body, translating the words, *Non derelinques cadaver meum in sepulchro*) nothing is more usual than both for the flesh, and for the soul (each of them *Synecdochically*) to signifie the person, considered as sometime endued with life: *Every one that sinneth shall be put to death*; and, *that soul shall be cut off*, are terms equivalent in the Law: the soul that eateth, the soul that toucheth, and the like phrases do often occur; and those expressions, *to deliver their soul from death*; *God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave*; *What man is he that shall not see death, that shall deliver his soul from the hand of the grave?* do seem parallel to this, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in hell*; which yet do import no more, than the persons there spoken of respectively to be preserved from death.

Acts 2. 29.

Exod. 31. 14. Levit. 7. 25, 27. 5. 2, &c.

Psal 33. 19. 49. 15. 89. 48.

Again, taking *soul* for the living *soul*, or that faculty by which we live, and *hell* for the state of death, the words mentioned, *Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell*, will have this natural exposition; agreeable to the *Apostles design*: thou wilt not suffer me to continue deprived of life, till my flesh be corrupted. It is also observable, that S. *Paul* in the 13th of the *Acts*, neglecting the former part, *Thou shalt not leave my soul in Hell*, contents himself with the latter, *Thou wilt not yield thy Holy one to see corruption*, intimating both parts to signifie the same thing.

(Dr. *H.* Pr. C.)

If it be objected as an inconvenience to this explication of the words here in the *Creed*, that admitting it, they signifie no more, than what was before expressed in plain words, *Dead and buried*; and so contain only a needless repetition; I Answer,

1. That this objection concerns them, who inserted the words here; who yet, even supposing this exposition to be good, might be excusable, as suspecting it possible, that our Saviour being ἐν ᾅδῃ, according to S. *Peter*, might imply more than this, although they knew not what distinctly; who also might perhaps intend somewhat by these words different from this sense, but not so truely applicable to them, or agreeable to the truth of the thing; I answer,

2. That to say our Saviour did continue in the state of death for some time, doth add somewhat above his being dead and buried; wherefore thus understanding the *descent* doth not render it altogether superfluous.

3. That a greater inconvenience seems to arise from expounding them otherwise; the doing so, reflecting upon the more ancient compilers, both of this, and other *Breviaries* of faith, as the *Nicene*, and *Constantinopolitan* Councils, *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, &c. who left them out; which they should not have done, if they contain any thing highly material and different from what is here otherwise expressed; whose credit is (as I conceive) more to be tendred, than of their *Juniours* and followers

followers unknown to us; and so much the more, for that in a matter of this kind, defect or omission is less tolerable, than any redundance in expression. Which inconvenience may seem in a manner to reach
1 Cor. 15. 4. higher, even to S. *Paul* himself; who in the 15th *Chapter* of his *first Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, declaring the sum of what he both learned and taught concerning our Saviour's last grand performances, only mentions his death, burial and resurrection; *I delivered unto you first, that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that he was buryed, and that he rose again the third day*; which enumeration of his, we may, it seems, well acquiesce in, as sufficient and complete, and may thence with great probability infer, that no other *descent* of our Saviour *into Hell*, beside his death and burial, was by him understood, or delivered in his *Catechetical* discourses and preachings as a point of faith; so that what is objected as an inconvenience, proves no small advantage to this exposition. But I say farther, to the main question, that,

2. Interpreting *Hell* for the mansion, or habitation of souls departed hence (to omit, that *Sheol*, as I before noted, seems to signifie otherwise in the *Old Testament*, and consequently thence the place in the *Acts* applyed out of the *Psalms*, would not be proper to this purpose; whereby the main ground and support of the assertion it self, taken according to this sense, were removed; waving I say, *that* consideration, and taking ᾅδης, according to the meaning, which we must confess it sometime to bear in the *New Testament*, yet) there seems to follow some inconvenience thereon. For then we must either take it for the place of damned spirits shut up in torment or despair (according to which acception the proposition it self would be most certainly uncertain, having no solid ground for it; and most probably false, for that it is affirmed, our Saviour's soul, the same day he died, did go into paradise; *This day*, said he to the penitent thief, *shalt thou be with me in paradise*) or we must
Luc. 23. 43. take it for a place common to all souls, as well good and blessed; as bad and miserable; (for that it in the *New Testament* at least, comprehends the place of torment, is evident by the parable of the *rich man* and *Lazarus*.) But I think that S. *Austin* had reason to doubt, whether it were consonant to the style of the *New Testament*, that *Hades*, relating to the state of souls, should there be ever taken in a good or middle sense, at
Apoc. 20. 14. least, whereas 'tis said in the *Revelation*, that those two inseparable companions, *Death* and *Hades* (that *Hades*, which is said to render up its dead to judgment) *were cast into the lake of fire*, 'tis hard to suppose, that *Paradise* was cast in there; yea hard it were to say, that *Hades* was cast in thither, supposing that word did then in its usual latitude of signification (as Christians understood it) comprehend *paradise*. Yea farther, this explication forces us upon this inconvenience, that we must suppose paradise to be seated in a place beneath us, or within the earth; that paradise, which is either the same with the third (or highest) heavens in * S. *Paul*, or confining thereto: it is, I say, hard to be forced by an interpretation of these words, to consent, that paradise (that *locus divinæ amœnitatis recipiendis Sanctorum Spiritibus destinatus*; *the place of divine* comfort and *amenity*, *destined to receive the spirits of the Saints*) should have its place in the darksome bowels

Εἰς ὃ πάντες ὅσιοι μετ' αὐτὸν καθάπερ εἰς ἀδυτον ἐνδύνδε τὰς ψυχὰς μεταπέμπεσθαι. Gr. Nyss. *de im. an.*

Μετάβασις εἰς τὸ ἀειδὲς καὶ ἀφανές. *Id.*

* 2 Cor. 12.

Οὔτε γὰρ ἐν ὑποχθονίοις ἔστι τις ἂν τὸν παράδεισον, οὔτε ἐν παραδείσῳ τὰ ὑποχθόνια, &c. Greg. Nyss. T. 2. *de Resur.* 1. Tertull. *Apol.* 47.

bowels of the earth; no commodious situation it seems for a garden, for delightsome walks and bowers: yet so it must be seated, that our Saviour's soul may (at least in rigour and propriety of speech) he said to descend thereinto. The word *descend* taking *hell* for the ancient *Sheol*, is proper enough, and hath ground both in authentick use, and the nature of the thing; but taking *hell* in this sense (for the place of souls) it is most probably improper, and hath no certain ground, or authority to commend it; for it is said, that our Saviour's soul was in Hell, not that it descended thither; nor can it by consequence be inferred so to have done, according to this meaning of *hell*. However,

3. I add, that seeing it is a most certain truth, that our Saviour's soul did immediately go into the place appointed to receive happy souls after their recession from the body, and resignation into God's hands; if we take *Hell* in a general and common sense for the place or the state of souls departed; and descending for passing thereinto (by a falling as it were from life, or by going away together with the descent of the body; and thence styled descending; what appeareth visibly happening to the body, being accommodated to the soul) if, I say, we do thus interpret our Saviour's *descent into Hell* for his soul's going into the common receptacle and mansion of souls, we shall so doing be sure not substantially to mistake. And this sense, I conceive, if the words can handsomely bear them, would be very proper to this place, as signifying somewhat distinct from what is otherwise expressed; and serving to the farther establishment of those great *Articles* adjoyning, our Lord's *death* and *resurrection*; it implying the perfect accomplishment of death for the soul to have deserted the body, and to have been translated into that ἀόρατον ἅδου (as the Book of *Wisedom* calls it) that *invisible region*, so far distanthence, whence — *revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras*, is a labour indeed, and a work not to be effected, but by the power of him, whose prerogative it is, *to kill, and make alive, to bring down to hell, and to bring up; to lead unto the gates of hell, and to bring back again.* Sap. 17. 14. (1 Sam. 2. 6. Deut. 32. 39. Tob. 13. 2. Sap. 16. 13.

This is all that I shall say about this intricate point; for I cannot well be at the pain to consider, or examine those conceits, which pretend to acquaint us why, and to what effect our Saviour descended into Hell.

That our Lord went thither to preach unto, convert and redeem from thence all, or some of the damned Souls (for some say, that he depopulated and emptyed that region of darkness; others are not so liberal as to free all thence, but only the fitter objects of compassion and favour; both saying that, which hath very weak, or no reasons to maintain, very strong and plain objections to assail it.) Iren. 4. 45. 5. 31. Euseb. *Hist.* 1. *ult.* Clem. *Str.* 2. *p.* 163. 6. *p.* 271.

That he went to rescue, and conduct into glory the souls of the *Patriarchs*, and other good persons, from that infernal *Limbus*, in which till then they were detained; (a place by no likely means to be proved existent otherwhere than in the fancy of its inventors) or, That he went to deliver the souls of the just, and Prophets, from the wicked powers, into whose power they had fallen (as *J. Martyr* in his *Dialogue* with *Tryphon. p.* 105.) Euseb. *Demonst.* 10. 8. Athan. *Cont.* Apollin.

That he went to affront, triumph over, and terrifie the powers of darkness upon their own ground, or in their own dominions. *Vid.* Montac. Orig. *Part. Post. p.* 442. *& in Appar.* 1.

These, and the like conceits seem enough discountenanced, by saying, the Scriptures no where plainly declare any such thing, and that therefore they have no good ground to stand upon (they pretend only

ly one or two difficult and obscure places in the *first Epistle* of St. *Peter*, which are capable of fair expositions not favourable to them) whereas in teaching us, that our Lord preached upon earth salvation to them, who in this life should be converted to believe upon him and obey his laws; damnation irrecoverable to them, who should persist in infidelity and disobedience: that he merited by his obedience, and purchased by his blood, both a redemption from all future distress, and a translation into bliss; that he by his death vanquished all the powers of hell, and triumphed over them upon the cross; in these things the Scripture is very clear and copious: but concerning that redemption of souls beneath, that translation of souls out of subterraneous closets, or * prisons (as they call them) that local triumph in the Devil's kingdom, it is quite silent, or very dark in expression about them; whence we may well be somewhat backward in yielding assent to such devices, of which, if any perhaps should be true, yet could not the belief thereof be of necessity, or great importance to us: for what our Saviour so did below would not belong to the salvation of the living, which is abundantly provided for by his death and resurrection, with what followed them; nor would it much refer to our practice, which is otherwise sufficiently directed and encouraged. So that we may however safely be ignorant in regard to any of those notions. But let it suffice to have discoursed thus far about this endless question; except we will end it with that saying of S. *Austin*; *Melius est dubitare de occultis, quam litigare de incertis:* or with that more peremptory saying of *Calvin: Atqui stultum, & temerarium est de rebus incognitis altius inquirere, quam Deus nobis scire permittit,*

Heb. 2. 14. Colos. 2. 15.

* Bellarm.

Vid. Fidei Symbola in Codice Justinian. Tit. 1. De Gen. ad lit. 8. 5.

Calv. *Inst.* 3. 25. 6.

SER-

He rose again from the Dead.

SERMON XXIX.

ACTS I. 3.

To whom also he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs; being seen of them fourty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.

THE most proper, and most usual way of God, in confirming any truth of high moment in special manner revealed by him, is by lending unto them, whom he employs as messengers thereof, his powerful arm for the performance of works supernatural or miraculous. Of such works there is none more certainly such than raising a dead person to life; the doing which upon several accounts plainly surpasseth the power of any creature; not only as exceeding the ordinary law and course of nature established and upheld by God, but for that the Souls of men departing hence do return into God's hand, or into a state by high sentence determined, whence no creature is able to fetch them down, or raise them up; because also God hath reserved the Prerogative of doing this unto himself; he *holding* (as it is expressed in the *Revelation*) *the keys of hell, and of death*; he having said, *I am he, and there is no God beside me*; *I kill, and I make alive.* Apoc. 1. 18. Deut. 32. 39. 1 Sam. 2. 6. Psal. 68. 20.

There could also particularly be no more proper way of confirming our Religion to come from God, whether we consider the persons whom it was designed for, or the doctrines it propounded: The *Jews* were uncapable of conviction by any other way, than by miracle; no other reason would have been apprehended by them, or would have had any force upon them: *The Jews* (saith St. *Paul*) *require a sign*; and *Except ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe*, said our *Saviour* to them. The *Gentiles* also had been so used to the winding off and on the subtilties and the plausibilities of disputation, that nothing probably in that kind would have sufficed to perswade them; and therefore somewhat miraculous in the highest kind might be needful to convert them: Also the most peculiar and eminent doctrines of our Religion (such as are, *Our Lord Jesus being the Messias*, the *Son of God* and *Saviour of the World*, the *future resurrection*, *general judgment*, and dispensation of rewards, answerable to mens practice in this life) cannot more immediately and directly be assured, than by the resurrection from the dead of him, who principally did reveal them. 1 Cor. 1. 22. John 4. 48.

Wherefore Almighty God in confirmation of our Religion did perform this great work in raising *Jesus* our Lord from the dead; and withal (for the conviction of the world, for rendring our faith reasonable, and our infidelity inexcusable) he did take especial care, that the fact should by very sufficient testimony be conveyed unto us; to which purpose he did (as St. *Peter* said) προχειροτονεῖν, predesign, pick out, and appoint a competent number of persons, in all respects capable and fit to assert it; this is that which St. *Luke* in our Text doth in way of Historical narration affirm. And because the truth thereof is in its kind the principal argument, whereby the truth of our Religion in gross may be evinced, we shall for the confirmation of our Faith against all impressions of this incredulous (and therefore impious) age, endeavour by God's assistance now to declare, and maintain it. That *Jesus* truly died, all the world could testify; no death was ever more solemn or remarkable; nor do any adversaries contest it; that he after that death was by Divine power raised again to life is that which we believe and assert: Now whoever with reason shall doubt thereof or deny it, must do it, either because of some repugnance in the fact it self, implying that it could not well be done; or from deficiency of the testimony proving it, as to its authours, or circumstances: but neither of these exceptions may reasonably be admitted.

Acts 10. 41.

As for the fact it self, or the notion of a resurrection in general there cannot (admitting that, which as capable of antecedaneous proof, and as acknowledged by all persons owning any Religion, may be presupposed, the power and providence of God, together with his chief Attributes of wisdom and goodness incomprehensible) there cannot be any repugnance therein, or any incredibility. For it was neither in its nature impossible to God, or in its design worthy of him; it contained nothing apparently either beyond the power of God, or presumeable to be against his will.

unworthy

1. To raise a dead man to life, is indeed we confess and avow a work surpassing the power of any creature, not assisted by God; but no reason can be assigned, why it should go beyond the Divine power. The doing it doth not involve contradiction, and is therefore an object of power, and at least is atchievable by Omnipotence: let the Soul be what it will, and in whatever life may be supposed to consist, nothing can hinder that God may reduce the parts of a man into the same state they sometime before were in. And very easily it is conceiveable that He, who (according to the general notions, and current traditions of mankind) did first inspire the Soul of man into his body, may reinfuse it being separated; that he who after death keepeth it in his hand, may thence restore it; who also (according to histories received in all the principal Religions that have been in the world) hath often actually performed it. *Pliny* indeed doth reckon this among instances of things absolutely impossible: *It is* saith he, *a great solace of our imperfect nature, that even God cannot doe all things; for neither can he bring death upon himself, if he would, nor bestow eternity on mortals, nor recall the dead to life:* but 'tis no wonder, that he, who thought the Soul quite to perish by death, should conceive the restitution thereof impossible; although even supposing that, his opinion was not reasonable; for even any thing how corruptible soever by dissolution of its ingredients, or alteration of its temperament, may by recollecting and

Imperfectæ verò in homine naturæ præcipua solatia sunt, nè Deum quidem posse omnia; nam neque sibi potest mortem consciscere si velit (quod homini dedit optimum in tantis vitæ malis) nec mortales æternitate donare, nec revocare defunctos. Plin. II. 7.

and rejoining those ingredients, or by re-establishing the causes of such a temperament be restored (as a house whose materials are dispersed may be re-edified, or as a liquor by a new fermentation may be revived) which to effect may not be deemed hard to him, that made the whole world: however to such as him we may say as our *Saviour* did to the *Sadduces*; *yea err not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God.* Especially to those who acknowledge the immortality of the Soul, or its permanence in a separate state, and who admit the truth of the ancient histories among the *Jews*, it is not onely most evidently possible, but very credible, that God upon any considerable occasion should perform it; with such St. *Paul* might well thus expostulate; *What doth it seem incredible to you that God should raise the dead?* to you that have such previous notions and perswasions about God's omnipotency; (such as the Prophet *Jeremy* expresseth when he saith, *Ah Lord God, behold, thou hast made the heaven, and the earth by thy great power, and stretched-out arm, and there is nothing too hard for thee*) to you who avow God to be the *Father of Spirits*, who *formeth the Spirit of man within him*, and that when man dieth, *his Spirit returneth to God who gave it*; to you who believe that our Souls are spiritual substances, like unto Angels subsisting after death, and destin'd to future rewards; to you in fine, who may in your Holy records find so many experiments of this power exerted by God in his Prophets; such as that of *Elias* his restoring the widow of *Sarepta*'s son; of *Elisha* raising the son of the *Shunamite*; that of the dead man reviving when his body touched the Prophet's bones; to you therefore this fact cannot be in it self incredible; nor indeed can it, for the reason suggested to any man reasonably seem impossible.

Jer. 32. 17. Matt. 22. 29. Acts 26. 8. Jer. 32. 17. Zech. 8. 6. Job 42. 2. Heb. 12. 9. Num. 16. 22. Num. 27. 16. Zech. 12. 1. Isa. 57. 16. Eccles. 12. 1. 1 Kings 17. 21. 2 Kings 4. 35. 13. 21.

2. Nor was it apparently in its design unworthy of God, or inconsistent with his holy Will; For the ends thereof (such as were pretended by the attesters of it) were as very great and important, so most good and reasonable; it aimed at no slight or trifling matter, but such as in appearance highly concerned the glory of God, and conduced to the welfare of mankind, it professing it self to be a credential of the greatest Embassy that ever came down from heaven to men, importing the complete revelation of God's will, and procurement of Salvation to the world; and did therefore in that respect well become the wisdom and goodness of God to use it. It pretended to confirm a doctrine containing most true and worthy representations of God, the best that could be; declaring most gracious intentions in God of mercy and kindness toward men; no less proper for him than grateful and needful for us; prescribing most excellent rules and patterns of life (wherein the most genuine piety and vertue, most exact justice and hearty charity, most strict purity and sobriety are prescribed) yielding the most effectual helps to the practice of all goodness, and tendering the best encouragement thereto; and upon this account therefore also most worthy of God. So that indeed God could not be conceived to perform such a miracle to better purpose, than for promoting the designs it pretendeth, being so very great, and so very good: it could not be improper for the Divine power to be thus exerted in favour of a Religion so apt to promote his glory, and to procure our benefit.

If it be said that it is absurd or improbable, that God should chuse to perform this miracle upon a person of this sort; one so mean and obscure in the state of his life, so wretched and infamous for the manner of his death; that God rather should have chosen for the interpreter

of

of his mind, and minister of his purposes a Personage more illustrious in rank, and clear in repute; I answer, *first*, that our shallow fancy is a bad and incompetent Judge of what is reasonable or absurd, convenient or unfit in such cases, touching the counsels of God; *who seeth not as man* seeth; *whose thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor ways as our ways*; whose folly *is wiser than men* (that is, whose counsels, however seeming strange to our dim apprehensions, do yet far excell the results of our best wisedom) before whom, *whatever is high among men is abominable*; *with whom the wisedom of this world is folly*; whose *judgments are unsearchable, and his ways are past finding out*; as the Holy Scriptures teach us; and as good reason considering the vast distance between God and us, must acknowledge: so that no such appearance of incongruity can bottom a good exception against this, or any such matter; otherwise well attested. I say *farther*, that God's choice herein, being weighed by a pure and well disposed mind, will appear upon many accounts full of admirable reason and wisedom; all the Divine Oeconomy concerning our Lord, being rightly apprehended will soon appear *wisedom to the perfect*, and will *be justified by the children of wisedom*; as that wherein God's transcendent goodness, and perfect justice and glorious power are with greatest advantage displayed; whereby the hearts of men are most sweetly comforted under their sense of sin, and fear of misery; their minds are most clearly instructed in the ways of duty and happiness, their affections are most strongly excited and encouraged to the practice of all goodness: to such purposes (for causes which were it now seasonable, we could produce) our Saviour's low condition, and hard circumstances did admirably serve; and therefore upon that score it could not be unlikely, that God should raise him from the dead.

1 Sam. 16. 7. Isa. 55. 8. 40. 13. 2 Cor. 1. 25. Luc. 16. 15. 1 Cor. 3. 19. Rom. 11. 33. (Psal. 92. 5. 36. 7.) Job 11. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 6. 7. 14. Matt. 11. 19.

3. But neither (which is the most considerable point) is the testimony asserting this fact any-wise defective or insufficient, but hath all the conditions imaginably requisite to the most entire assurance of any such matter. The defect in the testimony, if any be, must arise from weakness or from wilfulness in the witnesses (their want of knowledge, or mistake, their want of honesty or their unfaithfulness) or from some circumstances belonging to their persons, or their testimony, able to invalidate their attestation; but none of these things can with reason be supposed; they were in all respects more than competently qualified to attest, and all considerable circumstances do assist in confirming their attestation; as by weighing the considerations following may appear.

1 As for their number, it was not one or two persons (although one or two ordinarily do suffice for decision of the greatest cases among men) but many who conspired in asserting it. *He was* (saith S. *Paul*, one who was conversant with these witnesses, who of a zealous adversary and fierce persecutor of this testimony, did become an earnest avoucher thereof) *seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto this present.* And, *This Jesus* (say the twelve *Apostles*) *hath God raised up, whereof all we are witnesses: Twelve* there were who principally were designed, and did take it for their especial duty to attest this matter beside many others, who in their order were able and ready to do it.

2 Cor. 15. 5, 6. Acts 2. 14. 32. Acts 5. 32. 1. 22. 10. 39.

2. These witnesses were no strangers to *Jesus*, but persons by long conversation most familiarly acquainted with him; *who had* (as it is said, and as it was notorious) *been with him from the beginning, who went out and*

John 15. 27. Acts 1. 21, 22.

and in with him all the time (that is for three years ſpace) *from his baptiſm to his aſcenſion.*

3. They did aver themſelves to be αὐτόπλας τῦ λόγυ, or αὐτικόυς, eye or ear witneſſes of the matter, as fully informed about it as ſenſes could make them: *We cannot but ſpeak what we have heard and ſeen. What we did ſee with our eyes, and what our hands did handle of the word of life, that we report unto you*; So St. *John* (the beloved diſciple, who conſtantly attended on his dear Maſter) expreſſeth his teſtimony. And; *We have not followed cunningly deviſed fables, when we made known unto you the power and preſence of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but were eye-witneſſes of his Majeſty*; So St. *Peter* affirmeth concerning the manner of their teſtifying theſe matters. They did, I ſay, hear and ſee him, and that with all advantage poſſible or needful, not once or twice, not in paſſing or at diſtance, not in way of glimpſe or rumour; but often, for a good time, thoroughly; many days converſing and interchanging diſcourſes with him; *who* (as S. *Peter* in the name of the reſt ſaith) *did eat and drink with him after that he roſe from the dead.* And, *To whom* (as S. *Luke* their companion, from their mouth in our Text ſaith) *alſo he ſhewed himſelf alive after his paſſion by many infallible proofs, being ſeen of them fourty days, and ſpeaking of the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God*; and *He was* (ſaith S. *Paul*, another familiar of theirs) *ſeen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jeruſalem, who are his witneſſes to the people* And *two* of theſe witneſſes (S. *John* and St. *Matthew*) are in writings extant relaters of paſſages occurring in their converſation with him, very many, very ſenſible as can be.

Luc. 1. 2. Acts 4. 20. 1 John 1. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 16. Acts 10. 41. Acts 1. 3. Acts 13. 31.

4. We may alſo conſider that the chief of theſe witneſſes the *Apoſtles* themſelves were at firſt (as St. *Luke* of them, and from them confeſſeth) ſo far from being eaſy or credulous in regard to this matter, that hearing it from others, who before had ſeen our Lord riſen, they took it for a trifle or a fiction; and gave no credence thereto: *their words* (ſaith the Text) ἐφάνηαν ὡσεὶ λῆρος, *did ſeem to them (a toy or) an idle tale, and they believed them not.* Yea ſome of them would hardly confide in their own eyes, nor would yield aſſent unto the fact appearing to them, until by letting them touch him, and ſhewing them the marks of his crucifixion remaining on his body, he demonſtrated himſelf to be the very ſame perſon who had lived with them and died before them: *They were terrified and affrighted, and ſuppoſed they had ſeen a Spirit* —— *And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondred*, &c. are words in the hiſtory.

Luc. 24. 11. Matt. 28. 17. Luc. 24. 37. 41. John 20. 27.

5. Upon theſe grounds as they profeſſed, they did without any mincing, heſitancy, or reſervation in the moſt full, clear, downright and peremptory manner, with firm confidence and alacrity concurrently aver the fact: *They ſpake the word of God with boldneſs* —— *and with great power gave the Apoſtles witneſs of the reſurrection of the Lord Jeſus.*

Acts 4. 31, 33. 14. 3.

Which things being weighed, it will appear impoſſible, that the atteſters of this fact (ſuppoſing them in their wits and ſenſes; and certainly they were ſo, as preſently we ſhall ſhew, and as the thing it ſelf plainly ſpeaks) could not be ignorant therein, or miſtaken about it. For if all the ſenſes of ſo many perſons in a matter ſo groſly ſenſible, ſo often and for ſuch a continuance of time, can be diſtruſted; if the *Apoſtles* could imagine they ſaw their friend and Maſter, whom they ſo long had waited upon, when they did not ſee him; that they heard him making long diſcourſes with them, when they did not hear him;

ἡμεῖς πιςεύο-μεν, διὸ καὶ λαλῦμεν. 2 Cor. 4. 3.

that

that they did walk, eat and drink with him, did touch, and feel him when there was really no such thing, what assurance can we have of any thing most sensible? what testimony can be of any validity or use; on that hand therefore the testimony is impregnable, the witnesses cannot be accounted ignorant, or mistaken in the case; for number, or for ability they cannot be excepted against.

It must be therefore onely their seriousness, honesty, or fidelity that remains questionable in them; they must be said to have wilfully deceived and imposed upon the world; self-condemned hypocrites, impudent liars and egregious impostours they must have been, if their testimony was false; but that they were not such persons, that they could not, and would not doe so, there are inducements to believe as forcible as can be required, or well imagined in any such case.

1. They were persons, who did (with denunciation of most heavy judgments from God on the contrary practices) preach and press constantly and earnestly all kinds of goodness, veracity and sincerity, together with humility, modesty, ingenuity and equity, as main points of that Religion, which they by this testimony confirmed. All their discourses plainly breathed a most serious and sprightly goodness and charity toward men, very inconsistent with a base plot to delude them; their doctrine utterly condemned all malice, all falshood, craft and hypocrisie, detruding into the bottomless pit all *that love or make a lye:* Consider these sayings and rules of theirs; *As we have opportunity let us doe good unto all men*; *Let your moderation* (or equity) *be known to all men*; *Shew all meekness to all men*; *Laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and evil speakings, as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. Putting aside all lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour. Lye not to one another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds. Brethren, be not children in understanding*; *however in malice be ye children*; *but in understanding be perfect men:* such were their precepts discountenancing all malice, and all fraud; propounded in a manner as serious and grave and simple as can be imagined; all the tenour of their doctrine consenting to them: wherein also they earnestly declare against and prohibit all vanity of mind, and perverseness of humour, all affectations of novelty and singularity, all peevish factiousness and turbulency, all fond credulity, stupidity and precipitancy, all instability and giddiness of mind, all such qualities which dispose men without most sure and evident grounds either to introduce or to embrace any new conceits, practices or stories: such was their discourse, no-wise sounding like the language of impostours, deceit could hardly so disguise or so thwart and supplant it self.

Apoc. 22. 15. 21. 27. Gal. 6. 10. Phil. 4. 5. Tit. 3. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 1. Eph. 4. 25. 15. Colos. 3. 9. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Tit. 2. 7, 8.

2. Their practice was answerable to their doctrine, exemplary in all sorts of vertue, goodness and sincerity; such indeed whereby they did in effect conciliate much respect, and authority to their words. *Ye are witnesses* (they could, appealing to the observers of their demeanour, and to the all-knowing God, say) *and God also, how holily and justly, and unblameably we behaved our selves among you that believe.* And, *We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending our selves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* Such a lively sense of goodness shining forth in a long course of practice; so to bridle appetites, so to moderate passions, so to eschew all the allurements of pleasure, profit and honour, to bear adversities so calmly and sweetly,

1 Thess. 2, 10. 2 Cor. 4. 2, 6. 2 Cor. 2. 17. Phil. 3. 17.

sweetly, to express so much tender kindness and meekness toward all men, to be continually employed in heavenly discourses and pious works, exhorting men by word, leading them by example to all sorts of goodness indisputably such; to live thus, long and constantly, doth no-wise suite unto persons utterly debauched in mind, and of a profligate conscience; who had devised, and did then earnestly drive on the propagation of a vile cheat: The life, I say, they lead was not the life of wicked impostours, but worthy of the divinest men; fit to countenance and carry on the best design, such as they pretended theirs to be.

3. Farther, they were persons of good sense; yea very wise and prudent; not in way of worldly or fleshly wisdom, in skill to contrive or compass projects of gain, honour, or pleasure to themselves, to the commendation of them and of their testimony, they disclaimed being wise or skilful that way; having no practice therein nor caring for it (for *they looked not* much *on things temporal and* transitory; they did *not mind earthly things*; they had not *their conversation*, or interest here, but *above, as citizens* of another world, deeming themselves as but *sojourners and pilgrims here*) but endued they were with a wisdom as in it self far more excellent, so more suitable to the persons they sustained; with great perspicacy, and sound judgment in the matters they discoursed about, and in the affairs they pursued: such their writings, according to acknowledgment of innumerable most wise and learned persons, fraught with admirable wisdom, and heavenly Philosophy (rude indeed and simple in expression, but most exact and profound in sense) do manifest them to have been; such the tenour of their doctrine evidenced them, shining with that lustre and beauty, compacted with that strength and harmony, that whoever will not confess it to have proceed from God, must, upon consideration, however allow, that it could not have been devised by Idiots or mean persons, but did come from persons of much subtilty and great reach: they must be no fools who could frame a Religion merely by its own plausibility, without any external help, able presently to supplant all the Religions in the world; and to stand durably firm upon the foundations laid by them. Such also the notable conduct of their great affair, (notwithstanding so mighty disadvantages and difficulties) together with the prodigious efficacy their endeavours had upon men, do evince them to have been: they surely could not be weak men, who in a plain and peaceable way confounded all the wit and policy, all the learning and eloquence, all the force and violence that withstood them: Experience did attest to the truth of what St. *Paul* saith; *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations and every thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

1 Cor. 1. 20. 2. 5, 6. 2 Cor. 1. 12. 11. 6. 2 Cor. 4. 18. Col. 3. 2. Phil. 3. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 11. 2 Cor. 11. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 1. 13. Πᾶς αὐτὸ κατόρθωσαν μανθάνοντες ἐξεπλάγησαν, &c. Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. 5. *elegantissimè.* Act. 6. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 27. 2 Cor. 10. 4.

4. So were they qualified in their minds; it must be farther also considered as to their purposes in this case, that in falsly venting and urging this testimony, they could not have any design gainful or beneficial to themselves; but must therein to no end be mischievous to themselves and others; abusing others indeed, but far more harming themselves; they must be supposed voluntarily to have embraced all sorts of inconvenience, and designedly to have rendred themselves miserable; courting adversity, chusing naked and barren evil for its own sake: *For our exhortation was not of deceit, nor of uncleanness, nor in guile: For neither at any time used we flattering words, as ye know, nor a cloak of covetousness, God is witness: neither of men sought we glory.* Profit, honour,

Vid. Chrys. *ib.* 1 Thess. 2. 3, 5.

or pleaſure (thoſe baits which entice men to doe evil, and *ſet them upon* wicked attempts) or any worldly advantage thence to accrue to themſelves they could have no deſign upon; for all thoſe things wittingly and willingly they did abandon; for the ſake of this very teſtimony incurring extremities of loſs, of diſgrace, and of pain: They did plainly foreſee what entertainment their teſtimony would find, and how in proſecution thereof they ſhould be forced to indure all kinds of indignity, of damage, and of hardſhip from men; That *in this world they ſhould have tribulation*; that *men ſhould deliver them up to be afflicted, and ſhould kill them*; and that they ſhould *be hated of all nations for his name ſake*; their Maſter expreſly had forewarned them, That *all who would live godlily in Chriſt Jeſus* (that is, all profeſſours of faith in him, eſpecially the Teachers thereof) *muſt ſuffer perſecution*; and *muſt through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God*; That *bonds and impriſonments did abide them in every place*; That *God had ſet forth the Apoſtles as appointed unto death*, and expoſed them *as ſpectacles* of ſcorn and obloquy *to the world*; that they were *called to ſuffering*, and *appointed to this very thing*, as to their office, and their portion; theſe were the rules and meaſures they went by; theſe the expectations they had from the world: according unto which it did in effect happen to them: *Even to this preſent hour, we both hunger, and thirſt, and are naked, and have no certain dwelling place; and labour working with our hands; being reviled we bleſs, being perſecuted we ſuffer it; being defamed we intreat, we are made as the filth of the world, and as the off-ſcouring of all things unto this day:* So doth S. *Paul* deſcribe the *Apoſtles* condition.

Joh. 16. 33. 15. 20. 16. 2. Matt. 24. 9. Luc. 21. 12. 2 Tim. 3. 12. Act. 14. 22. Act. 20. 23. 1 Cor. 4. 9. 1 Pet. 2. 21. 1 Theſſ. 3. 3. 1 Cor. 4. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 8.

5. All theſe afflictions, as they knowingly did object themſelves to for the ſake of this teſtimony, ſo they did endure them with contentedneſs and joy; when they had been beaten, *they departed rejoycing, that they were counted worthy to ſuffer ſhame for the name of Jeſus; rejoycing that they were made partakers of Chriſt's ſufferings*; deeming it a privilege that *was given them not only to believe in him, but to ſuffer for his name*; thinking themſelves *happy in being reproached for the name of Chriſt, taking joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods, counting all things but loſs for the excellency of the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt their Lord, for whom they ſuffered the loſs of all things.*

Act. 5. 41. 1 Pet. 4. 13. Phil. 1. 29. 1 Pet. 4. 14. Heb. 10. 34. Phil. 3. 9. (1 Pet. 1. 6. Rom. 5. 3. Jam. 1. 2.)

6. Whence it is evident enough, that the ſatisfaction of their conſcience, and expectation of future reward from God for the diſcharge of their duty herein, was all the argument which did induce them to undertake this atteſtation, all the reaſon that could ſupport them in it; neither of which could be conſiſtent with the reſolved maintenance of ſuch a falſhood. They could not indeed but grievouſly be tormented with remorſe in their minds, they could not but dread ſevere vengeance from heaven, had they been conſcious to themſelves of ſo villanous a deſign of mocking God (whoſe name and expreſs command they pretended, whoſe teſtimony and judgment they appealed to in this affair) and together of abuſing the world with ſuch an impoſture. Such muſt have been their inward ſenſe, and ſuch their expectations, had they proceeded with guilty conſcience in this buſineſs; but they do ſeriouſly profeſs otherwiſe, and the condition of things might aſſure us they were in good earneſt: εἰς τοῦτο, *For this end* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *we both labour and ſuffer reproach, becauſe we truſt in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, ſpecially of thoſe that believe. And our rejoycing is this, the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God we have had our converſation in the world:* And,

Act. 4. 19. 5. 29. 2 Cor. 2. 17. 4. 2. 2 Cor. 9. 16. 1 Tim. 4. 10. 2 Cor. 1. 12.

Knowing

Knowing the fear of the Lord (that is, being sensible of our duty toward God, and fearful of his judgment, if we transgress it) *we persuade men*; *but are made manifest unto God*; so they declare what principle it was that moved them to this practice, and the hope encouraging them in it they often express: *If* (said they) *we suffer with Christ we shall be glorified together with him.* And, *We always bear about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body.* And, *It is a faithful saying, if we are dead with him, we shall also live with him; if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us.* And, *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day.* So they profess concerning the grounds and reasons of their maintaining this testimony (and the points connected therewith) with so great present inconvenience to themselves; and the state of things rendreth their profession most credible; for they appear not so blind as not to see those inconveniences, nor so fond as to like them for themselves, or upon no considerable account: they confess, that they should be very stupid and senseless people, if they had incurr'd and underwent all this to no purpose, or without hope of good recompence for it after this life; *If Christ be not risen* (saith S. *Paul*) *then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain; yea and we are found false witnesses of God, that he raised up Christ; —— then we have only hope in this life*; and, *If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*

1 Cor. 5. 11. 2 Rom. 8. 17. 2 Cor. 4. 10. 2 Tim. 2. 11. (1 Pet. 1. 7. 4. 13.) 2 Tim. 4. 8. 1 Cor. 15. 14, 15, 19, 30, 31.

7. And how indeed is it conceivable, that such persons should be so bewitched with so passionate an affection, or so mighty a respect toward a poor dead man (one, who was born so obscurely, who lived so poorly, who died so miserably and infamously, as a malefactour; who indeed so died to their knowledge most deservedly, supposing they did know their testimony to be false; one who never was capable to oblige them or to recompence them for their actings or sufferings in any valuable measure) that merely for his sake, or rather not for his sake, but only for a smoak of vain opinion about him (which could no-wise profit either him or them) they should with an inflexible obstinacy defie all the world; expose themselves to all the persecutions of the world, and to all the damnations of hell. S. *Paul* surely had another opinion of *Jesus*, when he said, *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerours through him that loved us*; *for I am perswaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord*; could they, think we, speak thus who knew *Jesus* to be a wicked deceiver, worthily hated of God and men? No assuredly, their speech and behaviour do palpably shew, that therefore they did bear so vehement an affection, and so high a respect toward *Jesus*, because as with their mouths they openly professed, so they were in their hearts thoroughly perswaded that he was the Son of God most dear unto him; who died for their sake, who was to their knowledge raised again; who also, according to his promises would recompence their faithful adherence to him with eternal joy and bliss.

Rom. 8. 35. &c. Rom. 10. 9.

Vid. Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *Orat.* 61. p. 61.

8. Again, we may consider these witnesses to have of themselves been persons very unlikely to devise such a plot, very unfit to undertake it, very unable to manage and carry it through: Persons they were of no reputation for birth, for wealth, for any worldly interest; persons of no education, no improvement, no endowments of mind (natural or artificial) anywise considerable: they were as to condition and manner of life fishermen, publicans, and mechanicks; as to abilities of mind, they were (as they report themselves) ἀγράμματοι καὶ ἰδιῶται, illiterate and simple; they were also men of no great natural spirit or courage, but rather irresolute and timorous; as their deserting their Master, their renouncing him, their flying and sculking, reported by themselves, declare: *the base* or ignoble, the *despicable* or abject, the *weak*, the *foolish things of the world*, they did style themselves; and in that no adversary will, I suppose, contradict them. And is it possible, that a few (in this respect, I mean very few) persons thus condition'd and qualified, should have the wit to contrive, or the courage to maintain a forgery of such importance? what hope they could frame to themselves of any success therein, upon so extreme disadvantages, is to any man very obvious. No kind of friends in all the world could they imagine ready to back them, or yield them any encouragement; but heaven, hell, and earth they had reason to expect all to be combined in opposition to them and their design: They had all reason to fear, that God himself would cross them and blast their wicked endeavours to propagate the belief of such a lye, which most profanely they dared to father on him, and to vent in his name. They could not hope the father of lyes himself, or any powers of darkness would be favourable or helpful to them; whose interest they so manifestly impugned; that the success of their doctrine, whether true or false, could not but much prejudice their Kingdom; as in effect we see that it did in a manner quite subvert it: they were sure among men to encounter the most potent, and most earnest adversaries that could be; all the Grandees of the world, both Political and Religious, deeply concerned in honour and interest to labour with all their power the detection of their cheat, and overthrow of their design: Whence it must be a boldness more than humane, more than gigantick that could bear up against all these adversaries; if their testimony was in their conscience false; against all those oppositions and disadvantages what could those poor men have to confide in, beside the natural prevalence of truth, and divine assistance thereto; being in their hearts assured of the former, and therefore greatly hoping for the latter?

Οὔτε γὰρ λόγων ἰσχυὰ, &c. *Chrys. Tom.* 5. *Orat.* 64. τίνι θαῤῥήσαντες; ἆρα τῷ καλάμῳ καὶ τῷ ἀγκίστρῳ καὶ τῇ σμίλῃ καὶ τῷ τριπάνῳ, &c. *ibid.*

Καὶ ἐκ ἂν ἔτως ἐτελέσθη καὶ ταπεινοῖς σκάφεσι τὶ τοιοῦτον ἐπῆλθέ ποτε, πλοῖ εἰ μαίνεσθαί τις αὐτὰς φαίη καὶ παραπλεῖν, &c. Chrys. *Tom.* 5. *Orat.* 64. *in* Babylam.

And how indeed could such a cheat, contrived and conducted by so, to humane esteem, weak and silly a knot of people, so easily prosper, and obtain so wonderful a progress, so as presently to induce very many persons, μυριάδες πεπιστεύκοτων (*Myriads of Believers*, as it is *Act.* 21. 20.) many of them considerable (even πολὺν ὄχλον ἱερέων, *A great crowd or company of Priests*, as 'tis said in the *Acts*) to embrace it, together with all the crosses and damages attending it? so as to escape all inquisition about it, and overbear all persecution against it, being neither convincible by proof, nor controllable by force; but in despight of all assaults holding its ground, and running forward with huge success: according to that in the *Acts*: *So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.*

Act. 6. 7.

2 Thess. 3. 1. Act. 19. 20. 6. 7. 12. 20. κατὰ κράτος ἴσχυεν, grew by main force

10. The

10. The matter of their testimony (if we consider that as we should do) and its drift were very implausible, such as no impostours would be likely to forge, and no hearers, without great evidence of truth, would be ready to admit. It was no fine story apt to please the lusts, to flatter the humours, or to gratify the fancies of men; but rather very distastful to flesh and blood (whose inclinations it mainly thwarted) likely to offend the ears of all men, who would hear it; apt to raise fierce anger and indignation in *Jews*, great contempt and scorn in *Gentiles* toward it. The *Jews*, to whom it was first addressed, it did plainly charge with heinous iniquity and impiety in cruelly murthering a Person most innocent, most excellent in vertue and dignity, most dear to God; it withal defeated their longings for a gaudy *Messias*, who should restore and rear them into a lofty state of temporal prosperity, substituting in the room a Spiritual King, with overtures of felicity invisible and future, little suiting their gross conceit and carnal gust of things; it also imported the abrogation of those ritual Laws, and revolution of those special privileges wherein they did so please and pride themselves; it opened the enclosures of God's favour and grace, making them common to all people: it crossed their secular interests of emolument and honour annexed to the present outward frame of Religion, which it dissolved; it menaced severe vengeance and horrible desolation to their Nation and City: and was such a report likely to be entertained by them otherwise than with displeasure, and detestation? Neither unto the *Gentiles* was it likely to be acceptable; for it did also subvert all the Religion established among them by law and custom, destroying consequently all the interests of those who were concerned in upholding thereof; such as those who made that famous uproar, crying out, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians:* it seemed to thwart the common maxims of policy, and dictates of worldly prudence; it could not but appear to men prepossessed with admiration of secular wealth, power and glory, a story most ridiculously extravagant, that so pitiful and wretched a person, as *Jesus* seemed in the eye of the world to have been, should in this miraculous way be declared the Son of God, and Lord of all things, Author of life and Salvation to all men; Sovereign object of all worship and obedience: such a story therefore it was not likely that any men in their senses should conspire to forge, should offer to obtrude on the world, so uncapable of it, so averse from embracing it; and being such it were strange that by a general repulse it should not presently be stifled and quell'd.

Τί ὃ περὶ αὐτῶν λέγουσιν ἐδύκουν ἂν εἶναι πιθανοί; &c. Chrys. *in* 1 Cor. *Or* 5.

Si rem credibilem crediderunt, videant quam sint stolidi qui non credunt. Si autem res incredibilis credita est, etiam hoc utique incredibile est, sic creditum esse quod incredibile est, &c. Aug. *de Civ.* D. 22. 5. *Vid.* Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *Orat.* 61.

Vid. Act. 22. 21, 22.

Act. 19. 28, 34.

Εἰ γὰρ καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων ἐκβεβηκότων —— ὅμως εἰσί τινες μεθ' τοσαῦτα τεκμήρια, καὶ τῆς οἰκουμένης, ὡς εἰπεῖν, ἁπάσης τῷ μαρτυρίαν οἱ διαπεσεῖσι τοῖς γεγονόσιν καὶ πολλοὶ ἔτως ἐξασυνίσως καὶ ἀνεξετάστως, τίς ἂν παρὰ τὰ ἀρχὴν μήτε πράγματα θεασάμενος, μήτε μαθὼν ἀξιοπίστως τούτων ἔχων ταύτην ἂν τὴν πίστιν ἐδέξατο ψυχή; Chrys. *Tom.* 5. *Or.* 64.

Τίς ἔτως ἐμεμήνει ἢ ταῦτα ἀκούσας ὡς ψιλοῖς ῥήμασι πιστεύσαι περὶ πραγμάτων τοιούτων; *Ibid.*

11. One would indeed think that this report had it been false, might easily have been disproved, and quash'd: they who were mightily concerned, and as eagerly disposed to confute it, wanted no means of doing it: they were not surprized in the matter; but were forewarned of it, and did forebode it coming; they were not drowsy, or neglectfull, but very apprehensive, carefull and cautious in preventing it that it should not be produced, or being so, that it might be defeated; for to this purpose they caused the Sepulchre of our Lord to be sealed up, and guarded by Souldiers; that being Masters of his body, they might

Act. 5. 28.

Matt. 27. 64.

might by exhibiting it diſprove any report that ſhould be made about his reſurrection: they had full opportunity of examining the matter to the bottom; it being freſh and preſently divulged after its being reported done; they having alſo all the power and authority on their ſide, in furtherance of the diſcuſſion of the buſineſs; we may accordingly ſuppoſe them very zealous, diligent and active in thoroughly ſifting it, and ſtriving to detect the falſhood therein: they did ſo certainly, and thereto they added ſtrict prohibitions, fierce menaces, and bloudy perſecutions toward the ſuppreſſion thereof; yet could they not by all their induſtry confute it, nor by all their fury quell it: Why? becauſe it was not confutable; becauſe truth proſecuted with vigorous integrity, and conſtancy, or rather ſupported by Divine protection and bleſſing, is invincible. Put caſe there were now the like fact by ſo many people, reported done within theſe two months, wherein the Church and State were in like manner exceedingly concerned, and ſhould therefore employ all their power and care to diſcover the truth, one would think it impoſſible, that were it an impoſture it ſhould eſcape detection, and being ſoon, with the general ſatisfaction of men quite blown away and exploded; this is the fate of all falſhood, ſtanding merely upon its own legs, and not propped by worldly power; but truth, as in this preſent caſe, is able to ſubſiſt by its own ſtrength, eſpecially heaven being concerned to aid it.

Act. 4. 17. 18. 5. 28.

Οὐδεμιᾶς δὲ δεῖται βοηθείας ἡ τῆς ἀληθείας ἰσχύς, ἀλλὰ κἂν μυρίους ἔχῃ τὸς σβεννύντας αὐτὴν, ἓ μόνον ἐκ ἀφανίζεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ δι' αὐτῶν ἐκείνων ἐπιφανεστέρα καὶ ὑψηλοτέρα φαίνεται, &c. Chryſ. *Tom.* 5. *Orat.* 64.

12. As alſo this teſtimony had no power to ſuſtain it, ſo it uſed no ſlight to conveigh it ſelf into the perſwaſions of men: it did not creep in dark corners, it did not grow by clandeſtine whiſpers; it craved no blind faith of men: but with a barefaced confidence it openly proclaimed it ſelf, appealing to the common ſenſe of men, and provoking the world to examine it; daring all adverſaries here to confront it, defying all the powers beneath to withſtand it; claiming onely the patronage of heaven to maintain it.

1 Theſ. 5. 21.

13. Farthermore, the thing it ſelf had it been counterfeit, was in all probability apt to fall of it ſelf; the witneſſes claſhing together, or relenting for their crime. That advice of *Gamaliel* had much reaſon in it; *Refrain* (ſaid he) *from thoſe men, and let them alone, for if this counſel, or this work be of men, it will come to nought*; καταλυθήσεται, it will of it ſelf be diſſolved or deſtroyed: For how indeed could it be, that among ſo many confederates in a juggle, not one either checked by conſcience, or daunted by hazards, or wearied and worn out by ſufferings; ſhould flinch and fall off, ſo as to detect the plot, diſavow his fault, and retire from perſecution, but that each one ſhould perſiſt ſtedfaſt in ſo high a ſtrain of vile diſſimulation? If one had fallen off, he had certainly ſpoiled all the plot, opened all mens eyes, and prevented the faith of any one perſon to the ſtory, and what cement could firmly combine ſuch a pack of men to God, and to all the world, that they ſhould continue invincibly ſtiff in their faith to one another, and conſtantly true to ſo vain a deſign, good to no man, worſt to themſelves? that, I ſay, twelve ſuch perſons, every one for along time, during their whole life, ſhould perſevere immovable in ſo extravagant a reſolution of lying, ſo as by no regrets, or diſſatisfactions from within, no threats, no perils, no troubles, or pains from without to be ever driven out of it, but ſhould die with it in their mouths, yea, rejoyce and glory in dying for it; ſhould dying carry it into the preſence

Acts 5. 38.

preſence of God, and dare with it to appear at his judgment; is exceedingly ſtrange and incredible: It muſt therefore ſurely be truth alone that could ſet them on this deſign, and could uphold them ſteady in it; ſo unanimous a conſent, ſo clear a confidence, ſo firm a reſolution; ſo inſuperable a conſtancy and patience nothing but a ſenſe of truth could inſpire men with, nothing but a perfectly good conſcience could ſuſtain. Poſſible it is, that in matters of ſpeculation and ſubtilty men upon ſlender grounds may be peremptorily opinionative, and deſperately pertinacious: (this experience ſheweth) but in a matter of this nature (a matter of plain fact, and groſs ſenſe) none can well be imagined (none eſpecially ſo qualified, in ſuch circumſtances, to ſuch purpoſes can be imagined) to be ſo wretchedly ſtupid, or deſperately obſtinate.

14. He then who doubts of the ſincerity of theſe Witneſſes, or rejects their teſtimony as incredible, muſt in ſtead of it admit of divers ſtranger incredibilities; refuſing his faith to one fact, devious from the natural courſe of things, but very feaſible to God; he muſt thence allow it to many others, repugnant to the nature of man, and to the courſe of humane things; performed without God, yea againſt him. It is credible that perſons otherwiſe through all their lives ſtrictly blameleſs, and rigidly vertuous (even in the more heavenly parts of goodneſs, in humanity, meekneſs, peaceableneſs, humility and patience) ſhould againſt cleareſt dictates of conſcience, peremptorily and perſeveringly commit ſo palpable villainy, as to broach and propagate ſuch an impoſture; that they, all whoſe demeanours and diſcourſes evidently did tend to the advancement of God's glory, and promoting goodneſs, ſhould ſo in their hearts utterly defy God, and deteſt goodneſs; or that perſons in a ſtrain incomparably ſolemn and ſerious ſhould ſo plainly teach, ſo ſtrongly preſs, ſo otherwiſe uniformly practiſe higheſt good will and beneficence toward all men, while they were with all their mind and might ſtriving to gull and abuſe men? Is it conceivable, that men otherwiſe in all their actions ſo wiſe, and well adviſed (able to manage and to perform ſo great matters) ſhould ſo zealouſly drive on a moſt vain and ſenſeleſs project, with more unwearied induſtry labouring to maintain, and diſperſe a lye, than any men beſide did ever ſtrive in behalf of truth? Is it not marvellous that men in all reſpects ſo impotent, without any arms or aids, ſhould adventure on ſo high an enterpriſe, ſhould with ſo happy ſucceſs atchieve it; that naked weakneſs ſhould boldly aſſault, and thoroughly over-power the greateſt might; pure ſimplicity ſhould conteſt with and baffle ſharpeſt wit, ſubtle policy, and deepeſt learning; that rude ſpeech (void of ſtrength or ornament) ſhould effectually perſwade an uncouth and unpleaſant tale, againſt all the fineſt, and ſtrongeſt Rhetorick in the world? Is it not ſtrange that a crew of vile and baſe perſons ſhould ſo inſeparably be linked together with no other hands, than deceit and diſhoneſty; no truth, no vertue, no common intereſt helping to combine, or contain them together? Is it to be believed that men of ſenſe ſhould *gratis*, for no conſiderable end or advantage, voluntarily embrace and patiently endure all that is diſtaſtful to humane nature, freely expoſing themſelves they knew not why, only for the ſake of a ſtory, to the fury of earth and flames of hell; eagerly ſacrificing their fortunes, credits, lives, and ſouls themſelves to the Ghoſt of a forlorn wretch, and infamous caitif? Is it not in fine prodigious, that ſo implauſible a falſhood upon all greateſt diſadvantages ſhould encounter, vanquiſh and triumph over

Aug. *de Civ.* D. 22. 5.

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over truth; these are incredibilities indeed, able to choak any man's faith; yet he that rejects this testimony must swallow and digest them, together with others like them of as hard concoction.

15. To these things we may add, that God himself did signally countenance, and ratify this testimony; not only by conferring on the avowers thereof extraordinary graces (invincible courage, irresistible wisdom, indefatigable industry, inflexible constancy and patience; admirable self-denial, meekness, charity, temperance, and all virtues in an eminent degree) not only farther by a wonderful success and blessing bestowed upon their endeavours; but by induing them with supernatural gifts, and enabling them to perform miraculous works openly and frequently; *So that by the hands of the Apostles many wonders, and signs were done among the people —— The Lord giving testimony unto the word of his grace, and granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands*; so that *with great power gave the Apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all*; (that is, there was a great appearance of the divine favour toward them, and of the divine operation in and by them.) Yielding which kind of attestation was the ancient and usual method of God in authorizing his messengers, and approving the declaration of his mind by them; (the Seal as it were put to the *Letters credential* from heaven) nor could God afford more convincing signs than these of his approbation to any person or design: that God did thus συνεπιμαρτυρεῖν *attest* (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh) *together with these* Witnesses, if the Apostolical history (bearing in it all the characters of a simple, faithful and upright narration) did not relate; yet the effect of this testimony, so speedily and easily prevailing every where, would render it highly probable, since in likelyhood; no humane endeavour, without divine assistence, could accomplish a business so great and difficult: if they did no miracles, τὸ μέγιστον σημεῖον, this (as S. *Chrysostome* says) *was the greatest miracle that could be*, that such a testimony should without any miracle prevail.

Act. 2. 43. 5. 12. Act. 14. 3. 19. 11. Act. 4. 33. Heb. 2. 4.

Ἀμήχανον γὰρ ἀνθρωπίνῃ ἰσχὺι λῦσαι τοσαῦτα τοτέ. Chrys. *in* Act. 1. 3. *Vid. in* 1 Cor. *Or.* 5.

Si per Apostolos —— illa miracula facta esse non credunt, hoc nobis unum grande miraculum est, quod ea terrarum orbis sine ullis miraculis credidit. Aug. *de Civ. D.* 22. 5.

16. Now for conclusion all these things being considered, it is sufficiently apparent, that this testimony is above all exception; that no matter of fact ever had, or well could have in any considerable respect, a more valid and certain proof: the greatest affairs in the world (concerning the rights and reputations, the estates and the lives of men) are decided by testimonies in all regards less weighty; so that to refuse it, is in effect to decline all proof by testimony, to renounce all certainty in humane affairs, to remove the grounds of proceeding securely in any business, or administration of justice; to impeach all history of fabulousness, to charge all mankind with insufficiency, or extreme infidelity (for if these persons were not able, or not honest enough, what men can ever be supposed such; who can by greater arguments assure their ability, or their integrity in reporting any thing?) to thrust God himself away from bearing credible attestation in any case (for in what case did he ever or can he be conceived to yield an attestation more full or plain, than he did in this? what farther can he perform needful to convince men endued with any competency of reason and ingenuity or to distinguish them from men of contrary disposition, unreasonably and unworthily incredulous?) in fine, to distrust this testi-

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mony is therefore in effect to embrace the vanity of the most wanton or wicked *Sceptick*.

The Use of all is in short this, that he should heartily thank God for so clear and strong an assurance of the truth of our Faith; that we therefore firmly embrace it, and steadily persevere therein; that we obey it, and bear fruits worthy thereof in our practice; that so doing we may obtain the blissful rewards which upon those terms it propoundeth and promiseth; that we may all so doe, God of his mercy grant, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord, to whom for ever be all glory and praise. Heb. 10. 23. 4. 14.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make us perfect in every good work to doe his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. Heb. 13. 20, 21.

The third day he rose again, &c.

SERMON XXX.

LUKE XXIV. 46.

And he said unto them, Thus it is written; and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day.

THE words of men leaving this world (as proceeding from a depth of serious concernedness, and influenced by a special providence) are usually attended with great regard, and a kind of veneration, these are such, even the words of our departing Lord; the which therefore deserve and demand our best consideration.

They respect two points of grand importance, the passion and the resurrection of our Lord; of which I shall only now consider the latter, as being most agreeable to the present season: and whereas there be divers particulars observable in them, I shall confine my discourse to *one*, being the main point; couched in those words, *thus it behoved*; which import the needfulness, and expediency of our Lord's resurrection: Of which I shall endeavour first to declare the truth, then to shew the usefulness, by a practical application thereof.

The reſurrection of our Lord may appear to have been needful and expedient, upon ſeveral good accounts.

1. It was needful to illuſtrate the veracity, wiſdom and providence of God, by making good what he had ſignified in the ancient Scriptures concerning it; either in myſtical adumbrations, or by expreſs predictions; underſtood according to thoſe infallible expoſitions, which the Apoſtles did receive from the inſtruction of our Lord, or from illumination of that Spirit which dictated the Scriptures: the particular inſtances, as being obvious, and requiring large diſcourſe, I now forbear to mention.

2. It was needful in congruity to other events foretold, and in order to the accompliſhment of thoſe deſigns which our Lord was to manage: the whole œconomy and harmony of the Evangelical diſpenſation, as it is repreſented by the Prophets, doth require it: It was, according to their predictions, deſigned, that Chriſt ſhould erect a ſpiritual Kingdom, and adminiſter it for ever, with perfect equity, in great peace and proſperity; that he ſhould in our behalf atchieve glorious exploits, ſubduing all the adverſaries of our ſalvation (*ſin*, *death* and *hell*;) that he ſhould eſtabliſh a new Covenant, upon better promiſes, of another eternal moſt happy life, aſſuring to the embracers thereof an entire reconciliation and acceptance with God; that he ſhould convert the world to faith in God, and obſervance of his will: In execution of theſe purpoſes, it was declared that he ſhould undergo ſuffering, and be put to death in a moſt diſgracefull and painfull manner; It conſequently muſt be ſuppoſed, that from ſuch a death he ſhould conſpicuouſly and wonderfully be reſtored to life; how otherwiſe could it appear, that he did reign in glory, that he had obtained thoſe great victories, that he had vanquiſhed death, that the former curſes were voided, God appeaſed, and mankind reſtored to favour by him? Had the grave ſwallowed him up, had God *left his ſoul in hell*, had he reſted under the dominion of common mortality, had after his diſmal paſſions no evidence of ſpecial favour toward him ſhone forth; What ground had there been to believe thoſe great things? Who would have been perſuaded of them?

1 Pet. 1. 11. Luc. 24. 26. Pſal. 110. 7. Iſa. 53. 10, 12. The *Scripture* therefore, which *foretelleth the ſufferings of our Lord, and the glories following them*; which ſaith, that *having drunk of the brook in the way he ſhould lift up his head*; that *when he had made his ſoul an offering for ſin, he ſhould prolong his days, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhould proſper in his hand*; that *becauſe he had poured out his ſoul unto death, God would divide him a portion with the great, and he ſhould divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong*; that *unto him whom man deſpiſed, to him whom the nation abhorred, Kings ſhould look and ariſe, Princes ſhould worſhip*; the *Scripture*, I ſay, foretelling theſe events, doth conſequentially imply the needfulneſs of his reſurrection.

Iſa. 49. 7.

3. It was requiſite in it ſelf; or in reſpect to the many great ends for which it ſerveth, and the excellent fruits, which it is apt to produce: as will appear by reflecting on thoſe, which are ſuggeſted in the *New Teſtament*.

I paſs by its particular uſefulneſs in regard to our Lord's *Apoſtles* and Diſciples; its ſerving to reinforce their faith, and rear their hopes, being ſtaggered by his paſſion; to comfort them in thoſe ſorrowful apprehenſions, and deſpondencies of heart, which aroſe from the frightfull events befalling him; to enlighten their minds by more perfect inſtruction, removing their ignorance, and reforming their miſtakes concerning him, and *the things of his kingdom*; to furniſh them with inſtructions

structions and orders requisite for managing the employments committed to them; to arm them by consolatory discourses and gracious promises of support against the difficulties, hazards and troubles they were to encounter, in the profession and propagation of his doctrine; in fine, by all his admirable deportment with them, and his miraculous departure from them to confirm them in their faith, and encourage them in their duty: these particular uses, I say, we shall pass over, insisting only upon those more common ends and effects in which our selves and all Christians are more immediately concerned.

4. A general end of it was the production and corroboration of faith in us concerning all the Doctrines of our Religion; for that by it the truth of all our Lord's declarations concerning his own person, his offices, his power, his precepts and his promises (to the highest pitch of conviction and satisfaction) was assured; it being hardly possible, that any miracle could be greater in it self for confirmation of the whole, or more proper for ascertaining the parts of our Religion. But more particularly;

Μάλιστα πάντων - σημεῖον ἱκανὸν καὶ τὰς ἀναστάσεως τοῦτας ἐπισοφίζειν. Chrys. in Rom. 1. 4.

5. *First*, From it the dignity of our Lord's person, and his especial dearness to God (to the voidance of all exceptions, and surmises against him) did appear.

If the meanness of his birth and parentage, if the low garb and dim lustre of his life, if the bitter pains and shameful disgraces of his death (however accompanyed with rare qualities shining in him, and wonderful deeds atchieved by him) in persons standing at distance, casting superficial glances on things, and judging by external appearances, might breed disadvantageous apprehensions, or suspicions concerning him, whether he were indeed as he pretended, the Son of God, designed by him to be the Saviour of mankind, *the Lord of all things*, the Judge of the world; the wonderful power, and signal favour of God demonstrated in his resurrection, served to discuss those mists, and to correct such mistakes, evincing those temporary depressions to have been only dispensations preparatory toward his greater exaltation in dignity, and apparent favour with God; *for though* (saith S. *Paul*) *he was crucified out of weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God*; that is, although in his sufferings the infirmity of our nature assumed by him was discovered, yet by his recovering life the divine power attending him was eminently declared; it was indeed *an excessive grandeur of power, an energy of the might of strength*, which God did exert *in the raising of Christ from the dead*, as the *Apostle* laboureth to express the unexpressible eminency of this miracle; and being so high an instance of power, it was consequently a special mark of favour; God not being lavish of such miracles, or wont to stretch forth his arm in behalf of any person, to whom he doth not bear extraordinary regard: the which consequence also, by reflecting on the circumstances, and nature of this event, will farther appear.

Joh. 7. 24.

2 Cor. 13. 4.

Eph. 1. 19. ὑπερβάλλον μεγέθος δυνάμεως — ἐνέργεια τοῦ κράτους τοῦ ἰσχύος.

He was persecuted and put to death as a notorious malefactour, and an enemy to God, to true Religion, to the common peace, to goodness; and his being delivered up to suffer was an enforcement of that pretence; for his adversaries thence did argue, that God had disavowed, and deserted him; they insulted over him as one in a forlorn condition, *esteeming him* (as the *Prophets* foretold) *stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted*: but God thus, by his own hand, undoing what they had done against him, did plainly confute their reasonings, did evidence their

Isa. 53. 4. Psal. 71. 11. 22. 8.

accuſations to be falſe, and their ſurmiſes vain, did in oppoſition to their ſuggeſtions approve him a friend and favourite of God, a patron of truth, a maintainer of piety and peace; one meriting, becauſe obtaining, the ſingular countenance and ſuccour of God.

And if yielding our Lord over to death (which being a total incapacity of enjoying any good, doth ſignifie an extremely bad ſtate) might imply God's diſpleaſure or diſregard toward him; (as indeed it did in a ſort, he ſtanding in our room to undergo the inflictions of divine wrath and juſtice;) then anſwerably reſtoring him to life (which, as the foundation of enjoying any good, doth repreſent the beſt condition) muſt demonſtrate a ſingular tenderneſs of affection, with a full approbation and acceptance of his performances: this indeed far more pregnantly doth argue favour, than that could imply diſpleaſure; for that may happen to the beſt men upon other grounds, this can bear no other than a favourable interpretation.

Farther, to give life doth ground that relation, which is deepeſt in nature, and importeth moſt affection; whence in the Holy ſtyle, to
Act. 13. 33. raiſe up to life, is termed to beget; and *the regeneration* is put for the *reſurrection*; ſo that it being a paternal act, ſignifieth a paternal regard:
Matt. 19. 28. and thence perhaps S. *Paul* telleth us, that our Lord *was declared, or defined to be the Son of God, by his reſurrection from the dead.*
Rom. 1. 4.

6. *Secondly*, By our Lord's reſurrection we may be aſſured concerning the efficacy of his undertakings for us: for conſidering it we may not doubt of God's being reconciled to us: of obtaining the pardon of our ſins, and acceptance of our perſons, of receiving all helps conducible to our ſanctification, of attaining final happineſs, in caſe we are not on our parts deficient; all thoſe benefits by our Lord's reſurrection, as a certain ſeal, being ratified to us, and in a manner conferred on us.

As God, in the death of our Lord, did manifeſt his wrath toward us, and execute his juſtice upon us; ſo in raiſing him thence correſpondently God did expreſs himſelf appeaſed, and his law to be ſatisfied; as we in his ſuffering were puniſhed (*the iniquity of us all being*
Iſa. 53. 6. *laid upon him*) ſo in his reſurrection we were acquitted and reſtored to grace; as *Chriſt* did merit the remiſſion of our ſins, and the acceptance of our perſons by his paſſion; ſo God did conſign them to us in his reſurrection; it being that formal act of grace, whereby, having ſuſtained the brunt of God's diſpleaſure, he was ſolemnly reinſtated in favour, and we repreſentatively, or virtually in him; ſo that (ſuppoſing our due qualifications, and the performances requiſite on our parts) we thence become completely juſtified, having not only a juſt title to what juſtification doth import, but a real inſtatement therein; confirmed by
Rom. 4. 25. the reſurrection of our Saviour: whence *He was* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *delivered for our offences, and raiſed again for our juſtification*; *and who then* (ſaith the ſame *Apoſtle*) *ſhall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?*
Rom. 8. 33. 34. *it is God that juſtifieth*; *Who is he that condemneth? it is Chriſt that di-*
2 Cor. 5. 15. *ed, yea rather that is riſen again:* Our juſtification and abſolution, are (ye ſee) rather aſcribed to the reſurrection of Chriſt, than to his death; for that indeed his death was a ground of beſtowing them; but his reſurrection did accompliſh the collation of them for ſince (doth the *Apoſtle* argue) God hath acknowledged ſatisfaction done to his juſtice, by diſcharging our ſurety from reſtraint, and from all farther proſecution; ſince in a manner ſo notorious, God hath declared his favour toward our proxy; What pretence can be alledged againſt

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us, what ſuſpicion of diſpleaſure can remain? Had Chriſt only died, we ſhould not have been condemned, our puniſhment being already undergone; yet had we not been fully diſcharged, without that expreſs warrant and acquittance, which his riſing doth imply; ſo again may S. *Paul* be underſtood to intimate, when he ſaith, *If Chriſt be not raiſed, your faith is vain, ye are yet in your ſins:* Death (or that obligation to die, to which we did all for our tranſgreſſions ſtand devoted) was *condemned*, and judicially *aboliſhed* by his death; but it was executed and expunged in his reſurrection; in which *trampling thereon* he cruſhed it to nothing; wherefore therein mankind revived, and received *the gift of immortality*; that being a clear pledge, and full ſecurity, that *as in Adam all die, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive: He* (ſaith S. *Chryſoſtome*) *by his reſurrection diſſolved the tyranny of death*, and *with himſelf raiſed up the whole world*; *By the pledge of his reſurrection* (ſaith S. *Ambroſe*) *he looſed the bands of hell*; *Thereby* (ſaith S. *Leo*) *death received its deſtruction, and life its beginning:* Therein not only the natural body of Chriſt was raiſed, but the myſtical body alſo, each member of his Church was reſtored to life, being throughly reſcued from the bondage of corruption, and tranſlated into a ſtate of immortality; ſo that *God* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *hath quickened us together with Chriſt, and raiſed us together, and made us to ſit together in heavenly places in Chriſt Jeſus.*

1 Cor. 15. 17.

Heb. 2. 14. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Rom. 8 3 5. 18. 6. 23. 1 Cor. 15. 14.

Morte calcatâ ſurrexit. Hier. *Ep.* 129.

1 Cor. 5. 21.

Διὰ τ ἀναςάσεως τ θανάτ τυραννίδα κατέλυσε. Chryſ. Rom. 1. 4.

Τῷ οἰκειμένῳ ἑαυτῷ σωματίσας Chryſ. *Tom* 5. *Or.* 84.

Dominus ſuæ reſurrectionis pignore vincula ſolvit inferni, &c. Ambr. *ad* Grat.

Per reſurrectionem Chriſti & mors interitum, & vita accepit initium. Leo. *M. Ep.* 81.

Epheſ. 2. 5, 6. Rom. 8. 21.

Hence in our Baptiſm (wherein juſtification, and a title to eternal life are exhibited to us) as the death and burial of Chriſt are ſymbolically undergone by us; ſo therein alſo we do interpretatively riſe with him; *being* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *buried with Chriſt in Baptiſm, in it we are alſo raiſed together with him*; and *Baptiſm* (St. *Peter* telleth us) being *the antitype* of the paſſage through the floud, *doth ſave us by the reſurrection of Chriſt*, preſented therein.

Coloſ. 2. 13, 14. 1 Pet. 3. 21.

It alſo miniſtreth hopes of ſpiritual aid, ſufficient for the ſanctification of our hearts and lives; for that he, who raiſed our Lord from a natural death, thence doth appear both able and willing to raiſe us from a ſpiritual death, or from that mortal ſlumber in treſpaſſes and ſins, in which naturally we do lie buried, to *walk in that newneſs of life* to which the *Goſpel* calleth us; and in regard to which, *God* (ſaith S. *Peter*) *having raiſed his Son Jeſus, ſent him to bleſs us, in turning every one of us from his iniquities.*

Eph. 2. 10. Apoc. 20. 6. Acts 3. 26.

The ſame conſequently is a ſure earneſt of our ſalvation; for, *If* (ſaith S. *Paul*) *when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we ſhall be ſaved by his life.*

Rom. 5. 10. 1 Pet. 3. 21.

7. *Thirdly*, By our Lord's reſurrection, the verity of his doctrines, and the validity of his promiſes concerning the future ſtate of men are demonſtrated; in a way moſt cogent, and moſt pertinent: Any miracle, notoriouſly true, doth indeed ſuffice to confirm any point of good doctrine; but a miracle in kind, or involving the matter conteſted, hath a peculiar efficacy to that purpoſe: So did our Lord's reſurrection, in way of palpable inſtance, with all poſſible evidence to ſenſe, directly prove the poſſibility of our reſurrection, together with all points of doctrine coherent thereto; (the ſubſtantial diſtinction of our ſoul from the

(Joh. 20. 31.)

the body, its separate existence after the dissolution, and consequently its immortal nature, God's wise and just providence over humane affairs in this state, the scrutiny and judgment of our actions hereafter, with dispensation of recompences answerable;) those fundamental ingredients of religion, most powerful incentives to vertue, and most effectual discouragements from vice; the which (before much liable to doubt and dispute, little seen in the darkness of natural reason, and greatly clouded in the uncertainty of common tradition) as our Lord by his doctrine, first *brought into clear light*, so by his resurrection he fully did shew that light to be sincere and certain: Infinitely weak and unsatisfactory were all the arguments, which the most careful speculation could produce, for asserting those important verities, in comparison to that one sensible experiment attesting to them: For if our Lord, a man as our selves, did arise from the dead (his soul, which from the cross descended into the invisible mansions, returning into his body) then evidently our souls are distinct from our bodies, and capable of subsistence by themselves; then are they apt to exist perpetually; then may they be put to render an account for what is acted here, and accordingly may be dealt with: Hence may we see, that S. *Paul* discoursed reasonably, when he told the *Athenians*, that *Now God hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by the man whom he hath ordained, πίστιν παρασχὼν πᾶσιν, exhibiting an argument most persuasive to all, having raised him from the dead*; that S. *Peter* also might well aver, that *God hath regenerated us to a lively hope of an incorruptible inheritance, reserved in heaven for us, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.*

2 Tim. 1. 10. Act. 26. 23.

Act. 17. 31.

1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

Credentes resurrectionem Christi, in nostram quoque credimus, propter quos & ille obiit & resurrexit. Tert. *de Pat.* 9.

Resurrectionem carnis per semetipsum primus initiavit. Cyp. *Ep.* 73.

Apoc. 1. 5. Col. 1. 18. 1 Cor. 15. 20. Acts 3. 15. 5. 31. Heb. 6. 20. 1 Cor. 15. 23. Luc. 20. 36.

Particularly the resurrection of our bodies, restoring our perfect manhood to us (a point wholly new to the world, which no Religion had embraced, no reason could descry) was hereby so exemplified, that considering it, we can hardly be tempted to doubt of what the *Gospel* teacheth about it; that he preceding as *the first-born from the dead*, and the *first-fruits of them which sleep, as our fore-runner*, and, *the Captain of life*; we ἐν ἰδίῳ τάγματι, in our *due rank* and season, as *younger sons of the resurrection*, as serving under his command and conduct, in resemblance and conformity to him, shall follow; so that, *If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwelleth in us; he that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken our mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in us*; that, *If we have been planted with him in the likeness of his death, we shall also* grow up *in the likeness of his resurrection*; that, *As we have born the image of the earthly man, so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly*; so that *God, who raised our Lord, shall also raise us by his power*; for we cannot but allow that consequence to be reasonable, which S. *Paul* doth imply, when he saith, *If we believe that Jesus died and rose again; even so them also, which sleep through Jesus, will God bring with him*, reducing them into a state conformable to his; by re-union of their body and soul.

Rom. 8. 11. Rom. 6. 5. 1 Cor. 15. 22. 49. 1 Cor. 6. 14. 1 Thess. 4. 14.

8. *Fourthly*, It was a designed consequence of our Lord's resurrection, that he thereby should acquire a just dominion over us; for, *to this end* (saith S. *Paul*) *Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living*: By the obedience of his death he did earn that dominion, as a worthy recompence thereof; *He did by*

Rom. 14. 9.

by his blood purchase us to be his subjects and servants: but from his resurrection he began to possess that reward, and to enjoy his purchase; it being the first step of his advancement to that royal dignity and *preeminence over all flesh*; to which, in regard to his sufferings, God did exalt him; concerning which, before his ascension, he said to his disciples, *All power is given me in heaven and earth*: On so many great accounts was our Lord's resurrection behoofeful; so that it is no wonder, if God took such especial care to assure its truth, and recommend its belief to us; appointing so many choice persons by their testimony to assert, and inculcate it; to doe so being often expressed a main part, and peculiar design of the office Apostolical. Nor is it strange, that to the hearty belief, and ingenuous profession of this one *Article* (it enfolding, or inferring the truth of all other Christian doctrines) salvation is annexed, according to that assertion of S. *Paul*; *The righteousness of faith saith thus* (or this is the purport of the *Christian* Institution) *that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thy heart, that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.* Nor is it much, that a consideration of this point should be so continually present to the minds of the ancient *Christians*, that when ever they did meet, they should be ready to salute one another with a χριστὸς ἀνέστη, *Christ is risen*, it importing so great benefits, and producing so excellent fruits; in regard whereto S. *Paul* expresseth his so ardent desire, and high esteem of *knowing Christ, and the power of his resurrection*; as the most valuable of all knowledges; which having in some measure declared, I come now briefly to apply.

Act. 20. 28. Joh. 17. 2. Phil. 2. 9. Matt. 28. 18. Acts 1. 22. 10. 41. 13. 31. Rom. 10. 6, 9. Phil. 3. 10.

1. *First* then; The consideration of our Lord's resurrection should strengthen our faith, and quicken our hope in God, causing us firmly to believe his word, and confidently to rely upon his promises, especially those which concern our future state. God having thereby, as by a most sensible proof, against all objections of our feeble reason, demonstrated himself able, as by a most sure pledge declared himself willing to bestow upon us a happy immortality, in gracious reward of our obedience: for seeing by so illustrious an instance, God hath manifested that he is thoroughly reconcileable to sinners, that he bountifully rewardeth obedience, that death and hell are vincible, What reason can we have to distrust his fidelity, to doubt of his power, or to despair of his mercy? Surely, He that was so faithful in raising our Lord from the grave, so notably rewarding his obedience and patience (in advancing him to Supreme dignity and glory at his right hand) will not fail also to confer on us (walking in the footsteps of his piety) the promised inheritance of everlasting life and bliss, the never fading crown of righteousness and glory: Surely, by this noble experiment we are clearly informed, and should be fully persuaded, that nothing can destroy us, nothing can harm us, nothing can separate us from our God, and our happiness; that no force, no fraud, no spite of men, or rage of hell can finally prevail against us; What then reasonably can be dreadfull, or discouraging to us? What should be able to drive us into distrust, or despair?

2. This point affordeth matter of great joy, and an obligation thereto. If the news of our Saviour's first birth were (as an *Angel* called them) *good tidings of great joy to all people*, how much more may the news concerning this second nativity of him be hugely gladsome? for in that birth he did but assume our flesh, in this he did advance it; then he began to sustain our infirmities, now he surmounted them; by his

Luc. 2. 10. Phil. 2. 8.

incarnation

1 Cor. 50. 57. incarnation he became *subject to death*, by his resurrection death was subdued to him; at that he entred into the field, and set upon the bloody conflict with our foes; in this he returned a triumphant conquerour, having utterly vanquished and quelled them; the fury of the world, the malice of hell, the tyranny of sin, the Empire of death, all of them combined to render us miserable, he did in his resurrection perfectly triumph over; And doth it not then become us to attend his glorious victories with our joyful gratulations? Is it not extremely comfortable to behold our gallant champion (the only champion of our life and welfare) after all the cruel blows which the infernal powers laid on him, after all the Ghastly wounds which humane madness did inflict; after he had passed through the scorching flames of divine wrath and justice, after he had felt the forest pangs of death, perfectly recovered from all those distresses; standing upright, and trampling on the necks of his proud enemies? Are not most sprightful expressions of gratitude, are not most chearful acclamations of praise due from us to the invincible *Captain of our salvation*? Shall we not with great alacrity of mind contemplate the happy success of that mighty enterprise, wherein no less our welfare, than his glory was concerned? Is it not a pleasure to consider our selves so exempted from that fatal doom, to which all humane race was sentenced; to see life and immortality so springing forth upon us; to view our selves, the children of dust and corruption, from hence in age and dignity, so nigh equalled to the first-born sons of the creation?

Σήμερον ἡμῶν τὰ λαμπρὰ νικητήρια γέγονε σήμερον ἡμῶν ὁ δεσπότης τὸ κατ' ἐχθρὸν τρόπαιον στήσας, καὶ τῷ διαβόλῳ τῷ τυραννίδι καταλύσας τῷ διὰ τοῦ ἀναστάσεως ὁδὸν ἡμῖν εἰς σωτηρίαν ἐχαείσατο.

Ἡ πρόθεσις καὶ σωτήριος ἑορτὴ — ἢ τοῦ εἰρήνης ὑπόθεσις, ἢ τῆς καταλλαγῆς ἀφορμὴ, ἢ περὶ πολέμων ἀναίρεσις, ἢ τοῦ θανάτου κατάλυσις, ἢ τοῦ διαβόλου πῆξα — Chrys. *Tom.* 5. *Orat.* 85.

It is said of the first disciples, that although they saw, and felt our Lord risen, yet *for joy they could not believe it*; so incredibly good was the news to them; excess of love and delight choaked, or rather suspended their faith; we cannot be such infidels from surprize, but let us be as faithful in our joy.

Luc. 24. 41.

Quod credunt tardius, non est perfidiæ, sed amoris. Chrysost. *Serm.* 81.

3. Great consolation surely it ought to breed in us, to consider, that by this event our redemption is completed, and we become entirely capable of salvation; that in it a full discharge is exhibited from the guilt, and from the punishment of all our sins, whereof we do truly repent; that God's justice appeareth satisfied, and his anger pacified; that his countenance shineth out clearly with favour and mercy toward us; that our condemnation is reversed, our ransome is accepted, our shackles are loosed, and our prison set open; so that with full liberty, security and hope, we may walk forward in the paths of righteousness toward our better country, the Region of eternal felicity. Farther,

4. This consideration should be a forcible engagement upon us to obedience and holy life. Our Lord did by his resurrection gain a dominion over us, unto which if we do not submit, we shall be very injurious and wicked; unto which if we do not correspond by all humble observance, we shall be very ingrateful and undutiful: *He was raised to bless us, in turning every one of us from our iniquities*; and no less unhappy, than unworthy we shall be, if we defeat that gracious purpose; It is the condition of our obtaining the happy fruits and benefits of his resurrection, that we should our selves rise with him *unto righteousness*

Rom. 14. 9.

Act. 3. 26.

ness and newness of Life; by not complying therewith, we shall render his Resurrection unprofitable to us, becoming unworthy and uncapable of any good advantage thereby. *Awake* (saith the *Apostle*) *thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life.* To awake from our spiritual slumber, to arise from dead works, are the terms on which Christ doth offer that eternal happy life: for as the pains and ignominies of his death will nowise avail those, who are not *conformable to his death* in *dying to sin*, and *mortifying their Lusts*, so will not they be concerned in the joys and glories of his Resurrection, who are not *planted in the likeness thereof* by renovation of their minds, and reformation of their lives; for as *he died*, so he was also *raised for us*, *that we should not henceforth live to our selves, but unto him who died and rose again for us.* Our sins did slay him, it must be our repentance that reviveth him to us, our obedience that maketh him to live in our behalf; for Christ is not in effect risen to impenitent people; as they continue dead in trespasses and sins, as they lie buried in corruption of heart and life, so *their condemnation abideth*, and Death retaineth its entire power over them; they shall not καταντᾶν εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν, *attain unto that happy Resurrection*, whereof our Lord's Resurrection was the pledg and pattern; so did our Lord assure in his Preaching: *He* (said our Lord) *that believeth in the Son* (that is, who with a sincere, strong and lively faith, productive of due obedience, believeth in him) *hath everlasting life*; but ὁ ἀπειθῶν, *he that disobeyeth* (or with a practical infidelity disbelieveth) *the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*; whence we may well infer with St. *Paul*, *Therefore, Brethren, we are debters, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh: for if we live after the flesh, we shall die*; *but if through the spirit we do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live*; that is, assuredly by obeying God's Will we shall obtain, by disobedience we must forfeit all the benefits of our Lord's Resurrection.

Rom. 6. 4. Eph. 5. 14. Phil. 3. 10. Rom. 6. 5. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Phil. 3. 11. Joh. 3. 36, 15. Rom. 8. 13.

5. Lastly, The contemplation of this Point should elevate our thoughts and affections unto Heaven and heavenly things, above the fordid Pleasures, the fading Glories, and the unstable Possessions of this World: for *him we should follow whithersoever he goeth*; rising with him, not only from all sinful Desires, but from all inferiour Concernments, soaring after him in the contemplation of our Minds, and Affections of our heart; that *although we are absent from the Lord in the body*, we may be *present with him in spirit*, having our *conversation in Heaven*, and *our heart there where our treasure is*; for if our Souls do still grovel on the earth, if they be closely affixed to worldly interests, deeply immersed in sensual delights, utterly *enslaved to corruption*, we do not *partake* of our Lord's Resurrection, being quite severed from his living Body, and continuing in vast distance from him: I shall therefore conclude, recommending that admonition of St. *Paul*; *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*; *set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth*; *for you are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God*; that *when Christ who is our life shall appear, then ye may also appear with him in glory.* Amen.

Rev. 14. 4. Eph. 2. 6. 2 Cor. 5. 6. Phil. 1. 23. Phil. 3. 20. Mat. 6. 21. 2 Pet. 2. 19. Rom. 8. 21. (Gal. 6. 8. Apoc. 3. 1. 1 Tim. 5. 6.) Col. 3. 1.

Now the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the Sheep, through the Blood of the everlasting Covenant, make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand, &c.

SERMON XXXI

MARK XVI. 19.

He was received up into Heaven, and sate on the right hand of God.

OUR Lord after his Resurrection having consummated what was requisite to be done by him upon earth, for the confirmation of our Faith, and the constitution of his Church; having for a competent time conversed with his Disciples, enlightning their minds with knowledg of the truths concerning him, and in right understanding of the Scriptures relating to him; establishing their faith in immovable conviction, enflaming their Affections by pathetical Discourse, comforting their minds with gracious promises against tribulations ensuing, and arming their hearts with courage and patience against all oppositions of Earth and Hell; directing and prescribing to them how they should proceed in the instruction of men, and conversion of the world to the belief of his doctrine, the acceptance of his Overtures, the observance of his Laws; furnishing them with authority, and giving them orders to attest the truth concerning him, to dispense the grace and mercy procured by him, and to promulgate the whole will of God to mankind; promising them spiritual gifts and aids (both ordinary and extraordinary) necessary or conducible, either to the common edification, or to the particular welfare of Christians, ordering them to collect and compact the society of faithful Believers in him, which *he had purchased with his Blood*; in fine, imparting to them his effectual Benediction, and a promise of continual assistance in the prosecution of those great and holy designs which he committed to their management; having, I say, accomplished all these things, which St. *Mark* in this *verse* expresseth briefly by the words μετὰ τὸ λαλῆσαι αὐτοῖς, *after he had spoken to them*, and
Acts 1. 2. which St. *Luke* comprises in the words ἐντειλάμενος αὐτοῖς, that is, having imparted to them all needful instructions, and imposed all fitting commands upon them, He in their presence departed away into the possession of his glorious state; *He was* (saith St. *Mark* in our Text) *received up into Heaven, and sate on the right hand of God.*

Which words of the *Evangelist* do contain *two* grand points of our Faith, the *ascension of our Lord to Heaven*, and his *session there at God's right hand*; the right understanding and due consideration whereof [as it is now peculiarly, when the Church recommendeth these points to be the subjects of our Devotion most seasonable, so perpetually] is of great use for the edification of our Souls, and the direction of our practice:

tice: in order to which purposes, I shall endeavour to explain them, to confirm the truth of them, to shew the ends and effects of them, and practically to apply them.

I. *He was received into Heaven*; this is the *first* point: wherein we may observe the *act*, and its *term*: The *act*, ἀνελήφθη, he was assumed, or *taken up* (saith St. *Mark* here) ἀνεφέρετο, *he* was elevated or *carried up*, and ἐπήρθη, *he was born up* (saith St. *Luke*) ἐπορεύθη, *he went into Heaven*, saith St. *Peter*; which phrases do import that he was according to his humanity (or that his body and soul united together were) translated by the divine power into Heaven; or that he as God (by the divine power immanent in him) did transfer himself as man thither; so that he both was carried, and did go with a proper local motion, the term whereof was Heaven. Luk. 24. 51. Act. 1. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 22.

And what is meant by *Heaven*, in the proper sense adequate to this matter, may appear from other places equivalent, by which this action, or the result thereof are expressed: it is called *ascending to his Father*, and *passing out of this world to his Father*, that is, departing hence into the place of God's more especial presence and residence; where *he* (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* saith) *appeareth to the face of God*; *being* (as St. *Peter* speaketh) *exalted to the right hand of God* (that is to the greatest proximity, and therefore highest eminency with God.) It is termed being *taken up into glory*, and *entring into his glory*, that is, into a most glorious place, and state peculiar to him; that place, which St. *Peter* calleth μεγαλοπρεπὴς δόξα, the magnificent, or *most excellent glory*. It is stiled *entring* εἰς τὸ ἐσώτερον τῆς καταπετάσματος, into *the most inward part behind the veil*; and into the τὰ ἅγια, the especially *holy places*; that is, into the inmost recesses of glory, inaccessible, and in degree incommunicable to any other. He is said to have *passed through the Heavens* (that is, through all places inferiour to the highest top of glory and felicity) to have *ascended* ὑπεράνω πάντων τῶν οὐρανῶν, *over above all the Heavens*, to have *become higher than the Heavens*, or advanced above them; by which expressions it appeareth, that the *term* of our Saviour's ascent, called *Heaven* here, was that place of all places in the *Universe* of things in situation most eminent, in quality most holy, in dignity most excellent, in glory most illustrious; the inmost sanctuary of God's *temple* above *not made with hands*; the most august chamber of presence in the Celestial Court: and whereas there are (as our *Lord* telleth us) *many mansions*, or apartments in the house of God, the chief and best of them our Lord hath taken up for his residence; whereas Heaven is a place of vast extent, to the utmost top thereof our Lord hath ascended; even into that φῶς ἀπρόσιτον, *inaccessible Light* where *God dwelleth*. Joh. 20. 17. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Luk. 24. 26. Heb. 6. 19. 9. 12. Heb. 4. 14. Eph. 4. 10. Heb. 7. 26. Heb. 9. 11, 22. Joh. 14. 2. 1 Tim. 6. 16.

And there, as it followeth, *He sitteth at God's right hand*; the meaning of which words it is not difficult to find out; it being obvious and clear, that the state of things above in the other blessed world, is in the Scripture represented to us by that similitude, which is most apt to beget in us reverence toward God, and which indeed really doth most resemble it; by the state of a King here, sitting upon his Throne, being surrounded with Personages of highest rank, worth, and respect; his neerest Relations, his deerest Favourites, the chief Officers of his Crown, and Ministers of his affairs there attending upon him: so that yet for distinction, some place more eminent, and signally honourable, is assigned to that person, to whom the King pleaseth to declare most especial favour

Psl. 118. 16. vour and regard; the which place by custom, grounded upon obvious reason, hath been of old, and continueth still determined to the *next* place at *the right hand*; (the *next* place, because nearness yieldeth opportunity for all kind of conversation and address; at *the right hand*, because that hand hath advantage for strength and activity acquired by use, and therefore hath a special aptitude to offer any thing, or to receive, as occasion doth require) hence for instance of the custom among those from whom the phrase is taken, when *Bathsheba* King *Solomon's*
1 King. 2. 19. Mother did come unto him, 'tis said, *The King——sate down upon his throne, and caused a seat to be set for the King's Mother, and she sate on his right hand.* Thus our Lord, as Man, in regard to his perfect obedience and patience, being raised by God to the supreme pitch of
Act. 5. 31. favour, honour and power with him; God having *advanced him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance unto* Israel *and remission of sins*;
Phil. 2. 9. having *superexalted him, and bestowed on him a name above all names, to which all knees in heaven, in earth, and under the earth must bow*; having
Eph. 1. 20. *seated him in heavenly places above all principality and authority, and power, and domnion, and name that is named, either in the present world,*
Mat. 28. 18. Joh. 3. 35. 13. 3. 17. 2. Heb. 1. 2. 2. 8, 9. 1 Pet. 3. 22. *or in that which is to come*, having *committed to him all Authority in heaven and upon earth, and given all things into his hand*; having *constituted him heir of all things, and subjected all things under his feet*, and *crowned him with* Sovereign *Glory and Honour*; having, in fine, given unto him all that which in the *Revelation* the innumerable host of Heaven ac-
Apoc. 5. 12. knowledgeth him worthy of; *Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing*; that is, all good and excellency conceivable in the most eminent degree, so that γίνεται ἐν πᾶσιν
Col. 1. 18. πρωτεύων, he *in all things becometh to have the preeminence*: God having, I say, conferred all these preeminences of dignity, power, favour
Eph. 1. 20. and felicity upon our Saviour, is therefore said to have *seated him at*
Matth. 26. 64. Mark 14. 62. Luke 22. 69. *his right hand*; *at the right hand of power* (say the *Gospels*) that is, so at the right hand of the Almighty Potentate, that all power is imparted to him for the governance and preservation of his Church, *at the right hand of the Majesty on high*, and *at the right hand of the throne of God* (saith the *Apostle to the Hebrews*) that is, so at the right hand of the Soveraign King of the world, that Royal dignity is communicated to him, in regard to which all honour and worship, all service and obedience are due to him from all Creatures.

Thus much plainly the whole speech, *sitting at God's right hand*, doth import; the which matter is otherwise more generally and simply ex-
1 Pet. 3. 22. pressed by being at God's right hand, *Who*, saith St. *Peter, is gone into Heaven, and is at the right hand of God, Angels and Authorities and Powers*
Rom. 8. 34. *being made subject to him*; and, *It is Christ*, saith St. *Paul, that dyed, yea rather that is risen again, who is also at the right hand of God.* Sometimes
Apoc. 5. 6. 14. 1. Act. 7. 55, 56. also our Lord is represented standing at God's right hand, as in the *Revelation* several times, and in the vision of St. *Stephen*, who *saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God*; the which posture doth then seem purposely assigned to him, when he is represented assisting his Servants, or in readiness to atchieve some great Work for the good of his Church; but most commonly, as in our *Text*, it is called *sitting*; the which word in ordinary use denoteth an abode, or permanency in any state: but there is perhaps some peculiar *emphasis* designed in attributing to our Lord that position; it implying the solid ground, the firm possession, the durable continuance, the undisturbed rest and quiet of that glorious condition, wherein he is enstated: the

term sitting may also seem to augment the main sense, for that *sitting* is the most honourable posture, and therefore implieth to the utmost that eminency of favour and regard, which our Lord enjoyeth in God's sight. It may farther also denote the nature, quality and design of our Lord's preferment; his being constituted our Ruler and our Judg; *sitting* being a posture most proper and peculiar to such persons; whence this expression representeth him as seated upon a throne of Majesty, or upon a tribunal of Justice.

Sedere judicantis est, stare pugnantis; Stephanus ergò in labore certaminis positus stantem vidit, quem adjutorem habuit; sed hunc post ascensionem Marcus sedere scribit, quia post ascensionis suæ gloriam Judex in fine videbitur. Leo M.

I shall only farther observe, that the attainment, and settlement of our Lord in this high state, is by one word frequently in Scripture called his glorification. *The Spirit* (it is said) *was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified*; *and when Jesus was glorified, then they remembred that these things were written of him*; and, *The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified*; and, *Now Father*, prayeth our Saviour, *glorify me with thee, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was*; that is, constitute me as Mediator in glory supereminent above all Creatures, accordingly as in my divine nature I was eternally with thee most gloriously happy. And, *The God of your fathers*, saith St. Peter to the *Jews*, *hath glorified his child Jesus, whom ye delivered up*; and, *We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the Angels, for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour*, saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*. So much for explication of these points.

Joh. 7. 39. 12. 16. 23. 13, 32. 17. 1, 5. Act. 3. 13. Heb. 2. 9.

II. The confirmation of them may be drawn partly from *ocular testimony*, partly from *rational deduction*, partly from *their correspondence to antient presignifications, and predictions*.

The ascension of our Lord toward Heaven was testified by the Apostles, who were eye-witnesses thereof; for βλεπόντων αὐτῶν, *they beholding, he was* (saith St. *Luke*) *taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight*. Act. 1. 9.

His arriving at the supreme pitch of glory, and sitting there, is deduced from the authority of his own word, and of his inspired Disciples, the which standeth upon the same grounds with other points of Christian faith and doctrine; the which it is not seasonable now to insist upon. Luk. 22. 69. Matth. 26. 64.

But it may be proper and useful to consider how they (as all other important events, and performances belonging to our Saviour) were by the Holy Spirit in the antient *Prophets*, many ways presignified and predicted; that they were so, our Lord telleth us; *Ought not Christ*, said he, *according to what the Prophets had spoken, to suffer, and so to enter into his glory?* And St. *Peter* assureth us, that *The spirit of Christ which was in the Prophets, did testify beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glories after the same*: so indeed there were many signal types representing them, and many notable passages respecting them, interpreted according to analogy, with other mystical representations. Luk. 24. 25, 26. 1 Pet. 1. 11.

Isaac, the Heir of promise, after his being devoted for sacrifice, and *received from Death in a parable*, was settled in a prosperous state of life, *God being with him, and blessing him in all things*. *Joseph* being freed from that death, to which by his envious Brethren he was designed, and raised from that burial in prison, into which by the *Egyptian Gentiles* he was cast, was advanced thence unto flourishing dignity, and established in chief authority over the King's house, and *over all the land*; which persons, Heb. 11. 19. Gen. 26. 3, 12, &c. Gen. 41. 40.

persons, as they were in other things, so may they well be conceived in these respects to have been Types of our Lord's Ascension and Glorification. *Joshua* (who in name and performances was the most exact Type of our Lord) being preserved from the common fate of the people, and with miraculous Victory over all the accursed Enemies of God's People, entring as Captain of *Israel* into the possession of the promised Land, the sure Type of Heaven, doth fitly represent the glorious Ascension of our Lord into Heaven, and his everlasting possession thereof, together with the good people which follow his conduct. The great afflictions and depressions of *David*, with his restauration from them unto a mighty height of royal splendour and prosperity (all enemies foreign and domestick being subdued) may be also supposed to typify the same; his expressions in acknowledgment and thanksgiving for them seeming to allude hither, and to be more congruously applicable to our Lord, than to himself; such for instance as those are in the *21st Psalm: He*
Ps. 21. 4, 5, 6. *asked life of thee, and thou gavest it him, even length of days for ever and ever; his glory is great in thy salvation, Honour and Majesty hast thou laid upon him; for thou hast made him most blessed for ever, thou hast made him exceedingly glad with thy countenance,* &c. *Enoch* having *walked with*
Gen. 5. 24. *God* (that is, in constant devotion, and in faithful obedience to God's
Heb. 11. 5. will) and having *received testimony that he pleased God, was taken unto God*, thereby prefiguring the ascension of the Well-beloved, *in whom God*
2 King. 2. 11. *was most well-pleased:* So was also the translation of *Elias into Heaven* in the presence of *Elisha*, and other his Disciples, after he most zealously had served God in declaration of his Will, and maintenance of his Truth, a manifest prelude of our Lord's like translation, after he had been employed in the like service, though far more high and important, and performed it in a more eminent manner.

The *High Priest* was a certain Type of our Lord, and the *Jewish Tem-*
Heb. 9. 24. *ple* a shadow of Heaven, and the *Holy of Holies* a figure of the highest place in Heaven; wherefore the High Priest's sole, and solemn entry once only in the year into the most holy place, after having by a
Levit. 16. 16, 34. bloody Sacrifice made atonement *for all the transgressions of the Children*
Exod. 30. 10. *of* Israel, *and his there sprinkling the blood of the Sacrifice upon the Mercy*
Heb. 9. 7. *Seat, and before the Mercy Seat* (the emblem of God's special presence) doth certainly prefigure our Lord's ascending into Heaven, and sitting there at God's right hand; there, by representation of his merits and passion performing the office of a most holy Priest, and gracious Media-
Heb. 9. 14, 24. 10. 12. tor for us: *By his own blood* (saith the divine *Apostle*) *he entred once into the Holy Place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. He is entred, not into the holy places made with hands, which are Figures of the true, but into Heaven it self, now to appear in the presence of God for us.*

Thus were these points aptly signified; they were also predicted: for *David* in the *68th Psalm*, celebrating the glorious Triumphs of God over
Huc etiam. the enemies of his People, and in consequence upon them his solemn entrance and seating himself in *Sion*, the Hill *which he delighteth to dwell*
Psa. 68. 18. *in* (the usual emblem of Heaven) subjoineth; *Thou hast ascended on high* (למרום, to the high place of Heaven) *thou hast led captivity captive, thou hast received gifts for men, yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them*; which words appositely sute to our Lord's triumphant ascension, after having subdued all the enemies of his Church, and upon which he liberally dispensed wonderful gifts
Eph. 4. 8. and graces to his people, and are by the unerring interpretation of St. *Paul* applyed thereto.

The

The Ascension of our Lord seemeth also (at least according to mystical Exposition reasonably grounded) to be respected in the 24*th Psalm*, as generally throughout, so particularly in those words, *Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the king of glory shall come in*; where according to the first, and more literal sense, the entrance of the *Ark* (the symbol of our Lord himself, in whom God is most specially present, *in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth bodily)* into the Temple is described; but in a second more elevate, more proper, and more full meaning the entrance of our Lord (the true *Shechinah)* into Heaven seemeth denoted; the doors of that Temple not made with hands, into which he, *the Lord of Glory*, at his Ascension did enter, being indeed most truly *the everlasting doors*; and the doors of the earthly Temple being only such as typified them. Psa. 24. 7, 8, 9. Colos. 2. 9.

Again, The Session of our Lord at God's right hand is expressly foretold by *David*; *The Lord* (saith he) *said unto my Lord, sit at my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool:* Who but the *Messias* could be that Lord of *David*, unto whom God spake? Who but he could be an eternal Priest after the order of *Melchisedec?* Not only therefore our Lord himself expoundeth that place of the *Messias*, but the antient *Jews* did commonly understand it to concern him; as appeareth by their tacit consent, and forbearing to contradict our Lord so interpreting it. Psal. 110. 1. Mat. 22. 44.

In fine, all the Prophecies, which are very many, that concern the spiritual and eternal Kingdom of the *Messias* (his being invested with, and exercising regal Dignity and Power over God's People for ever) do in effect declare the Ascension and Session of our Lord; particularly those of *David*; *I have set my King upon my holy Hill of* Sion; and, *Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy Kingdom is a right sceptre:* and that of *Daniel*; *I saw, in the night visions, one like the Son of Man came with the Clouds of Heaven, and came to the antient of days, and they brought him near before him; and there was given him Dominion and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations and Languages should serve him; his Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, which shall not pass away, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* So were these points foreshewed and foretold, to the manifestations of God's Wisdom, and the confirmation of our faith. Psa. 2. 6, 8. Heb. 1. 5. Psa. 45. 6. Heb. 1. 8. Dan. 7. 13.

III. Now for the ends and effects of our Lord's Ascension, and his abode in Heaven at God's right hand (I join them together as coincident or subordinate) they are in the Scripture declared to be chiefly these.

In general, our Lord by them was invested in the complete exercise of all the offices, and in the full enjoyment of all the privileges belonging to him as perfect Mediator, Sovereign King, High Priest, and Arch-Prophet of God's Church and People: He did initially, and in part exercise those functions upon earth; and a ground of enjoying those preeminencies he laid here, but the entire execution and possession of all, by his Ascension into Heaven, and in his Session there, he did obtain particularly.

1. Our Lord did ascend unto, and doth reside in Heaven at the right hand of divine Majesty and Power, that as a King he might govern us, protecting us from all danger, relieving us in all want, delivering us from all evil; that he might subdue and destroy all the enemies of his Kingdom and our Salvation; the Devil with all his Retinue, the World, the

the Flesh, Sin, Death and Hell; whatever doth oppose his Glory, his Truth, his Service, whatever consequently by open violence or fraudulent
Psal. 110. 1. Mat. 22. 44. Heb. 1. 13. Acts 2. 36. practice doth hinder our Salvation: *The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand, until I have made thine enemies thy footstool*; so God by the Holy Spirit in *David* did speak unto him; whence St. *Peter* doth thus infer: *Therefore let all the House of* Israel *know assuredly, that God hath made him Lord and Christ*; that is, his being seated in that place of special eminency is an infallible argument of his Royal Majesty and Sovereignty; and, *This Man* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *after he*
Heb. 10. 12, 13. *had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sate down at the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till his Enemies be made his footstool*; and
1 Cor. 15. 25. accordingly, *He must* (as St. *Paul* saith) *reign, until he hath put all his enemies under his feet.* By various Combats in his life our Lord did worst and weaken his and our Enemies; and in the last great Battle on his Cross, he did thoroughly rout and overthrow them; but by his triumph-
Eph. 4. 8. ant ascension into Heaven *he led Captivity captive*, enjoying the glory and benefit of his Victory; by sitting at God's right hand he keepeth them down in irrecoverable *subjection under his feet*, so that none of them can make any successful Insurrection against him: for no power certainly shall ever be able to withstand his Will and Command, who sitteth at the helm of Soveraignty immense, and omnipotent; at that right hand, which can do any thing, which wieldeth and moderateth all things every where; no Fraud can elude, no secret Conspiracy can escape his Knowledg, who sitting in that heavenly Watch-tower of infinite Wisdom and Omniscience, beholdeth whatever is done, said, or thought in all the World.

He so there with Royal Might protecteth us, and with Royal Goodness, Munificence and Clemency he doth also thence dispense grace and mercy to his faithful Subjects: for all good Gifts and Graces bestowed on the Church in general for common edification, and to each Member
Eph. 4. 7, 8. thereof singly for its particular benefit, which are useful for *perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edification of Christ's Body* in Truth, Holiness, Order and Peace, are expressed to proceed from our Lord's Ascension: *To every one of you* (saith St. *Paul*) *is given Grace according to the measure of the Gift of Christ*; that is, to every one of you proportionably according to the quality of your employment, rank, or station in the Church, and according to the particular exigency of your needs, as Christ in wisdom seeth fit, Grace is afforded, in correspondence (addeth he) to the *Psalmist's* Prophesy concerning our Saviour; *Having ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

Particularly in virtue, or consequence of his Ascension and Glorification, to all true penitents and converts unto God, mercy and pardon for their sins are dispensed: that repentance should be acceptable to God, and available for attainment of Mercy, our Lord did indeed merit for us by his suffering; but he effectually dispenseth it in God's name, being now enstated in glory, as a noble Boon of his royal Clemency: *God,*
Acts 5. 31. Luk. 24. 47. saith St. *Peter*, *exalted him as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance unto* Israel, *and remission of sins.*

2. Our Saviour did ascend, and now sitteth at God's right hand, that he may, in regard to us, there exercise his Priestly function. Having in this outward tabernacle once offered up himself a pure and perfect Sacrifice for the expiation of our sins, he entred within the veil, into the
Heb. 10. 12. most Holy Place, there presenting his blood before God himself, to the

 full

full effect of obtaining mercy for us, and restoring us to God's favour: *He is* (saith the *Apostle*) *entred into heaven it self, there to appear in the presence of God for us*; so that whenever we by our frailty do fall into sin, and do heartily by repentance turn unto God, invoking his mercy, our Lord is ready by applying the virtue of his sacrifice, and pleading our cause with God, upon the terms of that gracious Covenant purchased and ratified by his bloud, to procure mercy for us; for, *If any man sin, we have* (saith S. *John*) *an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who is a propitiation for our sins, and for the sins of the whole world*: And, *who* (saith S. *Paul*) *is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us*; that is, seeing our Lord hath offered a well-pleasing sacrifice for our sins, and doth at God's right hand continually renew it, by presenting it unto God, and interceding with him for the effect thereof; What, supposing us qualified for mercy, can hinder us from obtaining it? Heb. 9. 24. 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. Rom. 3. 34. 8

Our Lord also doth at God's right hand discharge the Princely ministry of praying for us, and so interceding in our behalf, as thereby to acquire from God to be conferred on us whatever is needful, or conducible to our salvation: *He* (saith the *Apostle*) *is able to save to the uttermost those that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.* More particularly he, by his mediation there, doth procure for us a free access to God in devotion, a favourable reception of our petitions and services, a good success of them in the supply of all our needs; for, *Through him we have access by the Spirit unto the Father*, and, *Having a great High-Priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God——let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in the time of need*, saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*. And *He*, as he is represented in the *Apocalypse*, is that *Angel of the Covenant*, who *at the golden Altar before God* doth *offer up the prayers of the Saints, incensed* by his mediation and merits. Heb. 7. 25. Eph. 2. 8. Heb. 4. 14. 16 Apoc. 8. 3.

Hence in his name, and through him it is, that we are enjoyned to present our Prayers, our thanksgivings, and all our services; * *doing all whatever we do in the name of the Lord Jesus.* (Joh. 10. 9. 14. 6. Rom. 5. 2. Eph. 3. 12.

3. Again, *Our Lord* telleth us, that it was necessary he should depart hence, and enter into this glorious state, that he might there exercise his Prophetical office, by imparting to us his holy Spirit for our instruction, direction, assistance and comfort. *Behold* (said he upon his departure) *I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the City of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with the power from on high*; this he promised then to his disciples, but did not perform until his exaltation: *Being therefore* (saith S. *Peter*) *exalted to the right hand of God, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.* He did not, and indeed (in consistence with the divine purpose, and the designed œconomy of things) could not perform this until then; *It is* (said he) *expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him to you*; that is, God, for promoting our Saviour's honour, and for the glory of his undertaking, had in his wisdom determined, that so incomparably excellent a gift should be the reward of his obedience, the consequence of his triumph, the effect of his intercession above, an ornament of his Royal state, a pledg of his Princely munificence: it was reserved as a most rich and majestick gra- Heb. 10. 19. Eph. 5. 20. Joh. 14. 13. 15. 16. 16. 23, 24.) * Col. 3. 17. Luk. 24. 49. Act 2. 33. Joh. 16. 7.

tuity, fit to be conferred at his coronation, then when he solemnly was inaugurated to soveraign Dignity, and invested with power superlative: whence, *The Holy Spirit* ('tis said in St. *John*) *was not yet* (that is, it was not yet poured forth, or bestowed in that conspicuous manner, and copious measure, as God intended it should be afterwards) *because*
Joh. 7. 39. *Jesus was not yet glorified:* It was from *Jesus* being received into glory, and advanced to God's right hand, that so transcendent a boon was in God's purpose, and according to his promise designed to come down.

4. Again, Our Lord himself telleth us, that he went to Heaven,
Joh. 14. 2. there *to prepare a place for* his faithful servants, to prepare *mansions* of
Psal. 16. 11. joy and bliss *in God's presence, where is fulness of joy; at his right hand, where are pleasures for evermore.* He accordingly hath (as the *Apostle*
Heb. 6. 20. saith) entred as our πρόδρομος, *our fore-runner into Heaven*; as an honourable Harbinger having dispos'd things there for our reception and entertainment; or rather as the son and heir of that great house, he by his authority and interest there procured leave for us to enter, and
Joh. 17. 24. reside there, or carryeth us as his retinue thither; *It is my will* (saith
14. 3. 12. 26. he) *that where I am, there should ye be also, that ye may contemplate my glory*, and consequently may partake thereof. It was indeed our Lord's ascension, which did unlock the gates of heaven, before shut upon us by our sins, which quenched the flaming sword, and discharged the mighty Cherubin, which guarded Paradise from all access to men.

Flammea illa rhomphæa, custos paradisi, & præsidentia foribus Cherubim Christi restincta, & reserata sunt sanguine. Hier. *Ep.* 3.

Οὐρανὸς ἓν ᾧ ἄβατος. Chrys. *ad* Heb. 9. 8.

The antient *Fathers* generally were of opinion, that Heaven, before our Lord's ascension, was inaccessible; and that no man had ever set foot therein, until our Lord, by his actual ascent and ingress, did open the passage thither, and removed the bars there: to prove this, they alledg that of our Lord

Ante Christum Abraham apud inferos, post Christum latro in paradiso, &c. Hier. *in Epitaph. Nepot. Ep.* 3.

Joh. 3. 13. in St. *John*, *No man hath ascended up into heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the son of man, who is in heaven*; and the forecited
Joh. 14. 2. place, *I go to prepare a place for you:* which seemeth to imply heaven before unfit to receive men; and those places, wherein our Lord af-
Joh. 10. 7. 14. 6. firmeth himself to be *the gate of the sheep*; and, *the way to the Father*; and that of the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*, concerning the *Patriarchs*, and
Heb. 11. 39. other good men before Christ's Incarnation; *And these all having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be per-*
Psal. 24. 7, 9. *fect.* Hither also they referred that of the *Psalmist*, *Lift up your heads O ye gates, and be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in*; which words they interpreted to signifie the gates of Heaven then to have been first opened, when our Lord did ascend thither. *Joshua* (a most congruous type of our Lord) leading God's people into the land of promise, did also to their sense imply our Lord's first entring into Heaven. The High Priest alone entring into the Sanctuary, did, as they deemed, argue the same; the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* seeming much to favour their sen-
Heb. 9. 7. timent, when he saith, *Into the second* (Tabernacle) *went the High Priest alone once every year not without blood, which he offered for himself, and the errors of the People; the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the Holyest of all was not yet made manifest, whilst the first tabernacle*

Ὅταν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀνέσῃ χριστὸς, ἡ ἀνάβασις εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν, καλεύσονται οἱ ἐν ἅδου τὰ ταχθέντες ἄγγελοι ἀνοίξαι τὰς πύλας τῶν οὐρανῶν. Just. M.

bernacle was yet standing. The same also was (say they) signified by those persons, who for offences wide of malice, were detained in the cities of refuge, and prohibited to return home until the death of the High Priest, but were afterward restored *to the land of their possession*; thereby, say they, being intimated, that until after our Saviour's death, no man could return into Paradise, his primitive home, from which man for his sin had been excluded; but that henceforth all persons, in an *Evangelical* account, not malicious or wicked, had a right and liberty to return thither. Upon these and the like grounds did the *Fathers* commonly suppose no person before our Lord's ascension to have entred heaven; but however it were as to the time, yet assuredly in order of nature and causality it was he that did first ascend thither, and by virtue of his ascension it is, that any man ever did, or shall ever come thither: *His Blood was* (as St. *Hierom* saith) *the key of Paradise*, the efficacy of which he carrying up with him did unlock it, so that thenceforth it doth stand wide open to those who can fore up thither, following his steps in persevering obedience: *Having therefore* (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *boldness to enter into the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say his flesh; and having a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart*——and, *He being* (perfected, or consummated in his state of glory) *became to all that obey him the Author of everlasting salvation; being denominated by God a High Priest after the order of* Melchisedec.

Numb. 35. 28.

Quid est quod homicida post mortem Pontificis absolutus ad terram propriam redit? nisi quod humanum genus, quod peccando sibi mortem intulit, post mortem veri sacerdotis, id est Christi, peccatorum vinculis solvitur, & in paradisi possessionem reparatur. Greg. M. Hom. in Ezech.

Sanguis Christi est clavis paradisi. Hier. Ep. 129.

Heb. 10. 19, 20.

Heb. 5. 9.

5. It was indeed an effect of our Lord's ascension and glorification, that all good Christians are with him in a sort translated into heaven, and advanced into a glorious state; being thence by him *made Kings and Priests to God. We have* (saith *Tertullian*) *in Christ Jesus seized on Heaven*; and the Apostle saith as much: *Us* (saith he) *who were dead in trespasses and sins, God hath quickned together with Christ, and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.* In many respects we thereby are raised to heaven and eminent glory.

Apoc. 1. 6. 5. 10.

Usurpavimus cælum, & regnum Dei in Christo Jesu. Tert. de Res. c. 51.

We thence even as men become greatly dignified, our nature being so highly advanced thereby: we thereby get the honour of being brethren or kinsmen to the world's great Lord and King; so that any of us may say with St. *Austin*, *Where my flesh reigns, there I believe my self to reign*: hence, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* teacheth us, is that of the *Psalmist* verified concerning man; *Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour, and hast set him over the works of thy hands.*

Ubi caro mea regnat, ibi me regnare credo. Aug. Med.

Psal. 8. 5. Heb. 2. 7.

We also more as Christians are elevated thereby by our near relation to him, and our participation with him as our head: for where the head is, there the body is; they are inseparably connected, there can be no breach, no distance between them; and the honour confer'd on the head, doth necessarily accrue to the members; according to St. *Paul*'s rule; *If one member be glorified, all the members do rejoyce* with

Ἔνθεν ἡ κεφαλὴ, ἐκεῖ καὶ τὸ σῶμα· οὐδενὶ γὰρ μέσῳ διέστηκε ἡ κεφαλὴ καὶ τὸ σῶμα. Chryf. in Eph. λ. 3.

1 Cor. 12. 26.

with it, or do partake of its joyful state. *Christi ascensio nostra est provectio, The ascension of Christ is our preferment; and whither the Glory of the head is gone before, thither likewise is the hope of the body called*, saith a devout *Father*.

Christi ascensio nostra est provectio; & quo præcessit gloria capitis, eo spes vocatur & corporis. Leo *P.*

We also are by our Lord's glorification advanced and advantaged, in that his being so glorified is a sure pledg and an earnest of that glorious reward, which all good Christians shall receive. *Christ* being *made heir of all things*, did in his ascension, *adire hæreditatem*, take possession of that inheritance, and we consequently as *coheirs* with him; and *having a share in the inheritance of the Saints in light*, do seise thereon, acquiring therein a right and propriety at present, being assured in due time (if by our miscarriages we do not forfeit our title) of an actual possession thereof: *As* (saith *Tertullian*) *Christ did leave to us the earnest of the Spirit, so he received from us the earnest of the flesh, and carryed it into heaven as a pledg of the whole sum to be sometime brought in thither.*

Heb. 1. 2. Rom. 8. 17. Eph. 1. 11. Col. 1. 12.

Quemadmodum Christus nobis arrhabonem Spiritûs reliquit, ità & à nobis arrhabonem carnis accepit, & vexit in cœlum pignus totius summæ illuc quandoque redigendæ. Tertull. *de Resurr. c.* 51.

We do also in a manner ascend with Christ to heaven, in regard that by his ascension our principal concernments, our only considerable interests (that κρείττων ὑπαρξις καὶ μένουσα, *better and enduring substance*) the true objects of our affection, and all our hope are transferred thither; whence heaven becometh our only true country, our *abiding city*, our real home: We having here no true rest, no setled mansion, no certain estate; but indeed being *strangers, sojourners, and Pilgrims upon earth*. Our πολίτευμα, our politick capacity relates to heaven, or we are citizens thereof, saith S. *Paul*; we are *fellow-citizens of the Saints, and domesticks of God*; are *Proselytes to mount Sion, and unto the City of the living God, the Metropolis of the Saints, the heavenly Jerusalem*; we are *translated into the Kingdom of God's beloved Son*, are *called into his Kingdom and glory*, have *our hope laid up for us in heaven*, are *dead to the world*, and *our life is hid with Christ in God*: and where we are so concerned, there especially in spirit and heart we may be supposed to be.

Heb. 10. 34. Heb. 13. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 11. 1. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 6. Phil. 3. 20. Eph. 2. 19. Heb. 12. 22. Προσεληλύθαμεν. Colos. 1. 13. 1 Thes. 2. 1, 2. Colos. 1. 5. Gal. 6. 14. 2. 20. Col. 3. 3.

6. I might add, that God did thus advance our Saviour to declare the special regard he beareth to piety, righteousness and obedience, by his so amply rewarding, and highly dignifying the practice thereof: *We* (saith the *Apostle*) *see Jesus for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honour*: We see him, not only as an object of our contemplation, but as a pattern of our practice, and as a ground of our encouragement; *Looking up* (saith that *Apostle* again) *unto Jesus the captain and the perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God* God it seemeth did intend, and he doth propound our Lord's exaltation for an engagement and motive to us of following him in the way by which he attained it; giving us assuredly to hope for the like reward of Glory and Joy, in proportion answerable to our imitation of his exemplary obedience and patience.

Heb. 2. 9. Heb. 12. 2.

Such are the principal ends and effects of our Lord's ascension, and session at God's right hand; the consideration of which points may have great use, and should have much influence upon our practice.

1. It may serve to guard us from divers errours, which to the dangerous prejudice and disparagement of our Religion (introducing into it notions thwarting reason and sense, charging it with needless and groundless incredibilities, exposing it to difficulties and objections so massy, that the foundations of Christian truth are scarce able to support them) have been, and are asserted by divers persons, or by sects of men professing Christianity, such as are that of the old *Eutychians*, who held that the humane nature of our Lord was converted into his Divinity, or swallowed up thereby; that of the *German Ubiquitaries*, who say, that our Lord according to his humane nature corporally doth exist every where; that of the *Lutheran Consubstantialists*, and of the *Roman Transubstantiators*, who affirm, that the body of our Lord is here upon earth at once present in many places (namely in every place where the *Host* is kept, or the *Eucharist* is celebrated) which assertions by the right understanding of these points will appear to be false. For our Lord did visibly in humane shape ascend to Heaven (which to do is inconsistent with the invisible, omnipresent and immoveable nature of God) and therefore he continueth still a man; and as such he abideth in heaven, and therefore he doth not exist every where, or other-where. It is the property of a Creature to have a definite existence, or to be only in one place at one time; for could it be in divers places at once, it might by like reason be in any, or in every place, and consequently it might be immense; nor can we conceive a thing to be at once in several distant places, without its being multiplyed in essence; it especially is repugnant to the nature of a Body at once to possess several places, seeing its substance and quantity do not really differ, or are inseparably combined, whence it cannot be multiplyed in dimensions, answerable to many localities, without being multiplied in substance; wherefore since our Lord as man did by a proper local motion ascend, pass through, and enter into the heavens (being, as it is said in *Holy Scripture*, in the visible form and dimensions of his Body, *taken*, *carryed*, *lifted up*, *gone into heaven*, *parting* from his Disciples, *going away from us*, *leaving the world* and *going to the Father*; being *where no man here can come*, *or can follow him*, being to be *no more in the world*, so that *we have him not always with us*; being there, where *we being in the Body*, *are absent from him*; seeing he doth now reside in *heaven*, which *must* (as S. *Peter* affirmed) *receive* (or hold) him, *until the restitution of all things*: where he constantly *appeareth in God's presence for us*, and *ever liveth to make intercession for us*; whence also we do expect that in the like visible manner as he went, that he shall come again, *descending* (as S. *Paul* speaketh) *from heaven*, and *coming in the clouds of heaven*, at the last resurrection and judgment, which is therefore commonly termed his *presence*, and *appearance* here) Since, I say, according to the tenour of *Scripture*, our Lord did thus as man in his flesh go into heaven, and there perpetually doth abide in glory, until he shall thence return

Heb. 9. 24. 4. 14. Act. 1. 2, 9, 10, 11. Luk. 24. 50, 51.

Mark 16. 19. Matt. 26. 11. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Joh. 16. 5, 7. 14. 25. 13. 3. 7. 33, 34. 8. 21. 13. 36. 17. 11. 2 Cor. 5. 6. Ὃν δεῖ οὐρανὸν δέχεσθαι. Act. 3. 21.

Heb. 7. 25. 9. 24.

Act. 1. 11. 1 Thes. 4. 16. 1. 10. 2 Thes. 1. 7. 1 Cor. 15. 47. Phil. 1. 20. Apoc. 1. 7. Matt. 24. 30. (Εἰς ἀπάντησιν κυρίου. 1 Thes. 4. 17.)

Παρουσία. Ἐπιφάνεια.

Secundum majestatem suam, secundum providentiam, secundum ineffabilem & invisibilem gratiam impletur quod ab eo dictum est, Ecce ego vobiscum — secundum carnem vero — non semper habebitis me vobiscum. Aug. in Joh. Tract. 50.

return hither to judg the world, we must not suppose him to be any where corporally upon earth: He is indeed every where by his divinity present with us; he is also in his humanity present to our faith, to our memory, to our affection, he is therein also present by mysterious representation, by spiritual efficacy, by general inspection, and influence upon his Church; but *in body,* as *we are absent from him,* so is he likewise separated from us; we *must depart hence, that we may be with him,* in the place whither *he is gone to prepare for us: Who shall ascend into heaven to bring Christ down* thence? saith St. *Paul,* intimating where he doth immoveably abide, in exclusion to all other places. These things (beside many other strong reasons) if we do consider, it will suffice to guard us from those rampant absurdities, which so long with such impudence, and such violence have outbraved plain reason and sense: But to leave this, and to come to more practical applications.

2 Cor. 5. 6. Phil. 1. 23.
1 Thess. 4. 17.

Rom. 10. 6.

2. Is Christ ascended, and advanced to this glorious eminency at God's right hand? then let us answerably behave our selves toward him, rendring him the honour and worship, the fear and reverence, the service and obedience suitable, and due to that his state. In regard hereto all the *Angels of God* are commanded *to adore him,* and they willingly submit thereto, acknowledging him to deserve the highest worship;

Heb. 1. 6.

Apoc. 5. 12, 13.

Every creature ('tis in the *Revelation*) *in heaven, in earth, and under the earth,* doth in its way send up acclamations of blessing and praise unto him: And shall we then refuse, or neglect to do the like? we, who of all creatures in equity and gratitude are most obliged, who in reason and interest are most concerned to honour him, as our selves receiving most honour and advantage from his exaltation? Shall we be backward in yielding obedience to him, who is in nature so nearly related to us, and in affection so well disposed toward us; who out of tender good-will toward us, hath undertaken this high charge, and exerciseth it with design to do us good; who therefore especially is pleased to sit at the helm, that he may protect us from all the enemies of our welfare, and that he may settle us in the enjoyment of happiness? Shall we dare to oppose his will, and not dread to displease him, to whom *all power in heaven and earth is given*; whose will is executed by the irresistible right hand of God; who therefore can easily check us in our bad courses, and will surely chastise us for our disobedience. We do plainly hereby incur the heinous guilt, and shall surely undergo the grievous punishment of rebellion; this being the sentence, which refusing subjection to him, we shall one day hear, and feel; *Those mine enemies, that would not have me reign over them, bring them hither, and slay them before me.*

Matth. 28. 18.

Luk. 19. 27.

3. These points do afford ground and matter of great joy and comfort to us: Have we not cause to rejoyce, that our Lord hath obtained so absolute and glorious a victory over all our cruel enemies? Should we not with joyful gratulation applaud the triumphs of goodness over wickedness, of charity over malice, of mercy over wrath, of life and happiness over death and misery? Is it not matter of huge satisfaction, that one of our kind and kindred, who beareth toward us the bowels of a man, and the affection of a brother, who hath yielded so wonderful expressions of good-will and charity toward us, who so

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loved us, as to lay down his life for us, is raised to such preferment? Shall we not be pleased, that we have so good a friend in so high place, and so great power; or that he who is so willing, is also so able to do us good? Have we not great cause to acquiesce in our subjection to so just, so mild, so gracious a Governour; *the Sceptre of whose Kingdom is a right Sceptre*, whose *yoke is easy, and burden light?* Shall we not be glad, considering, that we have so merciful, and so kind an intercessor always resident with God, always ready to do good offices for us at the throne of Grace? Considering this, What is there that can be, or happen in the World, that should displease, discourage, or disturb us? What enemies should we fear, since all our enemies lie prostrate under his feet? What good can we fear to want, since all things are at his disposal, and all good is dispensed by him? What events should trouble us, since all things are managed and ordered by his good hand? Will he suffer any thing to hurt us? Will he see us need any convenience? Will he let us be oppressed by any mischief or distress, whose office it is, and continual care to protect and succour us? Have we not, in contemplation of these things, abundant reason to comply with that precept, of *rejoycing in the Lord always?* Phil. 4. 4. Be our case in this world what it will, considering where our Lord is, we 3. 1. have great cause to be cheerful, according to that injunction of our Lord enforced by this consideration: *In the world ye shall have tribulation, but* Joh. 16. 33. *be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*

4. The consideration of these things serveth to cherish, and strengthen all kind of faith and hope in us. If the resurrection of our Saviour might beget in us a strong perswasion concerning the truth of our Lord's Doctrine, and *a lively hope* of Salvation from his undertakings and performances for us, his ascension and session in glory (confirmed by the same indubitable testimonies and authorities) must needs nourish, improve and corroborate them. We cannot surely distrust the accomplishment of any promises declared by him, we cannot despair of receiving any good from him, who is ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of divine wisdom and divine power, thence viewing all things done here, thence ordering all things every where for the advantage of those who love him and trust in him.

It especially doth serve to quicken in us that *blessed hope*, as St. *Paul* Tit. 2. 13. calleth it, of a joyful and happy rest after the troubles and sorrows of this wretched life; *which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure* Heb. 6. 19. *and stedfast, and which entreth into that within the veil, where the forerunner is for us entred, even Jesus, made an High Priest for ever after the order of* Melchisedec.

5. These points do likewise serve to excite and encourage our devotion; for having such a Mediator in heaven, so near God's presence, so much in God's favour, having so good and sure a friend at court, having such a *master of requests* ever ready to present up, to recommend and to further our petitions, what should deter, what should any-wise withhold us from cheerfully, upon all occasions, by him addressing our selves to God? We may therefore, as we are exhorted by the *Apostle*, *come to the throne of grace with boldness, that we may re-* Heb. 4. 16. *ceive mercy, and find grace for seasonable aid.* We cannot, considering this, any-wise doubt of those promises being effectually made good to us: *Whatever ye shall ask in prayer believing, ye shall receive: Whatso-* Mat. 21. 22. *ever ye ask in my name, that will I do:* There is nothing, which 7. 8. Mark 11. 24. he enjoying such power cannot do for us; and there is nothing which

1 John 5. 14. John. 14. 13. 15. 7. 15. 23. which he our loving and merciful brother will not do that is good for us, if we do with humble confidence apply our selves to him for it: And what greater incitement can there be to devotion, than an assurance so firmly grounded of fair acceptance and happy success thereof? yea, what an extreme folly, what a huge crime is it not to make use of such an advantage, not by so obliging an inducement to be moved to a constant practice of this so beneficial, and sweet kind of duties?

6. It may encourage us to all kind of obedience, to consider what a high pitch of eternal glory and dignity our Lord hath obtained, in regard to his obedience, and as a pledg of like recompence designed to us, if we tread in his footsteps, *running the race that is set before us, and looking up to Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and is set at the right hand of the throne of God.* As God in respect to what he should perform, did offer to him so high a promotion, so doth he likewise upon condition of our obedience to his commandments, oblige himself to put us into a like excellent and happy state; so our Lord himself declared, when he said, *I covenant to you a Kingdom, as my Father covenanted to me a Kingdom:* it goeth before, *Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations*, there is the condition, faithful and constant adherence to Christ in doing and suffering, upon performance of which condition our Lord tendereth that glorious reward of an eternal Kingdom: And the divine covenant being thus effectually fulfilled unto him, doth ascertain us, that his overture will likewise be made good to us: *It is*, saith S. *Paul*, *a faithful saying* (that is, a word upon which we may confidently rely) *if we be dead with him* (dead to sin and vanity) *we shall also live with him* (live with him in glory and joy) *if we endure* (or persevere in obedience and patience after him) *we shall also reign with him.* And, *To him* (saith our Lord in the *Revelation*) *that overcometh, will I grant to sit with me on my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father on his throne.*

Luk. 22. 29. Apoc. 1. 6. 5. 10. 2 Tim. 2. 11, 12. Apoc. 3. 22.

7. *Lastly*, the consideration of these points should elevate our thoughts and affections from these inferior things here (the vain and base things of this world) unto heavenly things; according to that of S. *Paul*; *If ye be risen with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God.* To the head of our body we should be joyn'd, continually deriving sense and motion, direction and activity from him: where the master of our Family is, there should our minds be, constantly attentive to his pleasure, and ready to serve him; where the city is, whose denizons we are, and where our final rest must be, there should our thoughts be, careful to observe the laws and orders, that we may enjoy the immunities and privileges thereof: In that country, where only we have any good estate, or valuable concernment, there our mind should be, studying to secure and improve our interest therein: our resolution should be conformable to that of the Holy *Psalmist*, *I will lift up mine eyes to the hills from whence cometh my help. Christ is our life*, saith S. *Paul*; And shall our souls be parted from our life? *Christ* (saith he again) *is our hope*; And shall our mind and hope be asunder? *Christ* is the principal object of our love, of our trust, of our joy, of all our best affections; And shall our affections be severed from their best objects? By his being in heaven all our treasure becometh there; *and where our treasure is, there* (if we apprehend and believe rightly, there naturally) *our hearts will be also:* if they be not, 'tis a sign we take him not for our best treasure. *We do in our bodies sojourn from the Lord*, as

Col. 3. 1. Heb. 11. 16. Psal. 121. 1. Col. 3. 4. Gal. 2. 20. 1 Tim. 1. 1. Col. 1. 27. *Animus est, ubi amat.*

as St. *Paul* saith; but in our spirits we may, and should be ever present, ever conversant with him; contemplating him with an eye of faith, fastning our love upon him, reposing our confidence in him, directing our Prayers and Thanksgivings to him; meditating upon his good Laws, his gracious Promises, his holy Life, and his merciful Performances for us. We should not, by fixing our hearts and desires upon earthly things (upon the vain delights, the sordid interests, the fallacious and empty glories, the sinful enjoyments here) nor by a dull and careless neglect of heavenly things, avert, estrange, or separate our selves wholly from him. No, *sursum corda*, let us, unloosing our hearts from these things, and with them soaring upward, follow and adhere to our Lord; so shall we anticipate that blessed future State, so shall we assure to our selves the possession of heaven; so here enjoying our Lord in affection, we shall hereafter obtain a perfect fruition of his glorious and blissful presence; the which God of his mercy by his grace vouchsafe us, through the same our ever blessed Saviour, to whom be for ever all glory and praise. *Amen.*

O God the King of Glory, who hast exalted thine own Son Jesus Christ with great triumph unto thy Kingdom in heaven; we beseech thee leave us not comfortless, but send thine Holy Ghost to comfort us, and exalt us to the same place, whither our Saviour Christ is gone before; who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghost, one God world without end. Amen.

From thence He shall come to judg the quick and the dead.

Sermon XXXII.

THE Reasonableness and Equity OF A FUTURE JUDGMENT.

ECCLES. 3. 17.

I said in my heart, God shall judg the righteous and the wicked.

THESE words are the result of a serious contemplation upon the state of human affairs, and common occurrences in this world: the Royal *Philosopher having* (as he telleth us) *given his heart to seek, and search out by wisdom concerning all things, that were done under heaven*; what was the proper nature, what the just price of each thing; what real benefit or solid comfort each did afford; how every person did fare in the pursuit, and success of his designs; did, after full examination, and careful balancing all things, resolve upon such conclusions as these,

Eccl. 1. 13.

That no kind of undertaking here did in effect yield any considerable profit, or complete satisfaction, but all in the issue did prove vain and vexatious.

1. 8. 2. 11.

That no man from his care and industry, in any course of life, could promise himself any certain success, or reap answerable reward.

2. 11. 9. 11. 11. 6.

That altho between wisdom and folly (or between goodness and wickedness) there is some intrinsick difference of worth *(one excelling the other, as light doth excel darkness)* yet as to external advantages, and as to final event here, there is no great odds discernible; for that events (prosperous and adverse) did appear to fall out, not according to the qualifications, or to the practices of men, but indifferently, according to the swinge of *time and chance*, and for that death and oblivion alike do seize upon all, so that apparently in that respect, *a man hath no preeminence over a beast.*

2. 13.

2. 15. 7. 15. 9. 1, 11.

2. 16. 3. 19.

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That in common life nothing doth appear better, than for a man with the beſt advantage he can, to enjoy ordinary ſenſible delights and comforts, which his condition doth afford. Eccleſ. 2. 24. 3. 12. 5. 18. 8. 15. 11. 10.

That in regard to the preſent things here, life were not deſirable to any man, the inconveniences and troubles thereof outweighing its benefits; ſo that even the wiſeſt, greateſt and happieſt perſons (ſuch as he himſelf was) had cauſe *to hate life, and all their labour which they had taken under the ſun.* 4. 2, 3. 2. 17, 18.

That the mind and affection of God toward men are very reſerved; the courſe of providence very abſtruſe, the reaſon of events unſearchable to the wit or ſtudy of men; ſo that we can hardly from appearances here deſcry any conſpicuous marks of God's favour, or his diſpleaſure. 3. 11. 8. 17. 11. 5.

From theſe obſervations, as from ſo many arguments, he doth both here and otherwhere in ſeveral places of this *Book* infer, that there ſhall be a divine judgment, paſſing upon all men, both righteous and wicked; whereby theſe ſeeming incongruities in the providential adminiſtration of things ſhall be ſalved; and in regard whereto our preſent opinions of things may be rectified: this he interpoſeth here, *I ſaid in my heart* (that is, by the conſideration of things I was perſuaded) *that God ſhall judg the righteous and the wicked*; this he ever now and then toucheth as incident to his meditations; this he in the cloſe of all propoſeth as the grand inducement to piety, and obedience to God's commandments; *For God ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* 11. 9. 12. 14. 5. 8. 8. 12. 7. 18. 12. 14.

This judgment he expreſſeth indefinitely, ſo as not to determine the kind or time thereof; and as to the abſolute force of his words, it may ſignifie the decree of God, to reward or puniſh men here in this life according to their deſerts, the which in holy Scripture is commonly ſtiled God's judgment: but the force of his arguments (or at leaſt of ſome of them) plainly doth infer a future judgment after death; and ſo therefore I ſhall take his ſenſe to be, grounding thereon this *obſervation*, That from a wiſe conſideration of humane affairs, and obvious events here, we may collect the reaſonableneſs, the equity, the expediency, the moral or prudential neceſſity of a future judgment, according to which men ſhall receive due recompences, anſwerable to their demeanour in this life. This obſervation it ſhall be my endeavour by God's help to declare, and prove by arguments deduced from the reaſon and nature of things.

Firſt, then I ſay, it is reaſonable and equal that there ſhould be a future judgment; this will appear upon many accounts.

1. Seeing all men come hither without any knowledge or choice, having their life as it were, obtruded on them; and ſeeing ordinarily (according to the general complaints of men) the pains of this life do over-balance its pleaſures; ſo that it ſeemeth, in regard to what men find here, a puniſhment to be born; it ſeemeth alſo thence equal, that men ſhould be put into a capacity, upon their good behaviour in this troubleſom ſtate, of a better ſtate hereafter, in compenſation for what they endure here; otherwiſe God might ſeem not to have dealt fairly with his creatures, and we might have ſome colour to expoſtulate with *Job*; *Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery, and life to the bitter in ſoul? Why dyed I not from the womb? Why did I not give up the Ghoſt, when I came out of the belly?* Job 3. 20, 11.

Vitam non mehercule quiſquam acceſſiſſet, niſi daretur inſciis. Sen. *ad* Marc. 22.

Nemini contigit impunè naſci. Sen. *ad* Marc. 15.

Eccleſ. 4. 3, 4. 2. 17. Job 3. 3. 15. 10. Jer. 20. 14, &c.

2. Seeing man is endued with a free choice, and power over his actions, and thence by a good or bad use thereof is capable of deserving well or ill, it is just that a respective differenee be made, according to due estimation; and that men answerably should be proceeded with either here or hereafter, reaping the fruits of what they voluntarily did sow. There is a natural relation between merits and rewards, which must come under taxation, and find effect, otherwise there would be no such thing as justice and injustice in the world.

Job 4. 8. Prov. 22. 8. Jer. 32. 19.

3. Seeing there is a natural subordination of man to God, as of a creature to his Maker, as of a subject or servant to his Lord, as of a client or dependent to his Patron, Protectour and Benefactour, whence correspondent obligations do result; it is just that men should be accountable for the performance, and for the violation or neglect of them; so as accordingly either to receive approbation, or to be obliged to render satisfaction; respectively as they have done right, and payed respect to God, or as they have offered to wrong and dishonour him; otherwise those relations would seem vain and idle.

4. Seeing also there are natural relations of men to one another, and frequent transactions between them, founding several duties of humanity and justice; the which may be observed or transgressed; so that some men shall do, and others suffer much injury, without any possible redress from other-where, it is fit that a reference of such cases should be made to the common patron of right, and that by him they should be so decided, that due amends should be made to one party, and fit correction inflicted on the other; according to that of S. *Paul*; *It is a righteous thing with God to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you who are troubled rest with us in the revelation of our Lord Jesus.*

2 Thes. 1. 6.

5. Whereas also there are many secret good actions, many inward good dispositions, good wishes, and good purposes, unto which here no honour, no profit, no pleasure, no sort of benefit is annexed, or indeed well can be (they being indiscernible to men) there are likewise many bad practises, and designs concealed, or disguised, so as necessarily to pass away without any check, any disgrace, any damage or chastisement here: it is most equal that hereafter both these kinds should be discloſed, and obtain answerable recompence.

6. There are also persons, whom, although committing grievous wrong, oppression, and other heinous misdemeanours, offensive to God and man, yet, by reason of the inviolable sacredness of their authority, or because of their uncontrolable power, no justice here can reach, nor punishment can touch; who therefore should be reserved to the impartial, and irresistible judgment of God; and fit it is, that (for satisfaction of justice, and distinction of such from those, who contrariwise behave themselves well) a *Tophet* should be prepared for them.

Isa. 30. 33.

7. Upon these and the like accounts equity requireth, that a judgment should pass upon the deeds of men; and thereto the common opinions of men, and the private dictates of each man's conscience do attest: for all men seeing any person to demean himself brutishly and unworthily, committing heinous disorders and outrages, are apt to pronounce it unfit, that such an one should escape with impunity; likewise when innocent and good persons (who do no harm, and do what good they can) do suffer, or do enjoy no benefit thence, it is a pity, will any indifferent person be ready to say, that such a man's case

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should not be considered; that some reparation, or some reward should not be allotted to him: the which apprehensions of men are in effect the verdicts of common sense concerning the equity of a judgment to be.

8. Every man also having committed any notable misdemeanour (repugnant to piety, justice, or sobriety) doth naturally accuse himself for it, doth in his heart sentence himself to deserve punishment, and doth stand possessed with a dread thereof; so, even unwillingly, avouching the equity of a judgment, and by a forcible instinct presaging it to come. As likewise he that hath performed any virtuous or honest action, doth not only rest satisfied therein, but hath raised in him a strong hope of benefit to come from heaven in recompence thereof; the which apprehensions, and hopes do involve an opinion, that it is reasonable a judgment should be. All which considerations (seeing it is manifest that there is not generally or frequently any such exact judgment, or dispensation of rewards in this life, nor perhaps without changing the whole frame of things, and course of providence, can well be) do therefore infer the fitness, and equity of a future judgment.

It is farther, upon divers accounts, requisite and needful, that men should have an apprehension concerning such a judgment appointed by God, and consequently that such an one should really be. It is requisite toward the good conduct of humane affairs here; or to engage men to the practice of virtue: It is necessary to the maintaining any belief concerning Religion, or sense of piety; without it therefore no convenient Society among men can be well upheld.

1. It is, I say, needful to engage men upon the practice of any virtue, and to restrain them from any vice; for that indeed without it, no consideration of reason, no provision of law here, can be much available to those purposes. He that will consider the nature of men, or observe their common practice (marking what apprehensions usually steer them, what inclinations sway them, in their elections and pursuits of things) shall, I suppose, find, that from an invincible principle of self-love, or sensuality, deriving it self through all their motions of soul, and into all their actions of life, men generally do so strongly propend to the enjoyment of present sensible goods, that nothing but a presumption of some considerable benefit to be obtained by abstinence from them, or of some grievous mischief consequent on the embracing them, can withhold them from pursuing such enjoyment. From hence (seeing fancy, reason and experience do all prompt men to a foresight of events, and force them to some regard of the consequences of things) it followeth, that hope and fear are the main springs, which set on work all the wheels of humane action: so that any matter being propounded, if men can hope, that it will yield pleasant, or profitable (that is, tending to pleasant) fruits, they will undertake it; if they do fear its consequences will be distasteful, or hurtful, they will decline it: very rare it is to find, that the love or liking of a thing, as in it self amiable to the mind, or suitable to reason, doth incline men thereto; that honest things, bare of present advantages, and barren of hopeful fruits, are heartily pursued; that any thing otherwise averteth us from it self, than as immediately presenting some mischief, or dangerously threatning it. When goodness therefore doth clash with interest, or pleasure, *humane wisdom* (the φρόνημα τῆς σαρκός, *natural sense of the flesh*, which S. *Paul* speaketh of, as opposite to virtue) will dispose men to take part with these, and except some higher aid come in to succour goodness, 'tis odds, that ever they will prevail over it. If it do appear, that virtue can pay

Rom. 8. 6.

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men well for their pains, they perhaps may be her Servants; but they will hardly wait on her in pure courtesie, or work in her service for nothing; if she bringeth visibly a good dowry with her, she may be courted; but her mere beauty, or worth will draw few suitors to her. Who will forgo sensible pleasures, or wave substantial profit? who will reject the overtures of power, or honour, for her sake? And if vice, how ill soever it look or lear, do offer fairly, how many persons will be so nice, or squeamish, as merely out of fancy, or in despight, to her to refuse or renounce her? In short, as men are baited with pleasure, or bribed with profit, so they pursue; as they are stung with pain, or curb'd with fear, so they eschew things: it is a *gift* (or a specious appearance of some good offered) which perpetually moveth the greatest part, which often *blindeth the eyes, and perverteth the heart* of the wisest sort of men.

Deut. 16. 19. Exod. 23. 8.

It is farther to common sense very obvious, that this life cannot promise, or afford to virtue any rewards apparently so considerable, as in the common judgment of men to overpoise the pains and difficulties required to the procurement and maintenance thereof (the pains and difficulties to be overgone in mastering stubborn inclinations, in moderating greedy appetites, in restraining violent passions, in encountring frequent and strong temptations, in abstracting our minds and affections from sensible things, in assiduous watching over our thoughts, words and actions) together with the manifold inconveniences, crosses and troubles, which do attend the strict practice of virtue; that likewise here there are not ordinarily any such discouragements affixed to vice, which do much weigh down the pleasures with which it is tempered, and the advantages waiting on it.

As for human laws, made to encourage and requite virtue, or to check and chastise vice, it is also manifest that they do extend to cases in comparison very few; and that even as to particulars, which they touch, they are so easily eluded, or evaded, that without intrenching upon them, at least without incurring their edg, or coming within the verge of their correction, men may be very bad in themselves, extremely injurious to their neighbours, and hugely troublesom to the world; so that such laws hardly can make tolerable citizens, much less throughly good men, even in exteriour demeanour and dealing. However, no laws of men can touch internal acts of virtue or vice; they may sometimes bind our hands, or bridle our mouths, or shackle our feet, but they cannot stop our thoughts, they cannot still our passions, they cannot bend or break our inclinations; these things are beyond the reach of their cognizance, of their command, of their compulsion, or their correction; they cannot therefore render men truly good, or hinder them from being bad.

Upon which and the like considerations, it is plain enough, that setting aside the persuasion of a future judgment, all other incentives to virtue, and restraints from vice, which either common experience suggesteth, or Philosophical speculation may devise, are very weak and faint, and cannot reasonably promise considerable effect: the native beauty, and intrinsick worth of virtue; or its sutableness to reason, and the dignity of our nature; the grace and commendation with which it decketh the practisers of it; its goodly, pleasant and wholesom fruits of manifold conveniences, of health to soul and body, of peace and amity among men, of tranquillity and satisfaction in mind, if they do not reach beyond this transitory life, cannot to the common apprehensi-

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ons of men appear so considerable, or prove so efficacious, as to engage men closely and constantly to adhere thereto. Neither will the worst of evils innate or accessory to vice (its essential deformity and turpitude, or its being disagreeable to reason, and dishonourable to human nature, together with the distempers, the damages, the disgraces, the disturbances apt to sprout from it) if no more hereafter is to be feared in consequence thereof, be sufficient to deter or discourage men from it: the peril of death it self (the worst evil which men pretend to inflict, and that which our nature seemeth most to abhor) will not import much toward the diverting indigent, ambitious, or passionate men from the most desperately wicked attempts; it is the observation of *Cicero*, from which he inferreth the need of supposing future punishments, as the only effectual restraints from such actions. *That*, saith he, *there might be in this life some fear laid upon wicked men, those antients did think good that there should be some punishments appointed in hell for impious persons; because indeed they understood, that setting these apart, death it self was not to be feared.*

Ut aliqua in vita formido improbis esset, apud inferos ejusmodi quædam illi antiqui supplicia impiis constituta esse voluerunt, quod videlicet intelligebant his remotis non esse mortem ipsam pertimescendam. Cic. Catil. 4.

There have been indeed vented such fine and stately notions as these; that Reason simply, however attended, doth challenge obedience to it self; that Virtue is abundantly its own reward, and Vice a complete punishment to it self; that we should not in our practice be mercenary, regarding what profit or detriment will accrue from it, but should be good absolutely and *gratis*; that moral goods are the only desirable goods, and moral evils the only evils to be grieved at; that nothing can happen amiss to good men, and whatever their condition is they are perfectly happy; that nothing can truly benefit ill men, or exempt them from misery. But these, and the like notions, frequently occurring in *Philosophers*, as they are (being rightly understood, or taken in a qualified sense) supposing Religion and a future judgment, evidently reasonable and true (as also perhaps, even abstracting from that supposition, they may have in them a kind of slim and dusky truth, discernible to one in a thousand, who is very sharp-sighted, and looketh most wistly on them; as they may be relished by a few persons of very refined spirit, or of special improvement) so to the common herd of people (unto whose inclinations and capacities, it is fit that the general rules of practice, and the most effectual inducements thereto should be squared) to men, immersed in the cares, the toils, and the temptations of the world, they plainly are unsutable; their grosser conceit cannot apprehend, their more rugged disposition will not admit such fine notions; they in effect, by the generality of men, have been slighted and exploded as incongruous to common sense and experience, as the dictates of affectation or simplicity; as the dreams of idle persons, addicted to speculation, and regardless of the world, such as it really doth exist, and will ever persist, while men continue endued with the same natural inclinations, and affections: so that from such notions little succour can be expected toward promoting Virtue, or restraining Vice in the world.

Cic. *de Fin.* 3. *Tusc.* 5. Cic. *de Leg.* 1. Sen. *de Clem.* 1. 1.

Neque bona, neque mala quæ vulgus putet; multos qui conflictari adversis videantur beatos, ac plerosque quanquam magnas per opes miserrimos, si illi gravem fortunam constanter tolerent, hi prosperâ inconsultè utantur. Tac. Ann. 6.

Upon these considerations the necessity, or great usefulness of supposing a Judgment doth appear; that it being cast into the scales may to the common understanding of men evidently render Virtue more considerable

derable and eligible than Vice; as even in consequential profit and pleasure far surpassing it.

2. Whence manifestly the same supposition is also needful for the welfare of human society; the which, without the practice of justice, fidelity, and other virtues, can hardly subsist; without which practice indeed, a body of men would be worse than a company of Wolves or Foxes; and vain it were to think, that it can any where stand without conscience; and conscience, without fear checking, or hope spurring it on, can be no more than a name: all societies therefore we see have been fain to call in the notion of a future judgment to the aid of justice, and support of fidelity; obliging men to bind their testimonies by oaths, and plight their troth by Sacraments; implying a dread of that divine judgment, to which they solemnly do then appeal, and make themselves accountable.

Deos agere curam rerum humanarum, ex usu vitæ est; pœnasque maleficii, aliquando feras, nunquam autem irritas esse, &c. Plin. II. 7.

3. But farther, the persuasion concerning a future judgment, is upon peculiar accounts, most requisite to the support of Religion, and defence of Piety.

It is certain, that no authority, upon whatever reason or equity grounded, if it do not present competent encouragements to obedient subjects, if it do not hold forth an armed hand, menacing chastisement to the refractory, will signify any thing, or be able to sustain the respect due to it; that no laws, however in themselves equal or commodious, if a certain account or trial, back'd with a dispensation of valuable rewards, and infliction of formidable punishments, be not annexed to them, will obtain any force, so as to be observed or regarded; that no obligation whatever, of duty or gratitude, will prevail upon men, if they do not apprehend themselves under a constraint, to render an account, so as to be forced either to do reason, or to suffer for not doing it; so it is generally; and so it is even in regard to God, the Sovereign King and Governour of the world, as piety doth suppose him; his authority will never be maintained, his Laws will never be obeyed, the duties towards him will never be minded, without influence upon the hopes and fears of men; they will not yield to him any reverence, they will nowise regard his commands, if they may not from their respect and obedience expect good benefit, if they dread not a sore vengeance for their rebellion or neglect; nothing to them will seem more fond, than to serve him, who doth not well requite for the performance, than to revere him, who doth not soundly punish for the neglect of his service.

Forasmuch also as piety doth require duties somewhat high and hard, as much crossing the natural inclinations and desires of men, it peculiarly for the over-ruling such aversion, doth need answerably great encouragements to the practice, and determents from the transgression of what it requireth; upon which score it may also farther appear, that temporal judgments, and recompences here are not sufficient to procure a due obedience to the laws of piety; for how indeed can he that for the sake of piety doth undergo disgrace, loss, or pain, expect to be satisfied here? What other benefits can he presume upon beside those, which he doth presently forfeit?

Of this particular God may seem designedly to have set before us a pregnant instance or experiment, worthy our consideration: God in a very notorious and affecting manner declared his will and law to the

Jews;

Jews; and to engage them to obedience, he not only recommended it to them as very good in it self, and very convenient for them to observe, but he enforced it with promises of the greatest blessings concerning this life, that men are capable of, if they should obey; and with curses or menaces of the most dismal mischiefs imaginable in reference to this life, in case of disobedience; that he both could and would in both respects make his word good, he did by miraculous dispensation of signal mercies and judgments most evidently shew and assure them: Yet what was the effect? it was that (as the *Psalmist* expresseth it) *They despised the pleasant land——and hearkened not unto the voice of the* Psal. 106. 24, *Lord*; *Their heart was not right with God, neither were they stedfast in* 25. 78. 37, 56. *his covenant*; *they tempted and provoked the most high God, and kept not his testimonies*: they did not so value those benefits, they could not so dread those penalties, as in regard to them to persist for any time in a steady obedience; as not easily in despight of them to be drawn into the worst of crimes prohibited to them: the sweetest enjoyment of those good things could not hold them close to their duty, nor was the saddest smart of those evils able to reclaim them from sin; but even that very people (we may farther observe) having afterward (by sparks of light darted from the Prophets, or otherwise) obtained some clearer notions, and stronger persuasions concerning a future state, and rewards dispensed therein of higher consideration than any temporal ones here, became thereupon very constant and resolute in observance of their law; they proved valiant and fierce in defence thereof; they chose rather to endure the most grievous afflictions, than to transgress it, as the history 2 Mac. 6. 26. of the *Maccabees* doth inform us: they (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* 7. 23, 29. remarked of them) *waxed valiant in fight, and turned to flight the Ar-* Heb. 11. 34, *mies of the aliens*; *they* also *were tortured, not accepting a deliverance,* 35. 2 Mac. 7. 7. *that they might obtain a better resurrection*; this hope it was, which then did raise them to so vigorous resolution, and so chearful patience. From the same *Apostle* we also learn, that it was a sense of our being Heb. 11. 26. here in a transitory state, and *having an eye to the recompence of reward* after this life, which did engage the good *Patriarchs* and *Prophets* of the *Old Testament* so readily upon all occasions to comply with God's will, and to perform the most difficult commands by him imposed on them: these things they did, *not*, saith the *Apostle*, having indeed *received the* Heb. 11. 13. *promises* (that is, not having the Evangelical Promises concerning a future life in so formal and express a manner, as we now have proposed to them;) *but* yet *having seen them afar off, and having been perswaded of them, and having embraced them, and having* (in declaration of those perceptions and perswasions) *confessed that they were strangers, and pilgrims upon earth.*

The like observation might be made even concerning the *Pagans*, who while the perswasions concerning judgments and rewards after this life were retained in common vogue, did live more innocently and virtuously; but after those generally were discarded, so that the *Satyrist* could say, that *scarce boys did believe any Ghosts, or subterraneous Judicatures*, then did all wickedness mainly prevail and overflow.

Esse aliquos manes, & subterranea regna——
Vix pueri credunt. Juv. *Sat.* 2.

Comparing which things we may discern, as the weakness of considerations merely regarding this present life, so the force of those, which concern a future state, in order to the procuring obedience to God's laws; supposing both entertained with the same faith or persuasion of

mind; from whence the necessity of that judgment, which we speak of, toward the maintenance of piety doth appear.

But beyond these things this point is very needful to secure the very foundations of all Religion and Piety, the existence of God, and his providence over human affairs: the belief of a Deity, according to any tolerable notion thereof, and of a providence over us, apt to engage or encourage us to religious performances; without supposition of a judgment, and of a dispensation according to it of future rewards, cannot be well maintained; the objections assailing them would strike too hard, and pierce too deep, were we not furnished with this good shield to receive and repel them.

Τὸ φῶς γὰρ εἶπας, ὡς παύσαιτο θεὸς. Eurip.

Eccl. 9. 1, 2. To find that of the *Preacher* certified by experience; *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before him; all things come alike to all; there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: As is the good, so is the sinner; and he that sweareth, as he that sweareth not.*

To behold virtue groveling on the ground, and trampled on, while Eccl. 10. 4. vice is mounted on the perch, and sitteth proudly domineering; to view innocence and right sadly groaning under oppression, while fraud and violence do triumph and insult: which sights are obvious in the Eccl. 3. 16. world, as the *Preacher* observed; *I saw*, said he, *under the sun, the place of judgment, that wickedness was there, and the place of righteousness, that* Eccl. 4. 1. *iniquity was there; I considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and behold the tears of such as were oppressed; on the side of their oppressors there was power, but they had no comforter.* So did *Job* also 6 Job 12. 7. take notice, when he said, *The tabernacles of the robbers prosper, and* Psal. 17. 10. *they that provoke God are secure*; and the *Psalmist* complained of wicked oppressors, *They are enclosed in their own fat*, and *with their mouth* Mal. 3. 15. *they speak proudly*: and, the Prophet *Malachy*; *Now we call the proud happy, yea they that work wickedness are set up, yea they that tempt God are delivered.*

Sed cùm res hominum tantâ caligine volvi
Adspicerem, lætosque diu florere nocentes
Versarique pios, rursus labefacta cadebat
Religio, &c. Claud. *in* Ruff. 1. *init.*

To observe it frequently to happen, that most innocent and virtuous persons do conflict all their days with hardships and crosses; and sometime after all die sadly in pain, and under ignominy, while persons most outragious in lewdness and iniquity do flourish and rant it out in a long undisturbed course of prosperity, and in the end depart hence fairly and quietly; according to that in *Ecclesiastes*; *There is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that prolongeth his life in wickedness*: the former was the case of *Socrates*, of *Phocion*, of *Regulus*, of many other remarkably gallant and worthy persons; the latter as *Cicero* observed, of *Dionysius*, who after thirty years of unjust and cruel domination, in much splendor, died quietly in his bed.

7 Eccles. 6. 15.

Dies deficiat si velim numerare, quibus bonis malè evenerit, nec minùs si commemorem, quibus improbis optimè. Cic. *de Nat. D.* 3.

Dionysius 30 *annos Tyrannus fuit opulentissimæ, & beatissimæ civitatis—— atque in suo lectulo mortuus.* Cic. *ib.*

Thus, I say, to see and consider, that commonly *to just men it happeneth according to the work of the wicked, and to wicked men according to the work of the righteous* (as the *Preacher* speaketh) that here piety with its best friends do suffer deeply, and impiety with its worst abettors

Eccles. 8. 14.

*

do notably thrive; yea that not only good men suffer, but often suffer for being good (from envy and malignity of men that hate goodness) and that bad men not only prosper, but prosper by their wickedness (by their fraud, and violence) hath been a huge scandal to religion, which hath caused many to stumble, hath cast some quite down into the gulf of *Atheism*, or *Epicurism*; hath brought some men to doubt, hath induced others flatly to deny, that there is a God (that is, a most wise, powerful, just and good Being, every where present) or that he being, doth preside over, or any-wise concern himself in our affairs. From this source did flow all those impious conceits, which *Seneca* thus *expressed: One objecteth to the Gods neglect of us, another iniquity; another casts them out beyond his world, and leaves them forlorn as lazy and dull, without any light, or any work.* From hence it hath been, that in all places and times, there have been persons ready to say with those in the *Psalms*, *How doth God know, is there knowledg in the most High? The Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of* Jacob *regard it; God hath forgotten, he hideth his face, and will never see it.*

Improborum prosperitates, secundæque res redarguunt (ut Diogenes *dicebat) vim omnem Deorum & potestatem.* Cic. *ibid.*

Ἦ χρὴ μηκέτ' ἤγεῖσθαι θεοὺς, εἰ τἄδικ' ἔσται τῆς δίκης ὑπέρτερα. Eurip. *Elect.*

Vid. Luc. *in* Jup. *Confut.* Plut. *de placitis,* &c. Plin. 11. 7.

Alius illis objicit negligentiam nostri, alius iniquitatem; alius illos extra mundum suum projicit, & ignavos bebetesque illos sine luce, sine ullo opere destituit. Sen. *de Benef.* 7. 31.

Psal. 73. 10. Psal. 94. 7. Psal. 10. 11.

And not only upon blind *Pagans* and profane persons, but even upon the most pious of God's people these considerations have made impression, extorting from their hearts and mouths expostulations like that of *Jeremy*; *Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper, wherefore are all they happy that deal very treacherously?* and that of *Job*, *Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, and are mighty in power? their seed is established in their sight, their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them——they spend their days in wealth, and in a moment go down to the grave*; and that, *Is it good unto thee that thou shouldst oppress, that thou shouldst despise the work of thine hand, and shine upon the counsel of the wicked?* Such questions did this kind of observations draw forth, and it shrewdly tempted them to a dissatisfaction in their pious practice, that they were ready to say with the *Psalmist*, *Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency*; or with those in the Prophet, *It is vain to serve God, and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinances, and that we have walked mournfully before the Lord?* so that hence, *their feet were almost gone, and their steps had well nigh slipped* into a distrust of God's wise and just providence; they were moved to suspect, that God did not indeed bear that special regard to goodness, and affection to good men, that great hatred of iniquity, and displeasure toward the lovers of it, which religion supposed, as the main grounds of piety: thus, I say, have men, both good and bad, upon such occasions been induced, or tempted to doubt concerning those fundamental points; and that not without apparently weighty cause, admitting that all accounts are made up here in this life, between God and men; or that there is no reckoning be-

Quippe sapientissimos veterum, quique sectam eorum æmulantur, diversos repentes; ac multis insitam opinionem non initia nostri, non finem, non denique homines Dits curæ; ideò creberrima & tristia in bonos, læta apud deteriores esse. Tac. *Ann. VI.*

Jer. 12. 1. Job 21. 7.

Job 10. 3.

Psal. 73. 13.

Mal. 3. 14.

Psal. 73. 2.

hind to be adjusted in another world by divine justice and goodness; then indeed that saying, 'tis *a reproach to the Deity that bad men do prosper*, and good men suffer, hath a plausible semblance of truth; then he that affirmed, *there was no God, and heaven to be a void place, proving his assertion hence, that while he thus affirmed, he found himself in a good case*, did argue smartly; then *Diagoras*, from an unpunished perjury, collected probably, that God did not exist, or did not mind what was done here; for that being, and regarding things, he would not have endured himself to be so affronted, and those under his care so abused; then had *Dionysius* some reason to justifie his sacrilege by his prosperous navigation from committing it; and with fair colour *Diogenes* might say, that *Harpalus* his successful treachery and rapine, did, *testimonium dicere adversos deos, bear testimony against the Gods*, as guilty of injustice, or carelessness: these sort of discourses would, I say, upon excluding the supposition of future judgment, have some validity, or speciousness; and for want of that supposition we may observe the Apologies for providence, elaborately composed by some *Philosophers*, to be very lame and unsatisfactory. But supposing a judgment hereafter designed by God, and a proceeding with all men according thereto, all difficulty in these cases vanisheth, all objections have plainly no moment or force: Then God's present connivence, or patient indulgence toward wicked men will signifie no more, than what most becometh him as God and Governour of the world, his most excellent goodness and admirable clemency toward his creatures and subjects, in *waiting to be gracious*, and providing for their return to a better mind; affording them time, and means of reforming their minds and manners, that so they may escape the stroak of final vengeance; so in most cases, and in some also signifying his wise justice in suffering bad men to proceed forward to an inexcusable pitch of guilt, in order to their more clearly just condemnation, and severe punishment hereafter; that being καταρτισμένοι εἰς ἀπώλειαν, *throughly fit* (as S. *Paul* speaketh) or ripe *for perdition*, being *prepared* (as the Prophet *Jeremy* expresseth it, or *sanctified*) *for the slaughter*, being by their present ease, and abused prosperity, become fat and fair, they may fall more proper victims to divine severity.

Θεῶν ὄνειδος τὸς κακὸς εὐδαιμονεῖν.

Nullos esse Deos, inane cœlum, Affirmat Selius, probátque quòd se Factum, dum negat hæc, videt beatum.
Mart. 4. 20.

——*Sunt nobis nulla profectò Numina, cum cœlo rapiantur sæcula casu Mentimur regnare Jovem*, &c.
Luc. *VII.* 445.

Rom. 2. 4. 9. 22.
2 Pet. 3. 9, 15.

Rom. 9. 22. Jer. 12. 3.

Ἄγνισον αὐτοὺς εἰς ἡμέραν σφαγῆς αὐτῶν. 70.

Ut victimæ saginantur, ut hostia coronantur. Min. Fel.

Then also from God's permitting good men to suffer, how smartly soever, nothing can be inferr'd prejudicial unto divine goodness, or justice; since they are thereby made fitter for, and do attain a surer title to those excellent rewards which he upon such tryal and approbation of their virtues doth intend to confer upon them; especially considering, that afflictions are necessary both as means of rendring men good, and as occasions of expressing their goodness; that scarce any virtue could subsist, or could appear without them.

Justis quicquid malorum irrogatur, non est pœna criminis, sed virtutis examen. Aug.

Experitur, indurat, sibi ipsum præparat. Sen. *de Prov.* 1.

There could be no such thing as Patience, if there were no adversities to be endured; no such thing as contentedness, if there were no wants to be felt; no such thing as industry, if there were no pains to be taken; no such thing as humility, if sensible infirmities and crosses did not prompt us to sober thoughts, and shew us what we are. There would be no true wisdom, no clear knowledg of our selves, or right judgment of things, without experiencing the worst half of things. We should never learn to master our passions, or temper our appetites, or wrest our inclinations to a compliance with reason, if that discipline were away, which the Holy *Psalmist* intimateth, saying; *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy statutes.* How much we do love God, how submissive we are to God's will, how little we do value these mean things here, we cannot otherwise, than by willingly undergoing, or patiently bearing afflictions, well express; without it no sure trial of virtue can be, without it no excellent example of goodness had ever been. As therefore it is necessary, that good men, even that they may be good, should suffer here; so it is, supposing a future judgment, very just that they should do so; that they may acquire a title to the rewards following it; rewards far outweighing the light afflictions they are put to endure here.

Vid. Chrys. *ad* 2. *a.*

Semper esse felicem, & sine morsu animi transire vitam, ignorare est rerum naturæ alteram partem. Sen. de *Prov.* 4.

Psal. 119. 67, 71, 75.
No Martyrs, if no Persecution.

Magnum exemplum nisi mala fortuna non invenit. Sen. *de Prov.* 3.

2 Cor. 4. 17. Rom. 8. 18. Mat. 5. 12.

In reference therefore to the present impunity of bad men, and letting iniquity to prevail, or to proceed here, that which cured *David*, *Job* and *Solomon*, may satisfie us; *going into the sanctuary, and understanding the end of those men*; considering that *the wicked is reserved to the day of destruction, and shall be brought out to the day of wrath*; that after all their jollity and pleasure, *God for all these things will bring them into judgment.* In regard to the righteous being afflicted here, that of S. *Paul* may suffice, saying of them; *It is a manifest instance of God's righteous judgment, that they may be made worthy of the Kingdom of God, for which they suffer*; that of our *Saviour*, *Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and shall reproach you; rejoyce ye in that day, and leap for joy, for behold your reward is great in heaven*; that of *Solomon*, *Though a sinner do evil a hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know, that it shall be well with them that fear God:* In respect to both sorts of men, that of S. *Peter* will resolve all doubt; *God knoweth how to deliver the godly out of trials, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished*; all scores will be fully quitted by the execution of that sentence pronounced by our Judg himself: *The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.*

Psal. 73. 17. Job 21. 30. Rom. 2. 5. Eccles. 11. 9. 2 Thes. 1. 5. Luk. 6. 22, 23. Eccles. 8. 12. Isa. 3. 10, 11. 2 Per. 2. 29. Matt. 25. 46.

This *Hypothesis* doth indeed even to our common sense throughly solve most of those appearances in the course of things here, which otherwise might seem intricate or strange; clearing providence from all misprisions, and satisfying our minds so far as is needful, concerning the reasons of most occurrences here: from it we may learn,

That

That God in this great *drama*, made up of his providence, and our free-will concurrently or interchangeably acting, doth mean, in order to this *catastrophe* of judgment in the last and chief Act, to let men go on, playing their parts undisturbedly, according to their inclinations and humours, yet within certain limits, and under the check of his hand, in proper seasons, to prevent confusion of all, interposing it self.

Διὰ τοῦτο ὕπω κρίσις, ἵνα κοινῇ πάντες στεφανωθῶμεν, ἵνα ἀπὸ πονηρίας πολλὰ μεταλαβόντων εἰς ἀρετὴν. Chrys. *in* Matt. *Or.* 11.

That it is not therefore fit now by open significations, either of approbation or dislike, often to interrupt the process of human actions; especially considering that the final doom concerning persons, is not to be grounded upon single passages, or the particular acts of one time, but upon the whole body of action passing through the course of each man's part, in the place and time allotted to him; and that he, who now acteth laudably, may, before all is done, come to faulter: he that now behaveth himself untowardly, may afterward learn to do better, and in the end come off well.

Eccles. 3. 11. 8. 17. 11. 5. That hence it is not to be wondred, that God here should be somewhat reserved in dispensing testimonies of favour to those, who at present do seem good, somewhat sparing in declaring wrath toward those, who now appear bad; that he should not miraculously pour down golden showers on the heads of the righteous, nor send *fire from heaven*, as angry man would have him, upon every provocation, to consume sinners.

Luk. 9. 55.

That this life is not a time of reaping, but of sowing; not of approbation, but of trial; not of triumph, but of combat: this world is not a place of enjoyment, but of work; our condition here is not a state of settlement, but of travel: whence no man should expect more of encouragement, than is needful to support him in this work and way; should look to receive wages before his task is done; to get the prize, before he hath gone through the race; to gather the spoils, before he hath fought out the battle; to enjoy rest, before he is at his journys end; to be put in full possession of happiness, before his right and title thereto is completely assured: That no man also should presume or please himself upon present impunity for his misbehaviour or sloth (like those of whom the *Preacher* saith, *Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil*) seeing this is the season of mercy and patience, when God commonly doth not farther inflict crosses on us, than may serve to mind us of our duty, or urge us to the performance of it; and seeing the longer vengeance is withheld, the more heavy it will at last fall on us, if we despise the present season of grace, and proceed to the end in impenitence: That present impunity therefore is a sore punishment, and correction here a really great favour.

Eccles. 8. 11.

That ordinarily temporal prosperity and adversity, as in comparison to things relating to our future state, they are plainly inconsiderable, so they can be no arguments of God's special favour or displeasure; whence it appeareth to be no small rashness to conclude how God stands affected to any person from what befalleth him here (as those who infer'd concerning *the Galileans, whose blood* Pilate *mixed with their sacrifices*; and concerning those *Jews, upon whom the Tower in* Siloam *did fall*, that they were more sinners than others of their Nation) yea, that if we must be interpreting God's mind from these occurrences, it is

Luk. 13. 1, &c.

* rather

rather more reasonable to conceive, that God disliketh them whom he doth not check, and approveth them whom he chastiseth; whence the prosperity of bad men is rather pitiable, than invidious, as that which aggravateth and strengthneth their wickedness, which accumulateth guilt, which draweth them forward, and plungeth them deeper into perdition; that the adversity of good men is no misery, but a blessing and happiness to them; as exercising and fortifying their virtues, ensuring their state, endearing them to God: however,

Prov. 3. 12. Job 5. 17.

Heb. 12. 7. Apoc. 3. 19.

Prov. 23. 17. Luk. 16. 25.

That God plainly doth mean to vilify these present things, appearing to our sense good or evil, by scattering them abroad with an indifferent hand; so that his friends taste as little good, and as much evil, as his enemies.

Nullo modo potest Deus magis concupita traducere, quàm si illa in turpissimos defert, ab optimis abigit. Sen. *de Prov.* 5.

That there is no reason to wonder, or to complain, that things here do not go on in a course so smooth and streight, as they should do; for that vanity and iniquity have their part and time to act upon this stage, yea are allowed sometimes a seeming reign; but Justice, tho at present it seemeth to sleep, or to wink at things, will at length awake, and effectually bestir it self; that Right, although here it may be sometime crossed, or foiled, yet it can never be quell'd or overthrown; it may be suspended, but cannot be suppressed; it may be somewhat eclipsed, but it cannot be quite extinguished; yea infallibly in the end it will triumphantly prevail.

Dantur bonis nè putentur mala, dantur malis nè putentur summa bona. Aug.

That no good design shall be undertaken, nor any honest labour can be spent in vain, seeing although they chance to find no success, or to yield no fruit here, yet they cannot fail to obtain a happy issue, and a plentiful reward hereafter.

That how small soever the difference doth now appear between wise men, and fools (or between virtuous and vicious persons) there will be hereafter a vast discrimination made, when in consequence of that upright trial one shall enter into eternal bliss, the other shall fall into an abyss of misery.

That this life is not contemptible, nor all things here utterly vain; seeing that upon this life is founded our eternal state; seeing these occurrences have influence upon our eternal joy, or wo; seeing all things here will conduce to the illustration of divine mercy, or justice. That God is indeed here *Deus absconditus* (as the *Prophet* stileth him) *God that hideth himself*; advisedly suffering his goodness and justice to be under a cloud, that at length they may break out more gloriously *in that day, when* (as St. *Paul* saith) his δικαιοκρισία, his most *righteous dealing* (both in governance of all affairs now, and in deciding of all cases then) *shall be revealed*, and made conspicuous to all the world.

[a] Isa. 45. 15.

Rom. 2. 5.

Thus doth it, upon many accounts, appear fit and needful, that there should be a future judgment; the apprehension thereof being the sharpest spur to virtue, the strongest curb from vice, the surest fence of human society, the safest bulwark of Religion (securing the authority of God, and guarding his providence, together with all his holy attributes, from all batteries, all sinister aspersions, all profane misconstructions) in short, the most effectual means, if it be heartily embraced, to render

render men in their minds, and in their enjoyments sober, just in their dealings toward their neighbour, and in all their life pious toward God; there being indeed no consideration, whereof the mind of man is capable, more apt to beget in him a care and conscience of what he doeth, than this; that after a very short and transitory life, all his actions must undergo a strict scrutiny, according to the result whereof he shall be either approved and rewarded, or condemned and punished; whereof any man being throughly perswaded, and any-wise considering it, he cannot surely but accuse himself of extreme folly, and madness, if he doth not provide for that account, and order all his practice with a regard thereto. The which use of this point God by his grace dispose us to make, for the sake of *Jesus* our blessed Redeemer, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.

1 Thes. 5. 23. *Now the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Amen.

From

From thence He shall come to judg the quick and the dead.

Sermon XXXIII.

THE CERTAINTY and CIRCUMSTANCES OF A Future Judgment FROM Divine Revelation.

ACTS 10. 42.

And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify, that it is he which was ordained by God to be judg of quick and dead.

THese words are part of a *Sermon* preached by St. *Peter* to *Cornelius* and his friends, wherein the *Apostle* briefly declareth unto them the chief particulars in the history of *Christ*, together with ome main points of Christian doctrine most fit for them to know; particularly he doth in these words express the point concerning the *future judgment*; reporting that our Lord especially did charge his Apostles *o preach unto the people and testify*, that is, first publickly to declare nd explain, then by convenient proofs, especially by divine attestatiins, to evince and perswade this point; the importance whereof, and emience among other Christian doctrines doth hence plainly appear, that he author of our faith did make so special provision, and gave so exress charge concerning the promulgation and probation thereof: the vhich circumstance is indeed remarkable and weighty, but I shall not

insist on it, meaning immediately to set upon considering the point it self, as it is here laid down in these terms——*that it is he which was ordained by God to be Judg of quick and dead:* in which words are couched *three* particulars most considerable;

1. A judgment ordained by God, and to be declared to men.
2. The Judg by whom immediately that judgment is administred, *He*; *Jesus*, our Lord and Saviour.
3. The extent of that judgment, or its adequate object, *quick and dead.*

These particulars I shall in order touch, inserting some material considerations about the nature, and manner of this judgment, with some reasons why it should be thus managed; then I shall adjoin some practical applications.

I. There is a judgment ordained by God, and to be declared to men; that is, concerning the persons and actions of men performed in this life. How just and fit it is that there should be such a judgment, how useful and requisite the declaration thereof is upon several accounts (for engaging men upon the practice of Virtue, and restraining them from Vice; for the preservation and maintenance of human Society, for the support and defence of Religion, for the vindication of divine Providence, and illustration of all God's holy Attributes) I have already endeavoured to declare; and in that regard I shall content my self now to say, that as upon the apparent equity and usefulness of this doctrine, all nations commonly have ever embraced the general substance thereof, as a fundamental principle of their Religion (all men commonly with a ready inclination having avowed it reasonable to suppose, that every man after this life shall be brought unto a just and impartial bar, where his doings shall be exactly scan'd, and his person answerably doomed unto a comfortable or afflictive recompence) so our Religion in a peculiar manner doth most expresly assert, most clearly describe, and most vigorously inculcate it, with all possible advantage, both for the clearing God's dealings and attributes, and for the excitement of men to a virtuous and pious life; the nature, manner, process and result of the future judgment are in the Holy Scripture most punctually set down.

Just. M. *p.* 1. & *p.* 106.

1. It teacheth us, that God hath appointed a determinate time for this judgment: *God* (saith St. *Paul*) *hath appointed a day, in which he will judg the world in righteousness*; that which is called *the day of judgment*, *the last day*, *the day of the Lord*, *the great*, and *the illustrious day*; and by signal excellency, *The day*; and, *That day*; intimating, beside the certainty of the thing it self, the most especial regard, that men are concerned to bear thereto.

Act. 17. 31. Act. 2. 20. Jud. 6. 2 Tim. 1. 18. 4. 8. 1 Thes. 5. 4. Heb. 10. 25.

2. That in order to this judgment all the actions of men are with greater exactness registred in books (the books of divine omniscience, seeing all things present, and retaining all things past, which nothing can escape) *The books* ('tis said in the *Revelation*) *were opened*, and the *dead were judged from the things written in the books, according to their works.*

(Job 13. 27. 14. 17.) Rev. 20. 12. Dan. 7. 10.

3. That in order thereto, there shall be effected by Divine Power and Command a general resurrection of all persons, both *just and unjust*

* *th*

The hour (saith our Lord) *is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.* Act. 24. 15 Joh. 5. 28.

4. That then all persons so raised shall be presented at the bar of our Lord to answer and undergo their trial. *I saw* (saith S. *John*) *the great and small standing before God's Throne*; and, *We must all* (saith S. *Paul*) *be made appear, and be set forth at the judgment seat of Christ*; and, *The son of man* (saith our *Lord*) *shall sit upon the throne of his glory, and all nations shall be gathered together before him.* Revel. 20. 12. Rom. 14. 10. φανερωθῆναι. 2 Cor. 5. 10. Παρίστασθαι. Matt. 25. 31, 32.

5. That then and there every thought, every word, every work of men shall be throughly disclosed and discussed; so that it, together with its due quality and desert, shall plainly appear; all the designs and pretences of men shall be laid bare; every case shall be considered, every plea heard and scan'd, the merits of every cause weighed in an even ballance, according to truth and equity; Mens neglects and omissions of duty shall also come under consideration; an account will be exacted of all the talents entrusted to any man (of the abilities, opportunities and advantages he ever had of doing God service) and of what improvemenis answerable he hath made; what men have done themselves, and what they have done by others from the influence of their advice, their persuasion, or their example, shall be searcht out, and poised; *God* (saith S. *Paul*) *will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of hearts*; and, *Of every idle word, that men shall speak, they shall render an account at the day of judgment*, saith our *Lord*; and, *After a long time* (saith *he* again) *the Lord of those servants* cometh, and *reckoneth with them*, &c. and, *Every work* (saith the *Preacher*) *God shall bring into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* 1 Cor. 4. 5. Rom. 2. 29. 1 Pet. 4. 5. Matt. 12. 36. Mat. 25. 18. Eccles. 12. 4.

6. That upon each man, according to the true quality of his doings, thus detected, examined, and stated, a definitive sentence shall pass, whereby he shall be acquitted, and approved, or condemned and reprobated; τότε ὁ ἔπαινος γενήσεται ἑκάστῳ, *then* (saith S. *Paul*) *praise shall be to each one*; *praise*, that is generally (by an εὐφημισμός, or favourable manner of speech) a due taxation and esteem, according to merit; then, *Well done good and faithful servant*; and, *O thou bad, and slothful servant*, shall be pronounced to one, or t'other sort of men, respectively, according to their demeanour here. 1 Cor. 4. 5. Matt. 25. 21, 26.

7. That according to the purport of this sentence a discrimination shall be made; and to one party a gracious reward, correspondent to the quality and measure of their good works in a blissful place, to the other a sorer punishment, in proportion to their demerits, in a place of misery; to the one everlasting joy and glory above in heaven, to the other endless sorrow and shame beneath in hell, shall be assigned, and dispensed effectually. *The son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his Angels, and then he shall reward every man according to his works*; He will *separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set his sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left; then the King shall say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World*——and, *Then he shall say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* And, The good and faithful servant shall *enter into his Master's joy*, the bad and slothful *shall be cast into utter darkness*, Μισθαποδοσία. Heb. 11. 26. Matt. 16. 27. Matt. 25. 32, &c. Matt. 25. 21, 30.

darkness, where is weeping and gnashing of teeth; so our *Lord* himself
2 Cor. 5. 10. expresseth it; and S. *Paul* thus, *We must*, saith he, *all appear before the tribunal of God*, ἵνα κομίσηται ἕκαστος, *that each one may bear away the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good, or bad*; and, *God will render to every man according to his works---*
Rom. 2. 6. *to them, who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil:* and even of old the
Dan. 12. 2. Prophet *Daniel* thus briefly did express this different doom; *Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake; some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.* Hence in regard to
Act. 3. 19. Eph. 4. 30. Luc. 14. 12. Col. 3. 24. Rom. 2. 5. 2 Pet. 3. 7. 2 Thes. 1. 8. one party is the time of judgment stiled *the season of refreshment*, the *day of redemption*, the time of *recompence*; in reference to the other, *the day of wrath*, the *day of destruction*, the time of *vengeance*; when our Lord *will*, as S. *Paul* saith, *take vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.*

8. We are also farther taught, that all this shall be transacted in a regular, publick, and most solemn manner, in open court, in the face and audience of all the world, before Angels and men. For our Lord is described coming to judgment with attendance of all the Holy Angels; and the Saints, being themselves first approved, shall become assessors there; and all men are represented as present at the trial, or as Spectators and Auditors thereof: *Whosoever* (saith our *Lord*) *shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the Angels of God; but he that denyeth me before men, shall be denyed before the Angels of God.* And, *There is nothing covered that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known: whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light, and that which ye have spoken in closets shall be proclaimed upon the house tops.*

2 Thes. 1. 7. Luk. 9. 26. Matt. 25. 31. 16. 27. Jud. 14. 1 Cor. 6. 2. Matt. 19. 28.

Luk. 12. 8, 9. Matt. 10. 32. Luk. 12. 2.

9. That also the judgment shall pass to the full conviction, and entire satisfaction of all that are present; so that each one concerned therein shall be forced in conscience to acquiesce in his doom, as most just and equal; the condemned stooping with awe to his justice; the absolved adoring with humble reverence his mercy; the spectators applauding with admiration his holy wisdom: for that day will be, as
Rom. 2. 5. Rom. 14. 11. S. *Paul* calleth it, *a day of revelation of God's righteous judgment*; and *God* in regard thereto is represented speaking thus; *To me, as I live saith the Lord, every knee shall bow, and every tongue shall give glory*
2 Thes. 1. 10. *to God*; and our Lord, *in that day*, saith S. *Paul, will be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all them that believe*; and, *He will* then (as it
Jud. 15. is in S. *Jude*) *convince all that are ungodly of all their ungodly deeds, which they have ungodlily committed, and of all the hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.* So that thereupon those confessions, and acclamations of praise in the *Revelation* shall be resounded
Revel. 19. 2. 16. 7. 7. 10. 15. 3. through heaven; *Allelujah, salvation and glory, and power be to the Lord our God, for true and righteous are his judgments. Salvation be unto our Lord, that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb: Great and wonderful are thy works, O Lord God almighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou King of Saints.*

Thus

Thus do the Holy *Pandects* of our Religion set out that judgment, which all men hereafter must undergo; wherein all the attributes of God shall be conspicuously glorified; his wonderful clemency shall be sweetly displayed, his exact justice shall be terribly demonstrated, his perfect wisdom shall be clearly unfolded; wherein the knotty intrigues of providence shall be loosed, and the mysterious depths of the divine counsels shall be laid open; and God's honour, which now by the bold and rash judgments of men is often attack'd, shall be throughly cleared and repaired, to the joyful satisfaction of all pious men, and sad confusion of the impious; wherein the great wisdom of those, who before all things chuse to be good, and to serve God, and the extreme folly of those, who scorn or neglect piety, shall be most evidently apparent; wherein finally all scores, that now so undiscernibly run on, shall be exactly quitted, and even; impartial right shall be done; every man shall have his due assigned and rendred to him.

But let so much suffice concerning the Judgment appointed; we proceed to the next particular, The Judg ordained, *He*, that is, *Jesus* our Lord and Saviour.

II. The original right, and absolute power of judging doth inseparably pertain to God Almighty, whose creatures, whose servants, whose subjects we are, and consequently to whose judgment we stand obnoxious. As he is naturally the Sovereign Lord and King of the world, so he is, as the *Apostle* calleth him, κριτὴς πάντων, the *Judg of all* persons and things; and particulariy *Judg of all the earth*, or of all men, as *Abraham* did style him. As upon the grounds specified we do owe obedience to the Laws he prescribeth us, performance of the service he allotteth us, and improvement of the talents he committeth to us; so we do thence stand obliged to render an account to him of our correspondent behaviour, and due management in those respects, and are liable to the judgment he shall make thereof: all judgment therefore must be exercised either immediately by God himself, or in subordination to him; in his name and right, and by virtue of authority derived from him; otherwise that of S. *Paul*, *Who art thou that judgest anothers servant*, might be alledged against any, who without licence, or commission from him should presume to judg us. Heb. 12. 13. Gen. 18. 25. Rom. 14. 4.

Now that immediately God should administer any judgment, is incongruous to his nature, and to ours; it is particularly unsutable to the manner of this judgment, which God designeth to be such, as may pass openly before all the world, to the conspicuous declaration of his glorious justice and mercy, to the clear satisfaction and conviction of all persons interested therein: which that it might be, *it was fit* (as S. *Austin* saith) *that they who are to be judged should see their judg*; it is fit, that the assistants, and spectators, or witnesses thereof should discern the process: but the glorious and dreadful presence of God cannot be discernible by us, or would not be supportable: *He* (saith S. *Paul*) *inhabiteth inaccessable light*, so *that no man hath seen, or can see him*; and, *Thou canst not see my face* (saith he to *Moses*) *for there shall no man see me and live*: that Majesty, before which the purest *Seraphims*, being dazled with its infinite brightness, are constrained to veil their faces; that presence, of which the Prophet saith, *The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burnt*. 1 Tim. 6. 16. Exod. 33. 20. Isa. 6. 2. Nah. 1. 5. (Ps. 104. 32. 18. 18.)

Etenim ea quæ judicantur, oportebat videre judicem & scire hunc à quo judicantur, &c. Iren. 3. 9.

Rectum erat, ut judicandi viderent judicem. Aug.

burnt in his presence; *yea the world, and all that dwell therein.* How should frail and impure flesh sustain? How should guilty sinners appear before him? *Who may stand in his sight when he is angry?* when he is angry, *at whose wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation:* What ear of mortal man could endure that *voice, at which the earth melteth,* that *reproof, at which the Pillars of heaven are astonished?* It being therefore from the divine excellency impossible, or inconvenient, that God himself immediately, as such, should exercise judgment, it hath pleased him, in his stead, to constitute one most fit for that imployment: as he for particular temporal judgments here hath appointed Princes and Governours visibly to manage them as his Ministers and Vicegerents, in his name and behalf; so that universal, and ultimate judgment, he hath (for his own greater glory, and our special benefit) committed unto his loving Son *Jesus*, our blessed Mediator and Saviour; the same, who with the most admirable condescension of grace and charity, did once come hither in our nature to rescue us from sin and misery; who underwent so many crosses and troubles for us; who freely laid down his life to redeem and save us; he it is, who is ὡρισμένος ὑπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ κριτής, *decreed* and determined *by God* (or under him, as his substitute and deputy) *to be our Judg*; so in our *Text*; and so again S. *Paul, God hath appointed a day in which he will judg the world in righteousness,* ἐν ἀνδρὶ ᾧ ὥρισεν, *by the man,* or in the man, *whom he hath ordained*; whence it is called, *the judgment seat of Christ, before which we must appear*; and, *The Father* (saith our *Lord* himself) *judgeth no man* (that is immediately and separately) *but hath given all judgment to the Son*; and, *The Father* (he addeth) *hath given to the Son the authority, and to execute judgment, because he is the Son of man*; that is, God hath conferr'd on him the Sovereign Regal authority, and hath particularly committed to him that prime branch thereof, Judicial power, *even as he is the Son of man:* so that as in our nature he performed all that was requisite to save us, as in our nature he was exalted to God's right hand to rule and bless us; so for consummation of all done in our regard, he shall in our nature appear to judg us; awarding to us the rewards he purchased for us, or punishments for the contempt of his favours.

Pf. 76. 7. 133. 5. 143. 2. Jer. 10. 10. Pf. 45. 6. Job 26. 11. (1 Cor. 15. 27.) Act. 17. 31. Rom. 14. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Cor. 4. 4. Joh. 5. 22, 27. 2 Tim. 4. 1.

——*Illa forma videbitur Filii, quam sibi per sacramentum incarnationis univit,* &c. Prosp. *Sent.* 337.

And indeed that he under this name and notion was designed to this office, even the anitent Prophets did foreshew; for it was *one like the Son of man,* whom *Daniel did behold coming with the clouds of heaven,* having all royal dominion and power given unto him; and it was according to *Esay*'s predictions, the *Son, born and given unto us, upon whose shoulder the government should be,* and to whom the Kingdom should be assigned, *to order it, and establish it, with judgment and justice for ever.*

Dan. 7. 13, 14. Isa. 7. 14. 9. 6, 7. 11. 3. 42. 1, 3.

The point then is manifest, that our Savior *Jesus*, by designment and deputation from God, is invested with this eminent office and power. And why it should be so, many reasons, many fair congruities may be assigned.

1. It was requisit (as we before touched) that the Judg should be visible, and audible; such whom the parties concerned might (without extreme surprize and amazement) discern and converse with, in order to their clearer and fuller satisfaction, or conviction: such our Lord, the Son of man, clothed with glorified flesh, will be; his mild and sweet, though bright and stately aspect, all men in some manner may be capable of seeing; his calm and clear voice all men may hear: Him the just may with

 chearful

chearful satisfaction behold smiling on them with gracious kindness, and the wicked also with sad confusion may view frowning toward them with just disdain; those with comfortable joy may hear him acquitting, commending and blessing them; these with due regret also may hear him convincing, reproving, and denouncing the fatal curse on them; so that hereupon the former with humble thankfulness shall willingly acknowledg and praise his grace, the latter with shameful horror constrainedly shall confess their guilt before him: *Behold* (saith St. *John*, with an emphatical regard it seems to this consideration) *he cometh in the clouds, and every eye shall see him, even they who pierced him*; and, *They*, saith our Lord himself, *shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven, in power, and great glory*; and, our Lord is represented in judgment, speaking and arguing the case with all parties concerned, receiving their plea, and expressing his mind to them: This is a kind of natural capacity qualifying him for this employment, but there are considerations of a higher nature peculiarly fitting him for it. Apoc. 1. 7. Mat. 24. 30. 26. 64. 25. 34, &c.

2. It was indeed a good part of that Regal Office, which God, in reward of his obedience, and to declare his acceptance thereof, did confer upon him; giving him *a power over all flesh, all authority in heaven and earth*: whence it is by St. *Paul* called *his Kingdom*; *I charge thee*, saith he to *Timothy*, *before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judg the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom*: He being then our King, and as such the fountain of all justice, must either himself in person, or by some delegate administer it; but that he should immediately do it, divers special reasons do suggest themselves. Joh. 17. 2. Mat. 28. 18. 2 Tim. 4. 1.

3. It is an office of too great eminence and dignity to be imparted to any other: He alone who subsists in union with God, who is the Son of God, who hath most highly pleased God, who hath merited a Soveraignty over us, and a supreme eminency above all creatures, is capable of the honour to determine those points of the highest importance concerning the final doom of God's Creatures, and the salvation of those souls whom he hath purchased: *Worthy is he alone to receive the book* (of Judgment) *and to open the seals thereof, because he was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by his blood: Worthy is the Lamb* (worthy exclusively, and solely) *that was slain, to receive the power, and honour, the glory and blessing*, annexed to this high office. Apoc. 5. 9, 12.

As there is nothing more apt to beget in us veneration toward him, than considering that he shall be our Judg, upon whose sentence our fate and felicity must depend; so it is therefore most fit, that it incommunicably, and solely should belong to him; especially seeing God with especial regard to his honour did assign the judicial office to him; the *Father*, 'tis said, *hath committed all judgment to the Son, that all men might honour the Son, as they do the Father*. Joh. 5. 22, 23.

4. He alone also hath capacities proper for this judicature: he only hath that divine faculty of searching mens hearts; he only is furnished with wisdom to know all matters of fact that ever were, and to discern the right in every case; he above all being absolutely good, is endued with perfect equity of mind, and immutable love of right, always disposing him to judg most justly; he alone can have in him that μετριοπάθεια, or exact temperament of affection toward men, which is requisite to the distribution of equal justice toward them, according to due measures of mercy and severity; the highest

Διὰ τοῦτο γὰρ ἐγὼ μόνος κριτὴς, ὅτι ἀναμάρτητος μόνος. Clem. Al. *Paed. l.* 2.

Heb. 5. 2.

eſt Angel in heaven were incapable ſo rightly to diſtinguiſh the ſtrict bounds of theſe things. Wherefore in regard to theſe diſpoſitions peculiar to him, we are even by the antient Prophets informed, that this office
Is. 11. 2, 3. is allotted to him; *The Spirit of the Lord*, ſaith *Eſay*, *ſhall reſt upon him, the ſpirit of wiſdom——and ſhall make him of quick underſtanding in the fear of the Lord; and he ſhall not judg after the ſight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of his ears; but with righteouſneſs ſhall he judg the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth.* And, *A bruiſ-*
Iſa. 42. 3. *ed reed* (ſaith *God* in the ſame *Prophet*, intimating his incomparable ſagacity, equity and temper, as it were, for this purpoſe) *ſhall he not break, and the ſmoking flax ſhall he not quench; he ſhall bring forth judgment unto*
Pſal. 45. 7. *truth.* And, *Thou*, ſaith the *Pſalmiſt* concerning him, *loveſt righteouſneſs, and hateſt iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs above thy fellows.*

5. By this deſignation the glory of God is eſpecially promoted, his moſt excellent attributes being much illuſtrated thereby: his wiſdom appeareth in conſtituting one ſo in all reſpects moſt fit to diſcharge the office; and his goodneſs moſt clearly ſhines therein: for ſince it was requiſite that a judgment ſhould paſs upon us, how could the terror thereof be better allayed, than by putting it into the hands of his Son? to whoſe cognizance, were the choice permitted to us, ſhould we rather ſubmit our actions, than to his? to whom rather ſhould we freely commit all our life and welfare, than to him, who by nature is ſo nearly allied to us, and hath
Mat. 11. 29. not diſdained to call us brethren? who in diſpoſition of ſpirit is ſo *meek and*
Heb. 2. 17. 4. 15. *lowly*, ſo *merciful* and *compaſſionate?* who here was viſibly in diſpoſition and demeanour a Lamb, and is repreſented to us continuing ſuch; than to him, who by ſo many ſignal experiments hath expreſſed an exceſs of kindneſs towards us, and tenderneſs of our welfare; who hath conſpicuouſly evidenced himſelf to be the beſt friend to mankind; that he ardently deſireth the ſalvation of all men, even of his worſt enemies, for whom he willingly did ſpend his blood, for whom he dying earneſtly prayed; whom he continually woeth to reconciliation and repentance, and conſequently to the enjoyment of greateſt happineſs? how then could God more plainly expreſs his goodneſs toward us, than in aſſigning ſuch a Judg for us?

How alſo could he exhibit a more illuſtrious inſtance of his juſtice, and love to righteouſneſs, than in advancing him to ſo glorious an office, who out of perfect compliance to his will did freely ſtoop ſo low, and gladly undergo ſo much? Worthy of God it was, and a
Apoc. 5. 12. congruous retribution to place the Crown on his head, to put the Sceptre into his hand, who willingly bore a croſs, who patiently ſubmitted to a ſcourge; to conſtitute him the Judg, who out of abundant piety to God, and charity to God's creature, was contented to be arraigned, to be ſentenced, to be executed as a malefactor: he dearly
Rom. 14. 9. purchaſed the right to be *Lord of dead and living*, and juſt it was that in effect he ſhould obtain it.

6. Juſt it likewiſe was, that to him, immediately and ſolemnly, ſhould be conſigned a power to acknowledg and reward his faithful friends and ſervants; thoſe who had believed his word, had obſerved his laws, had out of love and reſpect done much, and ſuffered much for him.

Juſt alſo it was, that he ſhould be impowered to do himſelf right upon his proud and ſpightful enemies; that he ſhould ſee them lying under his feet, and at his diſpoſal, who had ſo ſcornfully inſulted on

him,

him, and so cruelly misused him; that he righteously should judg them, who so maliciously had accused, and so injuriously condemned him; should chastise them severely, who most unmercifully had afflicted and slaughtered him; should worthily reprobate all those, who had unworthily rejected him; in fine, that he should render a due recompence to all wicked persons, who by distrusting his word, by despising his overtures of grace and mercy, by resisting his will, and rejecting his authority, by trampling upon his holy doctrine and laws, had wronged, had dishonoured, had disclaimed him.

7. This appointment of Jesus for our Judg is farther very conducible to our edification, in way of excitement to the practice of our duty, and encouragement thereto; in way of consolation and satisfaction to our Soul.

It considered is apt to raise in us a high reverence and dread of our Saviour; and consequently to dispose us to the observance of his laws, and imitation of his example.

It is matter of special comfort and encouragement to consider, that hence assuredly we shall find a fair and favourable trial; since 'tis no enemy, not one disaffected, yea, not one indifferently affected toward us, who shall judg us, but our best friend; from whom we may expect not only justice and equity, but all the favour and kindness our cause will bear.

It also duly pondered is most proper to work in us an earnest care, and fear of sinning, and thereby of becoming obnoxious to condemnation; for what an aggravation will it yield to our whether foolish perverseness, or slothful negligence? how extreme disingenuity, how wretched ingratitude will it argue in us to be cast and condemned by such a judg; a judg so fair and equal, so mild and gentle, so benign and favourable to us; so willing to acquit us, so desirous to save us? With what face think we, having transgressed his most good and righteous laws, having rejected all his gracious tenders of mercy and favour, having defeated all his most serious purposes, and frustrated his most painful endeavours for our welfare; having violated our manifold obligations and engagements to him; having abused his so unexpressibly great love and good will toward us; having hence deplorably forfeited all his favour, and incurred his most grievous displeasure; with what face, I say, having done all this shall we appear in his presence? how then shall we bear the frowns of his tender love changed into fierce disdain, of highest patience turned into extreme fury, of so terrible a Majesty provoked by so heinous affronts? with what heart shall we hear that once most sweet and charming voice, which in so pleasant and affectionate a strain did sound forth words of peace and comfort in our ears, that so kindly invited us to reconciliation, so meekly sued us to a compliance with him, so liberally offered to us the best things in the world upon so gentle terms, now only uttering toward us bitter complaints, and sore rebukes; thundring forth words of indignation and terrour, denouncing most horrible menaces and curses upon us? 2 Cor. 5. 20.

Thus, and to such purposes is Jesus our Lord appointed to be our Judg: I shall only farther touch the manner of his exercising, and executing this Office, or the way of his address and proceeding thereto; the which in *Holy Scripture* (for the begetting in us a regard, veneration and awe sutable thereto) is described to be with greatest glory, state and solemnity. Our Lord came once in a meek humi-

μυριάσιν, Heb. 12. 22. lity to shew us our duty, but he shall come again with a dreadful majesty to exact an account thereof; taking his progress from the highest Heavens in most royal magnificent equipage, attended upon Matt. 25. 31. with a numerous, or with a numberless, and most pompous train of Jud. 14. Angels, (*with all the holy Angels*, it is expressly said) accompanied 1 Thes. 4. 16. with triumphal shouts and acclamations; *a trumpet of God* (that is, a wonderfully and unconceivably sonorous trumpet, blown as it were 2 Thes. 1. 7. by the mouth of God) and *the voice of an Arch-angel* resounding before him an Universal summons, with a noise so loud and piercing, as 1 Cor. 15. 52. shall immediately (*in a moment*, in the twinkling of an eye) shake all the earth, and rouse all the dead out of their mortal slumber; the irresistible breath of that all-powerful voice wafting them, together with all surviving people, thro the clouds into the presence of their 1 Thes. 4. 17. Matt. 25. 31. Judg, conspicuously seated in most glorious State on his Royal *Tribunal*.

Act. 1. 11. *This same Jesus* (said the two *Angels* to the *Apostles*, expressing this matter in the most simple and plain manner) *shall come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven*; *a cloud took him up from their eyes* then, and the clouds, as they imply, should restore him to their Apoc. 1. 7. sight; for, *Behold*, saith S. *John*, *he cometh with the clouds, and every eye shall see him.* And, *They shall see the Son of man coming upon the clouds of heaven in power and great glory*; and, *When the* Matt. 25. 31. *Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him,* 16. 27. *then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory*, saith our *Lord* himself 2 Thes. 1. 17. somewhat more explicitely; but S. *Paul* with most punctuality de- 1 Thes. 4. 16. scribeth the manner of his appearance: *The Lord*, saith he, *shall de-* 1 Cor. 15. 52. *scend from heaven with a shout* (ἐν κελεύσματι, with an exciting or commanding summons) *with the voice of an Arch-angel, and with the trump of God*; *and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall ever be with the Lord.* In such manner to the purpose of exciting due respect and dread within us, is our Lord represented at the end of the World to come down from Heaven, for the exercising this judgment.

III. I proceed to the last particular observed in the *Text*, which is the objects, or the extent of the judgment ordained; whom is our Lord ordained to judg? how many shall they be? it is resolved, all without exception, expressed here by the words *quick and dead*; and 2 Tim. 4. 1. } otherwhere by S. *Paul*, *I charge thee*, saith he to *Timothy*, *before God* Rom. 14. 9. } *and the Lord Jesus Christ*, *who shall judg the quick and dead at his* 1 Pet. 4. 5. *appearing and his Kingdom*; and by S. *Peter* likewise; *Who* (saith he concerning prophane men) *shall render an account to him that is ready to judg both the quick and dead.* Which places evidently do confirm the truth of the proposition, that all men are obnoxious, and shall be subjected to this judgment; but yet so that the words themselves, *quick and dead*, may seem to need some explication: for it being a common law, to which all men by nature, such as it now stands after the curse, are Heb. 9. 27. subject to undergo death; for thence *It is*, as the Apostle saith, *ap-* Σπόκειται. *pointed for men once to die, and after death judgment*; and *what man* Psal. 89. 48. *is he*, saith the *Psalmist*, *that shall not see death?* and that being so, why should not the dead comprehend all that are to be judged? Apoc. 20. 12. accordingly as we see it expressed in the *Revelation*; *I saw the dead, great and small, standing before God——and the dead were judged for the things written in the Books, according to their works:* the dead were judged

judged, no mention is made of the living; wherefore to evade this objection, ſome have interpreted the dead and living not for a diſtinction of perſons, but of parts in men, of the living ſouls and dead bodies of men; others have taken the words as ſignifying metaphorically *the living*, that is, righteous men, ſay they, or perſons endued with a ſpiritual life; and *the dead*, that is, perſons *dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*; or Eph. 2. 1. void of ſpiritual ſenſe and activity. But the difficulty is not ſo mighty as to force us upon ſo remote and abſonous interpretations, St. *Paul* having plainly enough ſhewed us how to underſtand his words, and how to ſolve the knot propounded; that by the living are to be underſtood thoſe, who ſhall be found as it were ſurprized alive at our Lord's coming; by the dead all other perſons, who from the beginning before that time had deceaſed, and ſhould be raiſed up at the ſound of the laſt trump: *This we ſay to you* (ſaith *he* to the *Theſſalonians*) *in the word of* 1 Theſſ. 4. 15. *the Lord, that we which live, remaining* ×ωντο *at the preſence of the Lord, ſhall not prevent them which are aſleep.* Our Lord is therefore ſuppoſed by the Apoſtle to find ſome alive at his coming, wherefore that which is affirmed concerning all men being appointed to taſte death (being otherwiſe, as the inſtances of *Enoch* and *Elias* ſhew, liable to exception) is to be underſtood by a *Synecdoche* very ordinary in ſuch caſes, for the incomparably greater part of men, for all indeed but one generation; or with this abatement, all but thoſe, whoſe death ſhall be prevented by our Lord's appearance (the which is ſet out as very ſudden and unexpected, *like* the coming of a *thief in the night*) even thoſe men alſo being in nature and condition mortal like others, although accidentally thus eſcaping the actual ſtroke of death. Neither ſhall even thoſe perſons be ſo exempted from death, but that they muſt undergo ſomewhat equivalent thereto; a change, which ſhall render them alike prepared for judgment with thoſe who had undergone death; for, *Behold*, ſaith, St. *Paul* again to the *Corinthians*, 1 Cor. 15. 51. *I tell you a myſtery; we ſhall not all fall aſleep, but we ſhall all be changed in an inſtant, in the twinkling of an eye:* which words alone do with ſufficient evidence declare the meaning of this diſtinction between *quick* and *dead*. The ſum is, that all perſons, none excepted, of what condition or quality, what nation or time, what ſex, or what age ſoever, ſhall be expoſed to the judgment; high and low, rich and poor, wiſe and ſimple, learned and ignorant, good and bad; the mightieſt Princes and Lords no leſs than the meaneſt Subjects and Slaves; the ſubtleſt Stateſmen and deepeſt Scholars no leſs than the ſillieſt idiots: in a word, moſt univerſally *All* without any diſtinction, any privilege, any acceptance of perſons, all and every one muſt certainly appear at this bar, muſt undergo this trial, muſt here receive their ſentence and doom, muſt undergo reward, or puniſhment accordingly.

IV. The doctrinal part I have thus gone through of this grand point, it remaineth to make ſome application thereof. The conſidering it is indeed moſt neceſſary, and exceedingly profitable in many reſpects: there is no kind of virtue or good practice, which the ſerious conſideration thereof is not apt to produce; no good affection, which it may not ſerve to excite; no good duty to which it doth not powerfully engage us; there is likewiſe no ill paſſion, which it may not help to quell or repreſs; no bad deſign or action, which it may not effectually deter or diſcourage us from. Of ſo many particular uſes I ſhall only touch thoſe, which are moſt obvious; eſpe-

cially those unto which the Scripture doth expressly apply the consideration thereof.

1. It greatly doth engage us to be very circumspect in all our conversation, and vigilant over our ways; for since by irreversible decree it is appointed, that we must render an account of every thought arising in our mind (at least of those which find harbour and entertainment there) of every word that passeth through our mouth, of every action which we do undertake, what exceeding reason have we with most attentive, and accurate regard to mind whatever we do? Since it is certain that for all these things we shall be judged, but uncertain to us when we shall be called thereto; how watchful are we concerned to be, that we be not surprised, and found unready to yield a good account? How observant in all reason should we be of our Lord's admonition in the Gospel; *Watch, for ye do not know the day, nor the hour when the Son of man cometh?* How affected should we be with that warning, or menace in the *Revelation*; *If thou dost not watch, I shall come upon thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know when I come upon thee?* It may be, as we see intimated, the next day, for all we can know, or the next hour, when death seizing on us shall carry us into that prison or place of durance, where we shall be detained until the time of our being presented at the bar; and what an unexpressible misery then will it be to be found unprepared for the trial, and unable to render a good account? If we be quite asleep in a total neglect of our duty, or if we be drowsy in a careless and sluggish performance thereof, or if our senses rest amused upon other cares and businesses impertinent to this account, in what an extreme danger do we abide? as our Saviour again doth warn, advising thus, *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares.* You know what the fortune was of the foolish Virgins, whose *lamps were gone out* for want of oil; that is, whose Souls were destitute of true goodness, and whose lives consequently did not shine with good works; how being surprized in that case by the Bridegroom's coming, they were unfit to meet him, they were excluded from his favour, they were rejected with an, *I know you not.* The like fate you know of that bad servant, who *saying in his heart, my Lord delayeth to come,* (that is, not believing, or not considering his state in relation to the future judgment) *began to beat his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken* (that is, did live in the practice of injustice, uncharitableness, and intemperance) his fate shall be this; *The Lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not ware of, and shall cut him asunder, and appoint his portion with the hypocrites:* the same, if we do live in gross neglect, or in heinous violation of our duty, will be our doom; *Let therefore* (as our *Lord* again doth injoin, and inculcate) *our loins be girded about, and our lamps burning; and we our selves like men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh, we may open unto him immediately. Let us,* as St. *Peter* exhorteth, *gird up the loins of our mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that* (in case of our faithful and constant obedience) *shall be brought unto us, at the Revelation of Jesus Christ.* In fine, considering these things, *What manner of persons then ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for, and hasting unto*

Mat. 25. 13. 24. 42, 44.
Rev. 3. 3. 16. 15.
Luk. 21. 34. 1 Thess. 5. 3.
Mat. 25. 2.
Mat. 24. 48. Luk. 12. 45.
Luk. 12. 35, 36.
1 Pet. 1. 13.
2 Pet. 3. 12.

unto the coming of our Lord? as that great *Apoſtle* doth again admoniſh and argue.

2. The conſideration of this point is the moſt effectual means poſſible to beget, and preſerve ſincerity in us; diſpoſing us to live ſimply without diſſimulation or deceit, ſpeaking as we think, doing what we profeſs, performing what we promiſe, being as we ſeem: for ſeeing our hearts muſt be thorowly ſearched and ſifted; ſince our moſt retired thoughts muſt be diſcloſed; ſince our moſt ſecret deſigns, and our deſires muſt come to light, and be expoſed to the publick view of Angels and men; ſince the day approacheth, when (all vizards being taken off, all varniſh of pretence being wiped away) every perſon ſhall appear ſtark naked in his own true ſhape and colours; every thing ſhall ſeem what it really is, deveſted of falſe gloſſes, what profit can it be now to diſſemble, to conceal, or to diſguiſe our thoughts or doings? To what purpoſe doth it ſerve to palliate our ambitious or covetous intents with ſpecious garb of zeal or conſcience? what comfort can we find in driving on our ſelf-intereſts, or ſatisfying our private reſentments, in diſturbing the peace of mankind, or fomenting ſtirs and factions in the world under ſuch masks? what a folly is it to delude men with falſe appearances, or rather by them to abuſe themſelves; ſeeing they ſoon will be rightly informed, and we grievouſly diſgraced for it? What other ſatisfaction indeed can we have, than in real goodneſs, and pure integrity in heart and life; whereby we may now approve our conſciences unto God, and ſhall afterward by his unqueſtionable judgment be approved to all the world? Our true wiſdom is to be εἰλικρινεῖς καὶ ἀπρόσκοποι (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh, that is) *ſimple and* Phil. 1. 10. *inoffenſive toward the day of Chriſt*; that is, without any indirect regard or deſign conſcionably to perform our duty toward God and man, in order to the rendring a good account at the laſt judgment: our beſt comfort will prove that of St. *Paul*——*the teſtimony of our* 2 Cor. 1. 10. 12 *conſcience, that in ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity, not with fleſhly wiſdom, but by the grace of God we have had our converſation in the world.*

3. The conſideration of this point ſhould render us very ſober and ſerious in all our thoughts, our opinions, our affections, our actions; ſuppreſſing all proud and haughty conceits, all admiration of theſe tranſitory things, all vicious exceſſes, all vain curioſities, all wanton joys, and ſatisfactions: For,

Why ſhould any apprehenſion of worldly ſtate, of wealth, of honour, of wit, of any natural or acquired endowment puff up our minds, ſeeing the day is near at hand, which in theſe regards will quite level men, and ſet them all upon even ground before an impartial bar, where no ſuch things ſhall be had in any conſideration or regard; when all ſecular and external advantages being laid aſide, the moral qualities of men only ſhall be taxed and eſtimated; a day wherein all theſe admired vanities ſhall vaniſh into nothing; all our empty tumours ſhall be depreſſed; all the fond arrogance of man ſhall be confounded; ſo that the proud and profane ones of the world ſhall be conſtrained to ſay after the Wiſe-man, *What hath pride profited us, or what good hath riches with our vanting brought us?* Sap. 5. 3. 8, 9 *all theſe things are paſſed away as a ſhadow, and as a poſt that haſted by.*

Οὐ πλούσιος, ὁ πένης, ὁ δυνάστης ὁμοίως ἀδοξος, ὁ σοφὸς, ὁμοίως ἄσοφος, ὁ δοῦλος, ὁμοίως ἐλεύθερος, ἁπλοῦς φανεῖται ἁπάντων ὁμοίως περιστείρων τόπων συντριβέντων, ἡ ἁπλῶς ἔργων ἐξέτασις ἔσται μόνη. Chryſ. *in* Mat. 17. 9.

And why ſhould we much value thoſe ſplendid toys, or that ſordid traſh, which men here do ſo eagerly ſcrape, and ſcramble, and ſcuffle

scuffle for; which then evidently will be discountenanced, will at least appear worthless and unprofitable to us? what indeed in this world, supposing this judgment, being truly rated, can seem great, or worthy to affect us?

And why having affairs on foot of so immensly vast importance, should we amuse our selves with trivial matters, impertinent at least, if not prejudicial to our main accounts?

And how shall we dare to embrace the serpent of sinful excess, considering beside the poison in its body what a dreadful sting it carryeth in the tail thereof; how these flashes of pleasure do kindle a flame, that will scorch us to eternity? One thought of judgment mixt with any brutish enjoyments were enough one would think to allay their sweetness, to render them indeed not only insipid, but distastful and bitter to us.

And how can we be easily transported into wild merriments, suffering our minds to be ruffled, and the tone of our reason to be slackened by them, if we consider how infinitely serious business lieth upon us; what a dismal hazard we stand in, how nearly our everlasting welfare lieth at stake? If here in this world we were bound in few days to undergo a trial concerning our life, all our estate, and all our reputation, we should deem it seasonable to be somewhat intent, to be indeed very solicitous about what we should plead, and how we should get off, rather than to be lightly sporting at, and loosening our minds in little pleasant humours; much more rather than to be loosing our minds, and banishing all sober thoughts away in exorbitant frolicks; extremely wild or stupid would he seem, who in such a case should so behave himself: it is plainly the case of us all, in a degree infinitely more high than we can suppose any other to be; wherefore reflecting thereon should methinks quash all extravagant and dissolute mirth, apt to beat out of our minds and hearts the care of our Souls; should compose our minds into a very serious frame, should presently drive us into, and constantly hold us in a sober sadness of heart; it is a duty which both in wisdom and piety we do owe to this great matter (*the terror of the Lord*, as St. *Paul* calleth it) to fear and dread it; with which disposition of spirit excessive transports of carnal joy are scarce consistent: however let us hear (let us I say whose spirits are high, and fancies strong, hear) what the great observer of the world, the *Preacher* doth admonish: *Rejoyce* (saith he) *O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth; and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know, that for all these things God will bring thee to judgment.*

2 Cor. 5. 11.

Eccles. 11. 9.

4. The consideration of this point should engage us carefully to improve all the talents by God's providence and grace committed to us; that is, all the means and abilities, all the advantages and opportunities afforded us of doing good, or serving God. Hath God bestowed wealth upon us? this will engage us so to use it, as not therewith to cherish our pride, or pamper our luxury, not merely to gratify our pleasure or humour; but to expend it in succouring our indigent neighbour, or otherwise promoting God's service. Hath God invested us with power? this should induce us to use it moderately and fruitfully, not therewith to domineer or insult over our brethren, not any-wise to wrong or misuse them; but to yield protection, aid, and comfort to them; to afford patronage and succour to right;

to minister encouragement, support and defence to virtue; *remembring that we have also a Lord in heaven*, and a Judg, to whom we must be accountable. Hath God vouchsafed us any parts, any wit, any knowledg? this should move us to employ them not so much in contriving projects to advance our own petty interests, or in procuring vain commendation to our selves, as in setting forth God's praise, in recommending goodness, in drawing men with the most advantage we can to the practice of virtue and piety. Hath God conferred on us any thing of honour, or credit among men? this may oblige us not to build high conceits upon it, or to find vain complacences therein, but to use it as an instrument of bringing honour to God, of ministring aid or countenance to the interests of piety: to those purposes, I say, this consideration greatly serveth; for that it is plainly declared that we are but Stewards of these things, having received them in trust, not to use them according to our pleasure, but to employ them with the best advantage for God's service; and accordingly shall in the last judgment be strictly accountable for them; so that if we have embezelled oe perverted them to abuse, it will then appear far worse for us, than if we never had received them; much better indeed it will be for us, that we had been poorest beggars, silliest ideots, most despicable wretches here, than not to have duly improved our wealth, parts and honour to God's service; *To whomsoever much is given, from him much shall be required*, is the rule that punctually in that great Audit will be observed.

Eph. 6. 9.

Matt. 25. 14. 24. 45.

Luk. 12. 48.

5. The consideration of this point may induce us to the observing strict justice and equity in all our dealings: there are in this world many advantages of doing injury and iniquity safely in respect to men, without intrenching upon humane laws, without incurring any check, or any correction from them; they reach to very few cases, they retrench only some great outrages, and punish some enormous crimes, apparently noxious to the peace or welfare of common Society; the stroke of humane law may also (even where it taketh cognizance, where it maketh provision to secure right, or repair wrong) often be evaded by power, or eluded by slight, by gift, by favour: But as the divine law doth extend universally to the prohibition of all iniquity whatever (small as well as great, secret no less than visible) so the Divine judgment inevitably will reach to all; the least wrongful word, by which we hurt the good name of our neighbour, the least exaction or hard dealing with him, the least overreaching him by craft (however blameless these things may seem here, however they may pass with commendation, as instances of wit or ability) will surely then be condemned and punished: *Let no man*, saith S. *Paul, go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter*, διότι ἔκδικος ὁ κύριος περὶ πάντων τούτων, *because God will judg and avenge for all these things*; so that (as the same *Apostle* teacheth us) *the unjust, the wrongful, the revilers, the rapacious shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*; that day will detect all wicked fraud and cozenage, will defeat all unjust might and oppression; no power shall be able to break through, no wit shall skill to decline, no friendship or favour will help to keep off the impartial sentence, and the irresistible stroke of that judgment; *There is no darkness or shadow of death*

Quàm angusta innocentia est ad legem bonum esse? quanto latius officiorum patet, quàm juris regula? Sen. *de Ir.* 2. 27.

1 Thes. 4. 6.

2 Cor. 6. 9. 1 Cor

Job 34. 22.

death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves from being detected, from being prosecuted and punished. The poor, the meek, the simple, who rather chuse to suffer than do wrong, shall there find a certain patronage, and a full redress; that strict abstinence from wrong, which here may pass for simplicity, shall then be approved for the best wisdom; and this over-reaching craft, which now men are so conceited of, will then appear wretched folly, when all ill gotten profits with shameful regret shall in effect be refunded, yea shall bring grievous damages and sore penalties for them: In fine, then it will be most evident, that he who injureth another, doth indeed chiefly hurt himself; he that cheateth his neighbour, doth really gull himself, and abuse his own soul.

6. The consideration of this point is apt to breed Charity in us; Charity of all sorts; Charity in giving, Charity in forgiving, Charity in judging and censuring of men.

1. It should incline us freely to impart our goods, and to contribute our endeavours for the relief of our poor neighbour; for that the last judgment will in especial manner proceed upon a regard to the performance, or the neglect of this duty; it shall be the *Test* of Piety, and a ground of recompence at the last day. To charitable persons, who had relieved him in his poor brethren, and members, our Lord himself telleth us, that he will say, *Because I was hungry, and* Matt. 25. 34. *ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; I was naked and ye clothed me; I was sick and ye visited me; I was in prison and ye came unto me; therefore, Come ye blessed of my Father, enter into the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:* to them, who contrarily had neglected to succour, and comfort their poor brethren, he will pronounce the contrary doom; *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared* 14. Ver. *for the Devil and his Angels; for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat,* &c. and what argument can there be imagined more forcible to engage us on the practice of this duty?

2. It should likewise dispose us readily to forgive all injuries, and discourtesies received from any man; for since we shall at that trial need abundance of favour and mercy from God, we should in all reason and duty be willing to shew the like to others for God's sake, and at his command; especially since he hath appointed the doing so for an indispensable condition, without which we shall not receive mercy, or pardon from him; so that infallibly, if we will be rigorous and hard to others in this case, we must expect the like extremity and severity from God; for the laws and rules of God's proceeding Jam. 2. 13. then are these: *He shall have judgment without mercy, that hath* Matt. 6. 15. *shewed no mercy; If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will God forgive you your trespasses:* And by a lively example, in way of history or parable, our Lord in the Gospel hath expressed, what words (in case of our refusing to remit to our neighbour his debts and trespasses against us) we shall hear, what usage we shall find at that Matt. 18. 32. day; *O thou wicked servant* (will God say to any such unmerciful person of us) *I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me, shouldst not thou also have had compassion on thy fellow servant, even as I had pity on thee? And the Lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that is due unto him.*

3. It likewise serveth to restrain us from all undue, all rash and harsh censure concerning the persons, the actions, the state of our neighbour;

neighbour; whereby we do invade our Lord's office, making our ſelves Judges in his room; whereby we uſurp his right, exerciſing juriſdiction over his Subjects; whereby we arrogate to our ſelves his Attributes, who alone is able to know, and judg rightly; *Why*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *doſt thou judg thy brother, or why doſt thou ſet at nought thy brother? We ſhall all ſtand at the judgment-ſeat of Chriſt.* It is the office of Chriſt, which we muſt not encroach upon; and, *Who art thou* (doth he again expoſtulate) *that judgeſt another's ſervant? to his own Maſter he ſtandeth or falleth*; we wrong our Lord, in aſſuming authority over his ſervants; we wrong our brethren, in making our ſelves their maſters; and, *Judg nothing before the time*, ſaith the ſame *Apoſtle, until the Lord come, who ſhall enlighten the hidden things of darkneſs, and manifeſt the counſels of hearts.* We blind wretches in effect do make our ſelves Gods, and ſacrilegiouſly aſſert his incommunicable perfections to our ſelves, when we preſume to ſearch the hearts, or pretend to know the ſecret intentions of our brethren: again, *There is* (ſaith another *Apoſtle*) *one Lawgiver, who can ſave or deſtroy; who art thou, that judgeſt another?* that is, how intolerably raſh, unjuſt and arrogant art thou, who ſeateſt thy ſelf upon God's tribunal, and thence doſt adventure to pronounce doom upon his people? Did we indeed well conſider this Judgment, we ſhould rather think it adviſeable to be mindful of our own caſe, than to paſs ſentence upon that of others; obſerving how liable our ſelves are, we ſhould ſcarce have the heart to carp at others; finding what great need our actions will then have of favourable interpretation, we ſhould ſurely be more candid, and mild in cenſuring other mens actions; eſpecially conſidering, that by harſh Judgment of others, we make our own caſe worſe, and enflame our reckoning; we directly thence incur guilt, we aggravate our own offences, and render our ſelves inexcuſable; we expoſe our ſelves upon that ſcore to condemnation; for, *With what judgment we judg we ſhall be judged*; *and with what meaſure we mete, it ſhall be meaſured to us again*, our *Lord* doth ſay: and *Inexcuſable*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *thou art O man, whoever thou art that judgeſt; for wherein thou judgeſt another thou condemneſt thy ſelf*: and, μὴ στενάζετε κατ' ἀλλήλων, *Do not* (ſaith St. *James*) *grudg* (or make moanful complaint) *againſt one another, leſt you be condemned*; *behold the Judg ſtandeth before the doors.*

Rom. 14. 22. 10
Rom. 14. 4.
Jam. 4. 12.
Mat. 7. 2. Luk. 6. 37.
Rom. 2. 1, 3.
Jam. 5. 9.

7. It ſerves alſo to ſupport and comfort us as againſt all other wrongful dealing, ſo againſt injuries of this kind; againſt all unjuſt and uncharitable cenſures, groundleſs ſlanders and ſurmiſes, undeſerved ſcorns and reproaches of men; for that aſſuredly at that judgment right will be done to him, that ſuffereth in this kind; his innocence will be cleared, his good name will be vindicated and repaired: *God will bring forth his righteouſneſs as the light, and his judgment as the noon day*; whence approving his conſcience to God in well-doing, he may chearfully ſay with St. *Paul*, *With me it is a very ſmall thing, that I ſhould be judged of you, or of man's judgment. If our heart do not condemn us*, we may (whatever the opinions or diſcourſes of man be concerning us) have a chearful *boldneſs*, and comfortable hope in regard to God: the obloquy of men is a part of that croſs, which every good man here is appointed to bear, and aſſuredly ſhall meet with; for the Devil and the World do nothing, if they cannot by impudent aſſaults daſh, or by malicious ſug-

Psal. 37. 6.
1 Cor. 4. 3.
1 Joh. 3. 21.

Κἂν πάντες δικάζωσιν, ὁ δὲ δικαστὴς ἀπολογήσηται, οὐδείς μοι λέγ@ τὰ ἐκείνων ἀφῇρε, κἂν ἅπαντες ἐπαινέσωσι καὶ θαυμάσωσιν, ἐκεῖν@ δὲ μὲ καταδικάζῃ, οὐδὲν μοὶ πάλιν ὄφελ@ τὰ ἐκείνων κρίσεως. Chryſ. *Tom.* 8. *p.* 98.

gestions blast the practice of goodness; but this consideration may easily raise us to bear it with patience, or with resolution to surmount it, it thence appearing, that it no-wise can harm us; for if God is our Judg, what can the fancies or the tattles of men concern us? *I will not fear the judgment of men, who shall have God for my judg,* was with good reason said by St. *Hierom.*

Non timebo hominum judicium, habiturus judicem Deum. Hier.

8. It upon the like ground should preserve us from being deluded and poisoned by the more favourable opinions of men: there are visibly two great rocks, upon which frequently men do split, and make shipwrack of good conscience, compliance with the practice and regard to the opinions of others; men out of complaisance accompany others in doing ill; it is called good nature, it is deemed good manners to do it, so very civilly and genteely, very nobly and gallantly they go on to perdition, giving up their salvation in complement and courtesy to one another; then 'tis but natural for this most debonair and generous dealing to requite one another with good words at least, or with some demonstrations of esteem; and 'tis no less natural for those who are thus flattered to comply with the opinions of others, and to judg of themselves accordingly, thinking themselves good because they are called so; but to keep our selves from being upon such occasions, or upon any the like grounds perniciously cozened, we should consider, that in the great judgment the esteem of men will import nothing of advantage to us: things will pass there as they are in themselves, not as they are rated here, according to real truth, and intrinsick worth, not according to the conceits or affections of ignorant and partial men; even the things, that appear fairest here, may prove foul there; persons much approved and applauded now, may then be condemned and rejected; for *God seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh on the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart.* God then will *search the hearts, and weigh the spirits of men*; he will scan their designs and intentions; he will closely examine their tempers, and exactly poise their circumstances; he will consider many things inscrutable to men, upon which the true worth of persons, and real merit of actions do depend: wherefore most vain and unsafe it is to rely upon the uncertain opinions of men; or to please our selves with them; they neither can out of blindness, or will out of passion, interest, partiality judg truly.

Nihil omnino agimus, qui nos per exempla multitudinis defendimus, & ad consolationem nostram alienâ sæpe numerantes vitia, deesse nobis dicimus, quos debeamus sequi. Hier.

Quæ est hæc tanta levitas animi, quæ tanta vanitas, relictâ propriâ conscientiâ, alienam opinionem sequi, & quidem fictam atque simulatam, rati vento falsæ laudationis gaudere ad circumventionem suam, & illusionem pro beneficio accipere? Hier. *ad* Celantiam.

1 Sam. 16. 7.
Joh. 7. 24. Isa. 11. 3.
Prov. 16. 2. 1 Sam. 2. 3.
Psal. 103. 14.

9. If we desire to judg reasonably about our selves, or to know our true state, the only way is to compare our hearts and lives with the Law of God, judging our selves by that rule, according to which God will judg us; if we find in our hearts the love of God and goodness (sincere, although imperfect) if we perceive our selves disposed to keep God's commandments (to live piously, righteously and soberly in this world) then may we have a satisfactory hope concerning our state; then *we may* (as St. *John* saith) *have confidence toward God——because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing to him*; but if we do not find

1 Joh. 3. 21, 22.

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find that mind in us, and that practice; we in conceiting well of our selves upon any other grounds do but flatter, and impose upon our selves; if all the world should account us good, and take us to be in a good case, we should not at all believe them, or mind them; for *Let no man deceive us; he that doth righteousness, he* (and he alone) *is righteous*, is the most faithful advice, and unquestionable sentence of S. *John*. It is therefore (that by resting on such false bottoms we be not abused, and drawn thence to neglect the amendment of our hearts and ways, in order to our final account) a duty incumbent on us thus to search our hearts, and try our ways, and accordingly to judg our selves; the doing which with care and conscience would dispose us to prepare for the judgment we speak of; for *If*, saith S. *Paul*, *we would judg our selves, we should not be judged*, or not condemned. 1 Joh. 3. 7. 1 Cor. 4. 4. 1 Cor. 3. 31. Gal. 6. 3. Ps. 77. 6, 10.

10. The consideration of this point will guard us from infidelity, and from impatience in regard to the providential dispensation of affairs here; considering it, we shall not be offended at passages otherwise unaccountable, and scandalous to providence; we shall not wonder that so many disorders occur in the world, that right is perverted, that fraud and violence do prevail, that vice doth reign: We shall not complain of the adversities incident to good men, nor repine at the prosperities of bad men; we shall not be dissatisfied with any event here befalling our selves or others; since from hence it doth most evidently appear, that all these things are consistent with the wisdom, goodness and justice of God; and do assuredly tend to the declaration of those glorious Attributes; yea that consequently the worst accidents here, if we are faithful to God and to our selves, will finally conduce to our advantage and benefit, according to that of the *Apostle*, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God*. Rom. 8. 28.

11. In fine, there is no consideration able to promise so much efficacy toward the rouzing our passions, or duly ordering and setling them upon religious practice: it especially is apt to set on work those two grand Engines and mighty Springs of activity, hope and fear; and with them to raise their respective companions joy and grief: for how, if we have been very culpable in the transgression or neglect of our duty, can we reflect on this point without being seized with an hideous dread of coming to so strict a trial, of falling under so heavy a sentence? how can we think of it without a bitter remorse? hard as rocks surely we must be, if such thoughts do not pierce us; utterly dead and senseless must our hearts be, if they do not feel the sting of such considerations; more stupid and stony we then are, than the dissolute *Felix*, who could not without affrightment hear a plain discourse concerning the judgment to come; yea more inconsiderate and insensible we appear, than those obstinate sons of darkness, *the Devils* themselves, who *believe and tremble* thereat. Act. 24. 25. Ἔμφοβος γενόμενος. Jam. 2. 29. 19

If on the other hand we are conscious to our selves of having seriously and carefully endeavoured to please God, and obey his commandments, how can we think of it without a comfortable hope of finding mercy and favour in that day? If in our hearts we can say with S. *Paul*, *I have combated the good combat, I have finished* (or I have continued) *the race, I have kept the faith*; then may we hopefully say after him, as he said confidently before us, *From henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which in that* 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8. 1. 18.

day the Lord, the righteous Judg, shall render unto me. If by virtue of *the saving grace of God*, which *hath appeared to all men*, and according to its holy instructions, we have *denied ungodliness, and worldly lusts, living soberly, righteously and piously in this present world*; then may we joyfully *expect the blessed hope, and the appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ*; then may we indeed heartily wish, chearfully hope, and earnestly pray for that day; doing which is the character, and hath been the practice of the best men: *The Lord*, saith St. *Paul, will render the crown of righteousness to all them who love his appearance*; and, *looking for and hastening to the presence of the day of God*, saith St. *Peter*, intimating the practice of the primitive Christians; and, *Yea come, O Lord Jesus*, is St. *John*'s petition in the close of the *Revelation*, and may be the prayer of those who have the like conscience and affections with him.

Tit. 2. 12, 13.
1 Cor. 1. 7.
Phil. 3. 20.
Tit. 2. 9.
2 Tim. 4. 8.
2 Pet. 3. 12.
Apoc. 22. 20.

I conclude, wishing and exhorting, that the meditation of this most important affair may be continually present to our minds; that we may seem with that devout man always to hear the last trump sounding in our ears, and through our hearts; that so with a pious awe, and with a well grounded hope we may expect *the coming of our Lord*, and may *love his appearance*; that from hence being effectually restrained from all impious and vicious conversation, being induced to a circumspect and watchful pursuit of all piety and virtue, guiding our lives *inoffensively in all good conscience toward God and Man*, we may in the end be able to render a good account; and with comfort unexpressible may at that day from the mouth of our Judg hear those happy words, *Well done good and faithful servants, enter into your Master's joy; Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the World:* Unto the possession whereof Almighty God in his infinite mercy by the grace of his Holy Spirit vouchsafe to bring us, through the merits of our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom for ever be all glory and praise. *Amen.*

1 Thess. 5. 23. *The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Amen.

I believe in the Holy Ghoſt.

Sermon XXXIV.

THE DIVINITY OF THE Holy Ghoſt.

1 COR. 3. 16.

Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

MY purpoſe is at this time for our edification in Chriſtian knowledg concerning that grand object of our faith, and Author of our ſalvation, the *Holy Ghoſt*; and for arming us againſt erroneous opinions about him, ſuch as have been vented in former ages, and have been revived in this; to explain briefly the name, nature and original of the Holy Ghoſt (according to what appears diſcovered of him in the ſacred Writings;) to conſider alſo the peculiar characters, offices and operations, which (according to the myſterious œconomy revealed in the Goſpel) are aſſigned, and attributed to him; ſo that incidentally by teſtimonies of Scripture, and arguments deduced thence, I ſhall aſſert the principal doctrines received in the Church, in oppoſition to the moſt famouſly Heterodox Dogmatiſts that have appeared. For the doing which this Text of St. *Paul* doth miniſter good occaſion; for the full explication thereof doth require a clearing of the particulars mentioned, and it ſelf affordeth good arguments againſt the principal errors about this matter. His being called the Spirit of God may engage us to conſider his nature and original; his being ſaid to dwell in us, doth imply his perſonality; his divinity appears in that Chriſtians are called the Temple of God, becauſe the Holy Ghoſt dwelleth in them; his ſanctifying virtue may be inferred from his conſtituting us temples, by his preſence in us. I ſhall then in order

proſecute

proſecute the points mentioned; and laſtly ſhall adjoin ſomewhat of practical application.

1. *Firſt* then for the Name of the Holy Spirit; whereby alſo his nature and origine are intimated.

Of thoſe things, which do not immediately incur our ſight, but do by conſpicuous effects diſcover their exiſtence, there is ſcarce any thing in ſubſtance more pure and ſubtile, in motion more quick and nimble, in efficacy more ſtrong and powerful, than wind (or ſpirit.) Hence in common uſe of moſt languages the name of wind or ſpirit doth ſerve to expreſs thoſe things, which from the ſubtilty or tenuity of their nature being indiſcernible to us, are yet conceived to be moved with great pernicity, and to be endued with great force: ſo Naturaliſts we ſee are wont to name that which in any body is moſt abſtruſe, moſt agile, and moſt operative in *Spirit*: Hence it comes that this word is transferr'd to denote thoſe ſubſtances, which are free of matter, and removed from ſenſe, but are endued (as with underſtanding, ſo) with a very powerful activity, and virtue: Even among the *Pagans* theſe ſort of Beings were called *Spirits*: The ſouls of men are by them ſo termed; (*anima* hath its derivation from ἄνεμος, *wind.*) *Our life* (ſaith *Cicero*) *is contained by* (or compriſed in) *body and Spirit*: And, *We* (ſaith he again) *are at the ſame time received into the light, and endued with this heavenly ſpirit* (that is, with our ſoul.) Particularly the *Stoicks* uſed to apply this name to our ſoul: *I alledg the Stoicks* (ſaith *Tertullian*) *who call the ſoul a ſpirit, almoſt* therein agreeing *with us* Chriſtians. They likewiſe frequently did attribute this appellation to God:

Vita corpore, & ſpiritu continetur. Cic. *Or. pro* Mar.

Eodem tempore ſuſcipimur in lucem, & hoc cæleſti ſpiritu augemur. De Aruſp. reſp.

Stoicos allego, qui ſpiritum dicunt animam, penè nobiſcum. Tert. *de Anim.* 5.

Æn. 6.

——Cælum & terram campoſque liquentes,
Lucentemque globum terræ, Titaniaque aſtra
Spiritus intus agit——

ſaid the Prince of their Poets; by the word *Spirit* underſtanding (as *Lactantius* and *Macrobius* do interpret him) God himſelf, that pierceth and acteth all things; yea he ſo otherwhere expoundeth his own mind, when he to the ſame purpoſe ſings,

Lact. 1. 5.

Georg. 4.

——Deum ire per omnes
Terraſque tractuſque maris, cælumque profundum.

And the *Orator*, in his *Dialogues*, maketh *Balbus* to ſpeak thus: *Theſe things truly could not, all the parts of the world ſo conſpiring together, be ſo performed, if they were not contained* (or kept together) *by one divine and continued Spirit*: and *Seneca* clearly; *God* (ſaith he) *is nigh to thee, he is with thee, he is in thee: I tell thee* (O Lucilius) *a Holy Spirit reſideth within us, an obſerver and guardian of our good and our bad things* (or doings) *who as he hath been dealt with by us, ſo he dealeth with us; there is no good man* (or no man is good) *without God*: and, *Zeno* defined God thus; *God is*

Hæc ità fieri omnibus inter ſe continentibus mundi partibus profectò non poſſent, niſi ea uno, & divino continuato ſpiritu continerentur. De Nat. D. II. *p.* 60.

Prope eſt à te Deus, tecum eſt, intus eſt; ità dico, Lucili, ſacer intra nos ſpiritus ſedet, malorúmque bonorúmque noſtrorum obſervator, & hic prout à nobis tractatus eſt, ità nos ipſe tractat; bonus vir ſine Deo non eſt. Sen. *Ep.* 41.

Θεός ἐστι πνεῦμα, διῆκον δι' ὅλα τοῦ κόσμου. Zeno.

a Spirit, passing through the whole world: Posidonius also more largely; *God is an intellectual and fiery Spirit, not having shape; but changing into what things he will, and assimilated to all things.*

Θεός ἐστι πνεῦμα νοερὸν, καὶ πυρώδες, οὐκ ἔχον μορφὴν, μεταβάλλον ὃ εἰς ἃ βούλεται, καὶ ἐξομοιούμενον πᾶσιν. Posid. *apud* Stob.

In like manner hence the Holy *Scriptures*, with regard to our capacity and manner of conceiving, do with the same appellation adumbrate all those kind of substances, void of corporeal bulk and concretion; human Souls, all the angelical Natures, and the incomprehensible Deity it self. And to God indeed this name is attributed, to signify his most simple nature, and his most powerful energy; but to other substances of this kind it seemeth also assigned to imply the manner of their origin; because God did by a kind of spiration produce them: for which cause likewise (at least in part) we may suppose, that the Holy Scripture doth more signally and in a peculiar manner assign that name to one Being, that most excellent Being, which is the subject of our present discourse: the which is called the Spirit of God (that is of God the Father, who by reason of his priority of nature is often called God in a personal signification) the good Spirit of God; the Spirit of Christ; the Holy Spirit; and often absolutely in way of excellence, the Spirit.

The same is also called the Power or Virtue of God; about the reason of which appellation we may briefly observe, that whereas in every intellectual being there are conceived to be three principal faculties, will, understanding, efficacy; and correspondent to these three perfections, Goodness, Wisdom, Power; a certain one of these (according to that mystical œconomy or husbandry of Notions, whereby the manner and order of subsisting and operation, proper to each person in the blessed Trinity, is insinuated) is in a certain manner appropriated to each person (so I now by anticipation speak, being to warrant these terms hereafter) namely to the Father it is ascribed, that he freely decreeth what things should be done; to the Son, that he disposeth them in a most wise method and order toward their effecting; to the Holy Ghost, that he with a powerful force doth execute and effect them: whence as God is said, according to his pleasure, to decree and determine things [and τὸ θέλημα, the will, is a name by some Writers assigned to him; particularly *Ignatius* doth in his Epistles frequently so stile him; and so St. *Paul* may be understood, where he saith: καὶ γινώσκεις τὸ θέλημα, *And thou knowest the will*; that is, knowest Rom. 2. 18. God the Father; and St. *Peter*, *For it is better, that ye* (εἰ θέλει τὸ 1 Pet. 3. 17. θέλημα τοῦ θεοῦ) *if the will of God pleaseth, do suffer for well doing, than for evil doing*] as the Son is called the wisdom of God, so the Holy Spirit is named *the power of God*; his substantial power, as we shall Luk. 1. 35. shew. To this Being, whatever it is, 'tis manifest that properly 24. 49. and primarily the name of Holy Spirit is appropriated; but (which we should consider) from thence (as is usual in other cases and matters) by figurative deflection of speech (or by metonimy) the manner of that operation which that Holy Spirit doth exert, his influence and efficacy, and also any sort of effects proceeding from him, do commonly assume, or partake of this name. So when from this Spirit, in a very conspicuous manner, an excellent virtue of performing miraculous works, was liberally imparted to the Apostles, that virtue (or the manifest communication thereof, *the manifestation of the spirit*, 1 Cor. 12. 7. as St. *Paul* calleth it) is named the Holy Ghost: as when in St. *John*'s Gospel

Joh. 7. 39. Gospel it is said, *The Holy Spirit was not yet*, that is, the Apostles had not yet received that excellent gift; or that marvelous efficacy of the Holy Spirit had not yet discovered it self in them; as also when Act. 19. 2. in the Acts some Disciples are said *not to have heard, whether there were any Holy Spirit*; that is, they were not acquainted concerning that peculiar efficacy thereof. When also there are mentioned the Spirit Rom. 8. 5. Eph. 1. 7. of prophecy, the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of wisdom (which sort of Spirits are said to be encreased, to be taken away, to be quench- Kings 2. 9. 1 Thess. 5. 19. ed) it is plain, that by those phrases not the Holy Spirit of God it self 1 Cor. 12. Gal. 5. 22. (which in no sense is liable to such accident) but gifts, fruits or effects thereof are denoted; some of which sometimes are in the plural number called πνεύματα, Spirits; as when St. *Paul* enjoineth the *Corinthians* to be *Zealous* (or earnestly desirous) *of Spirits*, that is of 1 Cor. 14. 12, 32. spiritual gifts, or graces, or revelations; and when *the discerning of Spirits* (that is, of divine revelations, true or counterfeit) is said to be 1 Cor. 12. 10. granted to some; and where *the Spirits of Prophets are* said to be subject or subordinate *to Prophets* (that is, one Prophet had a right, and ability to judg about the revelations made to another, or pretended to be so) but these, and the like figurative senses being excluded, we discourse about the Holy Spirit in its most proper and primary sense, as it is in and from God.

Which things being premised concerning the Name of the Holy Spirit; for explication of his Nature,

I. We do first assert, that it is a being in some sense truly distinct from the Father and the Son; hereby rejecting the opinion of *Sabellius*, *Noetus*, *Hermogenes* and *Praxeas*; which confounding the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and destroying their substantial properties, did of them all make but one person, under several names; affirming ἐν μιᾷ ὑποστάσει τρεῖς ὀνομασίας, in one person three appellations, and making τὴν τριάδα συναλαφώ, the Trinity to be a coincidence, as *Epiphanius* speaks. [I said, truly distinct; for this word *distinction* is by the Schoolmen conceived more commodiously applied to this mystery, than others of near signification; those of diversity and difference seeming to intimate somewhat prejudicial to the unity of essence:

Ὡς μήτε τὸν Σαβελλίου νόσον χώσεων λαβεῖν, συγχεομένων τῶν ὑποστάσεων, εἴτουν τῶν ἰδιοτήτων ἀναιρουμένων. *Patres Conc.* Constant. *Epist. ad Conc.* Rom. Theod. 5. 9.

In divinis (in the mystery of the Trinity) *we must*, saith *Aquinas*, *avoid the name of diversity, and of difference, but we may use the name of distinction, because of the relative opposition*: which caution yet the antient Fathers do not so precisely observe; for sometimes in them προσώπων ἑτερότης and διαφορὰ (the diversity and difference of the persons) sometimes also the word διαίρεσις, the division of them do occur; although they seem more willingly to use the word διάκρισις, distinction; that which we simply affirm is, that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost τοῖς ἰδιώμασι διακρίνονται, are distinguished in properties (as *Greg. Nyssen* speaks) are ἄλλος καὶ ἄλλος, (as *Greg. Naz.* says) that is, truly more than in mere name or conception distinguished by their properties and relations.]

In divinis vitare debemus nomen diversitatis, & differentiæ, possumus autem uti nomine distinctionis, propter oppositionem relativam. Thom.

Διδάσκει τοσοῦτον εἶδέναι μόνον, μονάδα ἐν τελείᾳ προσωνυμίᾳ, θεότητος ἔχουσαν καὶ τὴν διαίρεσιν, καὶ τὴν ἕνωσιν. Naz. *Or.* 23.

Apud Aug. *personæ sæpe diversæ dicuntur.*

The Holy Ghost is, I say, truly distinct from the Father, and the Son; this we shall first shew separately, then jointly in regard to both.

He is distinguished from the Father; for,

1 Cor. 2. 10, 11, &c. 1. He is called the *Spirit of the Father*; which relation surely is not devised

devised by fancy, or wants a real foundation; and therefore its terms are truly distinct. 2. The Holy Spirit is said ἐκπορεύεσθαι, that is to *go out*, or proceed from the Father; he is therefore another from him; for a thing cannot be deemed really to proceed from another, from which it only is distinguished in name or conceit. 3. It is also said to be sent, conferr'd, given by the Father; which surely argueth some kind of true distinction. 4. Divers things are attributed to the Spirit, which do not well agree to the Father; as particularly that he appeared εἴδει σωματικῷ, *in a bodily form*; that he descended, and rested upon our Lord, the *Baptist* beholding him; *I saw* (saith St. *John*) *the Spirit descending as a Dove, and it abode on him.* But, God the *Father, no man* (saith St. *John*) *ever saw*; nor (addeth St. *Paul*) *can any man see him.* 5. The Holy Spirit is our advocate with God, crying in our hearts, and interceding with the Father for us (ὑπερεντυγχάνων, saith St. *Paul*) that office, that act does manifestly suppose a true distinction.

Joh. 15. 26. Joh. 14. 26, 16. 1 Cor. 2. 12. Gal. 4. 6. Luk. 3. 33. Joh. 1. 32, 33. Joh. 1. 18. 1 Joh. 4. 12. 1 Tim. 6. 16. Rom. 8. 15, 16. Gal. 4. 6.

For like reasons he is also distinguished from the Son; for, 1. He is called the Spirit of the Son; and that relation imp'ies a real ground. 2. He is sent by the Son; ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἀποστέλλω, *Behold* (saith our Lord) *I send him*: And, *If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you, but if I depart, I will send him unto you.* 3. He descended upon Christ, and abode on him; he filled him, he led or acted him; he anointed him; by his operation Christ did assume flesh; wherefore he is distinguished from the Son. 4. Christ plainly distinguishes between speaking against the Son, and blaspheming against the Holy Ghost; which supposes them two objects. 5. The Holy Ghost is said to receive from the Son, that which he should tell to Christ's Disciples, and thence to glorify the Son. 6. The Son did, and suffered many things personally, which cannot agree, and cannot be attributed to the Holy Ghost, as that he was incarnated, and assumed man's nature; that he suffered, rose again, ascended into heaven. 7. He is expressly said to be distinct from the Son: *I* (saith he) *will ask the Father, and he will give you another comforter.* So separately may the Holy Spirit be shewed distinct from each; and jointly in several places that distinction is signified. For to those three, by a constant œconomy, a certain order is assigned, some proper offices, and peculiar energies are ascribed; which it is not reasonable to think done without a real foundation; *By Christ* (saith St. *Paul*) *we have an access in one Spirit to the Father.* Why must we proceed by this circuit, in this certain method, if the Father, Son and Holy Ghost are only distinguished in name? Wherefore also doth the same Apostle bless thus: *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.* To what end also doth he distinctively assign a peculiar dispensation of operations to the Father, of ministeries to the Son, of gifts to the Holy Ghost? wherefore likewise doth St. *Peter* ascribe our election to the Father predestinating, to the Son propitiating, to the Holy Ghost sanctificating? Doth it agree to the gravity, simplicity and sincerity of the divine Oracles, so in a perpetual tenour to propound those three, as three, divers not only in names, but in reality, in manner of being, in manner of operation, if there be no other under all but a nominal, or notional distinction? what would this be but not only to yield us an occasion, but to impose a necessity of erring? shall we think those principal masters of truth purposely argute, perplexed and obscure in their speech? Farthermore, St. *John* affirms in his first Epistle (at least if there the text be authen-

Joh. 14. 16. Eph. 2. 18. 2 Cor. 13. 13. 1 Cor. 12. 4, 5, 6. 1 Pet. 1. 2.

1 Joh. 5. 7. tick) that *there are three which bear witness in heaven, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit*; the which also undoubtedly (although Joh. 8. 18. not so conjoinedly, as in his Epistle) he assures in his Gospel; for, *I am he*, saith Christ, *who bear witness of my self, and the Father, which* Joh. 15. 26. *sent me, beareth witness of me; and, when the comforter shall come, he will bear witness of me:* so there are, we see, three witnesses, which our Lord appealeth to; but three names (as for instance, *Marcus, Tullius, Cicero*) or the same thing having three names, will not constitute three witnesses. In fine, the form of Baptism evinceth this distinction; for at our Baptism we profess to acknowledg the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; we perform worship, and promise obedience to them all; which doing *Sabellius* would have us do, as if subjects should be required to oblige their Faith to *Caius, Julius,* and *Cæsar*; which kind of proceeding it seems absurd to suppose, that God should solemnly institute. This may be sufficient to overthrow the *Sabellian* errour.

II. Again, we affirm the Holy Spirit to be a person. By a person we understand a singular, subsistent, intellectual being; or (as *Boethius* defines it) *an individual substance of a rational nature.* The Greek writers use the word ὑποστασις (which word being of wider signification, doth comprehend also things void of understanding, importing) substance, concretely taken, or a thing subsistent (τὸ ἐνυπόστατον) which term is Heb. 1. 2. extant even in the Scripture, where the Son of God in respect to his Father is called χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ (the character of his sub- Hier. *Epist. ad* Damas. Aug. *de Trin.* 5. 8, 9. stance or person) whence there was less cause that S. *Hierom* and other Latin antient writers should so avoid, or timidly admit the word *hypostasis*; as fearing that by use thereof they should seem to acknowledg three essences; seeing (as St. *Austin* notes) according to most common acception substance denoted the same with essence; *whence*, saith he, *we dare not say one essence, three substances; but one essence (or substance) three persons:* but this (as *Gregory Nazianzen* did consider) was nothing else, but περὶ λεξιδίων ζυγομαχεῖν; *to contest about syllables*; or περὶ τὸ ἦχον μικρολογεῖν, *to mince about sounds*; seeing whether we call it either person or subsistence, we mean the same thing. We however affirming the Holy Spirit to be a person, do thereby intend to exclude the opinion of *Socinus* and his followers, which asserts the Holy Spirit to be only an accident, or an accidental thing; to wit, a divine power, virtue or efficacy, resident in God, or derived from him.

Rationalis naturæ individua substantia.

Unde non audemus dicere unam essentiam, tras substantias, sed unam essentiam (vel substantiam) tres personas. Naz. *Orat.* 39. 32.

1. Now this we persuade first from those things, which we before did shew concerning the distinction of the Father and the Holy Spirit; for that slender (or rather no) distinction, such as may be conceived to be between any being and its efficacy (especially in this case, attending to the most simple nature of God, and his most simple manner of acting) doth not well reach the business, nor doth suffice to found that distinction, which the Scripture doth (as we shewed) constitute between the Father and holy Spirit. Indeed *Socinus* as to this point (however it be, that he sometimes objecteth *Sabellianism* to the Catholicks) doth scarce himself differ from *Sabellius*: for *Sabellius* himself did avow the Son and Holy Spirit to be divers energies of the Father, and that they are distinguished from him as Light and Heat from the Sun, which did not hinder the Fathers from refuting him, as putting no true distinction between them; as indeed God in the thing it self (or beyond the manner of our conception and expression) is not distinguished from his power and efficacy.

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2. Again,

2. Again, this may be collected from the very name of Spirit, the which primarily is imposed upon substances, both corporeal and incorporeal; belonging to God essentially understood, to Angels, to humane Souls; all which things are substances; whence it is probable, that to the Being, of which we treat, because it in like manner is a substance, this name of Spirit is assigned by God, the best Author of words; the epithet Holy being adjoined for distinction sake. This is confirmed from that whereas *God* essentially *is a Spirit* (as is expressed John 4. 24. in St. *John*'s Gospel) his efficacy cannot aptly assume the same name; as because our Soul is essentially a Spirit, it were incongruous to call any virtue thereof a Spirit. The same is farther hence confirmed, for that the evil Spirit, which is opposed to the *good Spirit of God*, is not 1 Sam. 16. 14. an efficacy of God, but a subsistent Being; which argueth the good Spirit also to be likewise subsistent. The same is corroborated from the 1 Cor. 2. 10, 11. Apostle's comparing the Spirit of God to that Spirit, which being in man doth search and discern his inward counsels and purposes; but the Spirit of man is a substantial thing; wherefore 'tis intimated, that correspondently the Spirit of God is such a Being. We add to these things, that power, virtue, efficacy are ascribed to the Holy Spirit; *that you may* (saith St. *Paul*) *abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost*; but Rom. 15. 13, 19. that power should be attributed unto power, or efficacy to efficacy, is not congruous.

3. The Holy Scripture (to whose speech it becometh us to sute our conceptions) doth commonly describe the Holy Spirit as a person, enjoying personal titles, offices, attributes and operations; and those such which neither in sound or sense do agree to mere efficacy.

1. Speaking of the Holy Ghost, it purposely and carefully (as it were) doth accommodate the article agreeing to a person: Not *it*, but *he* is the article commonly assigned to the Spirit; and that with marks of doing it studiously: Ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐκεῖνος, τὸ πνεῦμα τῆς ἀληθείας, *when he* John 16. 13. (in the masculine gender) *comes, the spirit of truth* (in the neuter) 14. 26. 'tis said in St. *John*'s Gospel: and τὰ τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐδεὶς οἶδεν (*none*, in the 15. 2, 6. masculine gender again, *knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God*) 1 Cor. 2. 11. why, otherwise beside analogy of Grammar, should the stile be so tempered or inflicted, but to insinuate the Holy Spirit's personality? If he were nothing else but the virtue of God, there were no need, or rather it would be inconvenient, so to phrase it.

2. Again, the Scripture attributes personal offices to the Holy Spirit; the office of a Master (*He shall teach you*) of a Leader, or Guide John 14. 16. (*He shall lead you into all truth*) of a Monitor (*He shall bring all things* John 16. 13. *to your remembrance*) of a Witness (*He shall testify concerning me*) yea, John 15. 26. which more strongly evinceth, of a Legate, who declareth God's mind, not as from himself, but as deputed and furnished with Instructions from the Father and the Son: *He shall not* ('tis said) *speak from him-* Joh. 16. 13, 15. *self*; *but whatever things he shall hear, he shall speak*; *and he will tell you things to come: All things that the Father hath, are mine*; *therefore, said I, that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you*: Which expressions do in no sort well agree to the divine power, or efficacy, but evidently respect a person; for what is performed by any agent, to say that of its efficacy, as distinct from it, is beside the reason and manner of Speech; and doth especially disagree with the nature and genius of the divine Scripture, which undertaketh most simply and plainly to instruct us. That God's efficacy should be sent from the Father and Son; that it should speak, that it should hear from the Fa-

ther and the Son, how ſtrangely hard and obſcure a manner of ſpeaking is that? from them, not from himſelf: what *himſelf* can they imagine, who diſtinguiſh him not from God, and allow him no perſonality? why ſhould we without neceſſity aſperſe the Holy Scripture, made clearly to inſtruct us, with ſuch miſtyneſs and darkneſs? Likewiſe to the Holy Spirit is attributed the office of a Paraclete, or Advocate, who pleadeth our cauſe with God, praying and interceding with God for us: but that God's efficacy (which can hardly be conceived, which ſhould not be conceived diſtinct from God) ſhould ſpeak to God, ſhould interpoſe it ſelf between us, is, as the reſt, too perplexed and intricate a ſaying.

Rom. 6. 26.

3. Farthermore, the Holy Scripture doth to the Holy Spirit attribute faculties and operations annexed to him plainly perſonal: ſuch are Underſtanding *(the Spirit ſearcheth all things, yea the deep things of God: The things of God none knoweth, but the Spirit of God)* Will *(He divideth to every one as he willeth)* Affections; of Grief *(Grieve not the Holy Spirit)* and Anger *(They provoked his Holy Spirit)* Senſe *(what he ſhall hear, he will ſpeak)* Speech, there and in many other places: *(It is not you,* ſaith our Saviour, *that ſpeak, but the ſpirit of your Father that is in you:* and *The Spirit ſaid, ſeparate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them*; and again, very emphatically; *while Peter thought on the viſion, the Spirit ſaid unto him, behold three men ſeek thee.)* Now theſe and the like faculties and acts are clearly perſonal; not repreſenting any quality, or energy, but a live and intellectual ſubſtance. To interpret all theſe things as ſpoken by fiction or dramatically, what is it but to transform God's oracles into Pythian riddles, and of Theology to frame a Mythology? that ſometime for emphaſis ſake, in matters leſs dark or high, the Holy Scripture may ſometime uſe ſuch ſchemes, nothing I confeſs doth hinder; but that perpetually it ſhould involve ſuch a moſt grave and ſublime matter with ſuch *tortuous* forms of ſpeech, doth in truth not ſeem conſentaneous to its moſt holy and ſimple Majeſty: As more ſimply, more clearly and more intelligibly, ſo more compendiouſly it might have been ſaid, God knoweth, God willeth, God is thus or thus affected, God ſpeaketh; than, God's virtue knoweth, God's power willeth, God's efficacy ſpeaketh; if theſe manners of ſpeech did not otherwiſe differ, at leaſt the former would be more clear, ſimple and expedite, nor would it ſo yield occaſion to errours and doubts; and therefore more worthy it would be of the Holy Writ. However ſuch Proſopopœia's ſhould not be inept, but ſuch as moſt appoſitely ſhould agree to the matter propoſed, which would not happen in this caſe; for of thoſe perſonal attributes ſome at leaſt do ſcarce admit thoſe figurate ſenſes, or do plainly refuſe them; 'tis hard to ſay that a divine power doth know, or hear; and who will ſay that a divine efficacy is affected with anger, or ſorrow?

1 Cor. 2. 10, 11.
2 Cor. 12. 11.
John 3. 8.
Epheſ. 4. 30.
Iſa. 63. 10.
John 16. 13.
Mat. 10. 20.
Acts 13. 2. & 10. 19.

I add, that when the ſin of blaſphemy is ſaid to be committed againſt the Holy Spirit juſt in the ſame form of ſpeech as againſt the Son, it is ſignified that the Holy Spirit is in the ſame manner a perſon as the Son is a perſon; otherwiſe the compariſon would not ſeem to be well framed.

4. The Holy Spirit in the ſame manner, and by like right as the Father and Son, is the object of our faith, worſhip, obedience; the which as by divers other ways (as afterwards we may ſhew) ſo eſpecially doth appear from the form of Baptiſm inſtituted and preſcribed by our Lord; where

where we as well are baptized into the name of the Holy Spirit, as of the Father and Son; wherein is signified, and by a solemn contestation ratified, on the part of God, that those three joined and confederated (as it were) are conspiringly propitious and favourable to us; that they do receive us into their discipline, grace and patronage; that they are ready, and by virtue of promise in a manner bound, to bestow on us excellent benefits and privileges (on us, I say, performing the laws and conditions of the covenant then entred into) On our part, that we do with sound and firm faith equally (that is thorowly and entirely) acknowledg and confess those three; that we repose an equal (that is a most firm) hope and confidence in them; that we do most highly reverence all and each of them; that we do sincerely and seriously undertake and promise a perpetual (and neareſt, to what we are able, a perfect) obedience to them: doing which things, we do (as *Athanasius*, or an antient writer under his name observeth) yield more than a simple adoration to the Holy Spirit: (*Since*, saith he, *they that are catechized in order to Baptism, are not before they are Baptized, perfect Christians, but being Baptized are consummated; Baptism therefore imports more than adoration*) Hence who sees not in this first and principal mystery of our religion the Holy Spirit is exhibited to us as a person, that about him as such this excellent part of our duty, this eximious worship is conversant? Attending to this point we may also see the adverse opinion to be urg'd with many inconveniences: for if the Holy Spirit be not a person, not aptly (or rather very incongruously) he is put into the same rank with the other two persons; not rightly are things so wholly differing in kind (things subsistent and not subsistent) conjoined, and just in the same form proposed as like objects of worship; yea superfluously and to no purpose doth the Holy Spirit seem to be adjoined, if by it nothing beside the divine efficacy is designed: for acknowledging the Father, we do withal acknowledg his power and efficacy, congruous to the divine nature; worshipping the Father, we do together adore his power; devoting our selves in obedience to the Father, we do likewise subject our selves to his power: as if one hath promised faith and loyalty to the King, he therein hath abundantly satisfied his duty; so that there is no farther need to profess himself devoted to the King's power or efficacy: who sees not that in such a case it is superfluous and idle to sever the King from his royal power? One may also ask, why with as good reason we should not be consecrated into the name of the divine goodness, of the divine justice, of the divine wisdom, or of any other divine attribute, as into the name of the divine power? The Socinian exposition therefore doth cast strange clouds and incongruities upon this august mystery: which yet in decency should be most clearly and simply propounded, lest in the very entrance of our Christian profession an occasion should be given of stumbling into great errour.

Εἰ δὲ μὴ εἰσὶ τέλειοι χριστιανοὶ οἱ κατηχούμενοι πρὶν βαπτισθῶσι, βαπτισθέντες δὲ τελειοῦνται· τὸ βάπτισμα ἄρα μεῖζόν ἐστι τῆς προσκυνήσεως. Athan. *Dial. 1. contra Maced.* p. 265.

5. The personality of the Holy Ghost is also perspicuously evinced from its being represented under the visible shape of a subsistent * thing. A substantial thing is no proper symbol, or representative of a thing accidental; nor commodiously may assume its name: to a thing having no subsistence it doth not well sute to descend like a Dove, and to rest upon Christ: supposing the Spirit were only the efficacy of God the Father, seeing the effects of faculties and operations are most aptly attributed to the persons having or exerting them, it could have been said (and that more rightly and properly) that the Father himself did

* Ἐν εἴδει σωματικῷ, *in a bodily shape, as it is said in the Gospel.*

appear

appear in a corporeal figure, that the Father deſcended, that the Father ſate upon Chriſt, that the Father was ſeen by the Holy Baptiſt; the which it were raſh to affirm.

Cur non hic accipiamus viſibiliter inſinuatam per creaturam viſibilem Trinitatis æqualitatem, atque in tribus perſonis unum, eandemque ſubſtantiam. Aug. de Trin. 2. 11, 12.

I forbear to alledg, that the Holy Spirit is reckoned among the three that bear witneſs in heaven; that the ſin againſt the Holy Ghoſt is diſtinguiſhed from the ſin againſt God the Father. I alſo paſs over, that a Trinity of Perſons (as many of the Fathers conceive) was repreſented in the apparition to *Abraham*, where it is ſaid, Gen. 18. 1. *The Lord appeared*, and *Three men appeared to him*; as alſo that the Eſ. 6. 3. Hymn [*Triſagias*] (in *Eſay* and the *Apocalypſe*) does inſinuate it likewiſe Apoc. 4. 8. that the phraſes *Creavit Elohim* (*Gods* in the plural, did create in the Deut. 6. 4. ſingular) *Faciamus hominem, let us make man*; *Jehovah Elohim, the Lord our Gods*; and the like may well hither be referred. For from what hath been ſaid, the Socinian error may ſeem abundantly confuted.

III. We thirdly now aſſert (ſuppoſing his perſonality) that the Holy Spirit is God, coeſſential to God the Father, and God the Son; or that the one divine nature (with all its attributes and perfections) is common to him with the Father; or that (which is the ſame) the Holy Spirit is God, that moſt High God, moſt abſolutely and properly ſo called (for, ſeeing the Holy Scriptures do frequently inculcate that there is but one God, if the Holy Spirit be God, he muſt neceſſarily be coeſſential to the Father and the Son.) Now that he is God, we againſt the Macedonians, or Semi-Arians, do aſſert, and by theſe Arguments prove:

I. The moſt proper names of God, and the moſt divine titles are every where (according to juſt interpretation, and by perſpicuous conſequence) attributed unto the Holy Spirit: inaſmuch as often (almoſt ever) upon various occaſions the ſame words, works and acts are referr'd to God and the Holy Spirit; ſo that whatever God is ſaid to have ſpoken, to have performed, to have made, that alſo is reported, ſaid, tranſacted, produced by the Holy Ghoſt; and reciprocally, whatever doth any way regard the Holy Spirit, that is referr'd to God; the which doth argue, that between the beings denoted by the names God and Holy Spirit an eſſential identity, or unity doth intercede. Of the *If-* Pſal. 78. 56. *raelites* being wickedly incredulous and refractory it is ſaid: *They tempted and provoked the moſt High God, and kept not his teſtimonies*; the ſame Iſa. 63. 10. *Eſay* thus expreſſeth: *They rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit.* In *Eſay* Acts 28. 25. (6. 9.) God is ſaid to ſend the Prophets; St. *Paul* reporting it ſaith, the Holy Ghoſt ſent them. St. *Peter* chargeth *Ananias*, that he Acts 5. 3, 4. had lied to the Holy Spirit; and thence that he had lied to God: *Ananias* (ſaith he) *why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie unto the Holy Ghoſt?* preſently he ſubjoins, *Thou haſt not lied unto men, but unto God*; he plainly by thoſe names deſigneth the ſame things, and more than intimates it to be the ſame thing to lie to God, and to lie to the Spirit. Our Lord as man was conceived by the Holy Ghoſt, and for that rea- Luc. 1. 35. ſon was the Son of God: *The Holy Ghoſt* (ſaid the Angel) *ſhall come upon thee, and the power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee*; *therefore that holy thing which ſhall be born of thee ſhall be called the Son of God.* What conſequence were there of this, if the Holy Ghoſt is not God? Our

Lord

Lord also is said to have performed his miracles by the power of God, and by the power of the Holy Spirit indifferently: *If I* (saith he in Saint *Matthew*) *by the Spirit of God cast out Devils:* In Saint *Luke* he saith; *If I by the finger* (that is by the power) *of God cast out Devils*; and both Phrases Saint *Paul* doth equipollently express by *the power of the Holy Ghost:* and Saint *Peter* says, that *God did the miracles by him.* The Holy Scripture, because dictated by the Holy Spirit, is said to be θεόπνευστος, or inspired by God. The *Spirit spake in the prophets* (saith Saint *Peter*, and the other holy writers commonly) *God spake in them*, saith the Apostle to the *Hebrews*, and others likewise, so often as the Holy Scripture is called the word of God. The Holy Spirit *doth shed abroad* and work *charity in our hearts*; we are thence said to be θεοδίδακτοι, taught by God to love one another; yea every virtue, all holiness is promiscuously ascribed to God and the Holy Ghost as its immediate authors: *To be led by the Spirit of God*, and *God worketh in us to will and to do*, do signifie the same thing. Every faithful Christian is therefore called a temple (that is a place consecrated to God) because the Holy Spirit in a special manner is present in him: *Know ye not, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* (saith Saint *Paul* in our Text) know ye not that ye are God's temple? whence should we know it? from hence, that God's Spirit inhabiteth you, because the inhabitation of the Spirit is the same with the inhabitation of God. The same Apostle again: *In whom ye are also builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit*; for an habitation of God in the Spirit, that is therefore an habitation of God, because the Spirit dwelleth in you; how could the Divinity of the Holy Spirit be more expressly declared? we may add that Saint *Paul* calleth the Holy Spirit, Lord, ὁ δὲ κύριος τὸ πνεῦμά ἐστι, *but the Lord is that Spirit*; which Spirit in the words immediately following is called *the Spirit of the Lord*; the which also before (as Saint *Chrysostom* noteth) is called *the Spirit of the living God:* the Spirit therefore of the Lord is the Lord himself, unto whom the Jews, when the veil covering their minds is taken off, shall return. (Lastly, Saint *John* affirms *the Father, Son and Holy Spirit* to *be one*; and therefore the Holy Ghost is God.)

Matt. 12. 28. Luc. 11. 19. Rom. 15. 19. Act. 2. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 16. 1 Pet. 1. 11. Heb. 1. 1. 2 Pet. 1. 21. Luc. 1. 70, &c. Rom. 5. 5. 1 Thes. 4. 8, 9. Rom. 8. 14. Phil. 2. 13. 2 Cor. 3. 16, 17. 6. 19. 2 Cor. 6. 16. Rom. 8. 9. Eph. 2. 22. 2 Cor. 3. 17, &c. 1 Joh. 5. 7.

Hence (for corollary to this argument) we see how we may retund the importunity of the *Macedonians*, who did nothing but ask where in Scripture the Holy Ghost is called God: where say you is he called God? where not, say I? almost every where he in effect is so called: seeing when all about in the same *deed*, or in the same history, the same words and acts are reported of *Cæsar* and of the Emperour, it may rightly be pronounced, that *Cæsar* is there called Emperour; which no man, I suppose, will contradict. The case is here plainly the same between the Holy Spirit and God.

Dial. adverf. Maced. apud Athan.

2. To the Holy Spirit are most expressly attributed all the incommunicable perfections of God, the essential characters and properties of the divine nature. The very Epithet of Holy (absolutely, in way of excellence characteristically put) is one of them: for (as it is in *Hannah*'s song) *There is none holy as the Lord*; *neither is there any beside thee:* there is none beside God absolutely and perfectly Holy (that is, by a most remote distance severed from all things, far exalted above all things, peculiarly venerable and august in majesty) whence ὁ ἅγιος, *the Holy one*, is a distinctive title of God. Yea the name of Spirit it self (absolutely and eminently put, and so importing highest purity

1 Sam. 2. 2.

purity and perfecteſt actuality) doth ſeem to imply the ſame. Alſo eternity, immenſity, omniſcience, omnipotency (than which no more high perfections, or more proper to God can be conceived) are attributed to the Holy Spirit. Eternity; for the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* calls him αἰώνιον πνεῦμα, *the eternal Spirit. (How much more,* ſaith he, *ſhall the blood of Chriſt, who by the eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God, purge your conſcience?)* Immenſity; *Whither* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *ſhall I go from thy Spirit? and whither ſhall I fly from thy face?* The queſtion involveth a negation; and ſignifieth a manifeſt reaſon thereof: I cannot fly any whither from thy Spirit, becauſe it is every where preſent. Omniſcience; *The Spirit,* ſaith St. *Paul, doth ſearch all things* (that is, it perfectly comprehendeth all things) *even the deep things of God*; τὰ βάθη, *the depths,* or deepeſt things of God, and conſequently all things, which God knows, or can be known) even thoſe things, which to comprehend doth as far exceed the condition of a creature, as it goeth beyond the capacity of one man to diſcern the cogitations and affections of another man; for ſuch a compariſon St. *Paul* doth make. Our Saviour in the Goſpel ſaith, *None knoweth who is the Son, but the Father*; *nor who is the Father, but the Son*: but the Holy Spirit did queſtionleſs know who was the Father, and who the Son; he had a knowledg therefore moſt divine and incommunicable. Particularly to the Holy Spirit is aſſigned the knowledg of future contingencies; which knowledg is peculiarly high and moſt proper to God, and is therefore called divination; the which peculiarly is appropriated to the Holy Spirit, as its immediate principle; whence he is called the *Spirit of prophecy, the Spirit of revelation, the Spirit of wiſdom, the Spirit of truth*; and from him all the Prophets are ſaid to derive their foreknowing power. To theſe may be adjoined other no leſs divine attributes of the Holy Spirit; as *Independency* in will and operation; for, *All theſe things* (ſaith St. *Paul,* that is the production of thoſe excellent graces, the diſtribution of thoſe wonderful gifts) *doth one and the ſame Spirit work, dividing to every one as he willeth.* And as the *wind bloweth where it willeth,* nor can be determined or hindred by any thing, ſo (as our Lord inſinuates in the Goſpel) the Holy Spirit according to his pleaſure worketh every where. Abſolute goodneſs, which belongeth only to God (for, *there is none good but one, God himſelf*) but, *Thy Spirit* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *is good, lead me into the land of uprightneſs.* Moſt abſolute veracity (which alſo doth imply both perfect knowledg, and extreme goodneſs) the which is ſignified by the title of truth abſtractedly aſſigned to him: *It is* (ſaith St. *John*) *the Spirit that beareth witneſs, becauſe the Spirit is truth*; that is, moſt abſolutely and perfectly veracious. In fine, omnipotency doth belong to the Holy Spirit, as by his works doth appear, which we ſhall immediately propound in the next argument. For,

Heb. 9. 14. Pſal. 139. 7. 2 Cor. 2. 10, 11. Luk. 10. 21. Eph. 3. 5. 1. 17. Rev. 19. 10. Joh. 15. 26. 1 Cor. 12. 11. Joh. 3. 8. Εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἡ οὐσία τοῦ πνεύματος ἦν ἀγαθὸν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ἐκ ἂν ἀγαθὸν ἐκαλεῖτο, ὅποτε κύριος καὶ παρεῖχε τὸ χαλεῖσθαι ἀγαθός, καὶ ἀνθρωπος γέγονε. Athan. *contra* Apoll. *T.* 1. *p.* 607. Mat. 19. 17. Pſal. 143. 10. Neh. 9. 20. 1 Joh. 5. 6.

3. Moſt divine operations (tranſcending the power of any created thing) are aſcribed to the Holy Ghoſt: ſuch are; to create things, and make the world; for it was the Spirit which reſting upon the unſhapen maſs did hatch the world: *By his ſpirit* (ſaith *Job*) *he hath garniſhed the heavens.* [And, *By the word of the Lord,* ſaith the *Pſalmiſt, were the heavens made, and all the hoſt of them by the breath of his mouth,* or by his Spirit.) *But he* (as the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews* ſaith) *who made all things, is God.* To conſerve things: *Thou ſendeſt forth thy Spirit, they*

Job 26. 13. Pſal. 33. 6. Heb. 3. 4. Pſal. 104. 30.

they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth, saith the Psalmist, speaking about the continued production or conservation of things. Particularly to produce Man both at first and continually; for the soul of the Protoplast was derived from the Spirit of God; and good *Elihu* professeth of himself, *The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life*; yea (which worthily may be deemed somewhat greater and more difficult) to create men again or renew them, being marr'd and deformed, unto the image of God (quickning a man's Spirit in a manner dead, enlightning his blind mind, reforming his perverse affections) which to effect as it is ascribed to God, so also to the Holy Spirit in places numberless. Also (which is connected with that) to justify a man, to remit sins (not ministerially, but, which is proper to God, principally and absolutely) for, *ye are* (saith St. *Paul*) *justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.* To animate the Church by his influence, to govern it by his power and guidance, to prescribe laws unto it, to set rulers over it, to dispense gifts and graces requisite for the building, propagation and preservation thereof, are works of his, and together the most proper and principal works of divine power. To perform miracles, that is works contrary or superiour to the laws of nature, and therefore only congruous to God; the doing of which is peculiarly attributed to God's Spirit; particularly to raise the dead, which is the highest of miracles; *If* (saith St. *Paul*) *he that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.* In fine, there is no work either of nature, or of providence, or of grace, so sublime, or so difficult, which is not ascribed to the efficacy of the Holy Spirit; the which doth shew his soveraign authority, and his Almighty power; for surely by no more plain and cogent arguments, than by these, can the omnipotence of the supreme Deity it self be demonstrated.

Job 33. 4.

Ἡ κτίσις ἐκ ἀναλύει κτίσιν. Bas.

Eph. 4. 24. 2. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 6. 5. 17. Col. 3. 10. Tit. 3. 5. Luk. 5. 21. 1 Cor. 6. 11. Rom. 8. 2. Tit. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 13. Act. 15. 28. Act. 20. 28. Eph. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 12. Heb. 2. 4.

Rom. 8. 11.

4. The Divine Majesty of the Holy Spirit may also be asserted from the divine Worship which is duly to be yielded to him. It by God's appointment is yielded to him, when being solemnly baptized in his name we do profess to place our faith and hope upon him, we do protest our reverence and obedience to him. The same is then exhibited, when (according to the rule of St. *Paul*) together with the grace of our Lord Jesus, and the love of God the Father, we implore the communion of the Holy Spirit. The same is not obscurely signified whenever (that which often occurs) in the execution of divine (most excellent and admirable) offices and works, the Holy Ghost is put in conjunction and co-ordination with the Father and the Son: For that by God most jealous and curious (as it were) of his Honour (who more than once professeth that he will not *impart his glory to another*) should be allowed to any creature, to match in even rank, to seem advanced to an equal pitch of dignity with himself, is no-wise credible, or agreeable to reason. *(What communion can there be between a Creature and his Creator? why should that which is made be numbred together with his Maker, in the performing of all things?* saith St. *Athanasius* well) Moreover, what dignity belongs to the H. Spirit, what reverence is due to him, appears clearly from that the blasphemy against him is peculiarly unpardonable, whenas the faults committed against God the Father, and obloquy against the Son are

2 Cor. 13. 13.

Is. 42. 8. 48. 11.

Ποία γὰρ κοινωνία τῷ κτίσματι πρὸς κτίσιν; διὰ τί τὸ πεποιημένον συναριθμεῖται τῷ ποιήσαντι εἰς τὴν τῶν πάντων τελείωσιν; Ath. *Orat. in Ar.*

Ἀσεβὲς ἂν εἴη λέγειν ἢ λέγειν, ὅ ποιητὸν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον, ὁπότε πίστα χαφὴ παλαία τε καὶ καινὴ μετὰ πάσης καὶ ὑπ' συναριθμεῖ αὐτὸ, καὶ ἀξιάζει. *Ed. περὶ ἐνσεβείας ὅλης. Tom. 1. p. 600.*

capable of remiſſion; for the nature of things doth ſcarce bear, that to detract from a creature ſhould be a crime ſo capital, or receive ſuch aggravation; it cannot well be conceived that the honour of a creature ſhould in ſuch a manner be preferr'd to the honour of God himſelf. *How*, ſaith St. *Ambroſe*, *can any one dare to reckon the Holy Ghoſt among creatures? or who doth ſo render himſelf obnoxious, that if he derogate from a creature, he may not ſuppoſe it to be relaxable to him by ſome pardon?*

Quomodo inter creaturas audet quiſquam Spiritum S. computare? aut quis ſic ſe obligat, ut ſi creaturam derogaverit, non putet ſibi hoc aliquâ veniâ relaxandum? Ambroſ.

Phil. 2. 9. Eph. 1. 21.
Quomodo creatura dicitur, qui Domini Creator ex Maria comprobatur? Aug. *Serm.* 6. Mat. 1. *de Temp.*

5. Again, whereas Chriſt even as a man is elevated in dignity and eminence above all creatures (*above every Name, far above all principality, authority and power*, as the Apoſtle teaches us) he is yet in that reſpect inferiour, and gives place to the Holy Spirit. For as ſuch he did receive his nature from the Holy Spirit; *That which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghoſt*, ſaith the Evangeliſt; and, *more honour than the houſe hath he that made it*, ſaith the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*. Chriſt was ſent by the Holy Spirit; *The Lord God* (ſaid the Prophet of him) *and his Spirit hath ſent me*, But, *The Apoſtle* (ſaith he himſelf) *is not greater than he that ſent him*; the *Sent* is not greater, that is (by a ὑποτάξις, or μείωσις, the figure of diminution) he is inferiour to the *Sender*. Chriſt was conſecrated, and inaugurated into his offices by the Holy Spirit: *The Spirit of the Lord* (foretold *Eſaias* of Chriſt, as the Evangeliſts interpret) *is upon me, becauſe he hath anointed me*: But, *without controverſy the leſſer is bleſſed by the greater*, ſaith the Apoſtle. Chriſt was by the Holy Ghoſt endowed with excellent gifts abundantly and beyond meaſure; but, *It is more bleſſed to give than to receive*, is an Aphoriſm out of our Lords own mouth. In fine, our Lord did by virtue of the Holy Spirit perform miracles; by the eternal Spirit he offered himſelf to God; by the Spirit he was raiſed from the dead: which things are manifeſt arguments that the Holy Spirit doth excel Chriſt as man; wherefore ſeeing beſide God only, nothing is in worth or dignity ſuperiour to Chriſt, it neceſſarily follows that the Holy Spirit is God.

Heb. 3. 3. Iſa. 48. 16. Joh. 13. 16. Iſa. 61. 1, 12. Luk. 4. 18. Heb. 7. 7. Joh. 3. 34. Luk. 4. 1, 2. 40. 52. Act. 21. 35. Mat. 12. 28. Heb. 9. 14. Rom. 1. 4. 8. 11.

6. I add, that whereas upon divers occaſions the Ranks and Orders of Creatures are mentioned in Scripture (as where all the Quire of them is ſummon'd and cited to ſing the praiſes of God; namely the Angels, the heavens, the earth, men, beaſts, plants; when Catalogues are recited of things made by Chriſt, and ſubject to him, among which Angels, Thrones, Dominations, Dignities and Powers are mentioned) it is ſtrange, that this top of creatures (if a creature he be) this leader of the Quire ſhould wholly be pretermitted. It is very probable, that if the Prophets had known, nor the Apoſtles had thought this, they would have not been ſilent about it, they would, as reaſon had required, have ſet him in the head of all; which if they had done, they would have exempted us from theſe ſcruples and errours in ſo high a point: but they could not do it, becauſe indeed the Holy Spirit is not in the order of creatures; the which we do ſeem ſufficiently to have proved.

Pſal. 103. 148. &c. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Col. 1. 16. Eph. 1. 21. Rom. 8. 38.

To all the premiſed points no ſmall acceſſion of weight doth come from the authority of ſo many Holy Fathers and Councils; and from the conſent of the Church, running down through ſo many ages; to oppoſe which, without very weighty and manifeſt reaſons, doth as much recede from prudence, as it is far from modeſty.

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III. The next point we shall consider is the Original of the Holy Spirit; the which we do assert to be in way of procession jointly from God the Father, and God the Son; meaning hereby, that to this divine person in a peculiar manner (incomprehensible indeed and ineffable, but which in some manner by this term procession may be signified) the divine Essence which he hath, is communicated from the Father and the Son.

That the Holy Spirit is not from himself, as the Father is, is plain; ἐκ ἀφ' ἑαυτοῦ λαλήσει. for that being supposed, there would be more first principles than one, Joh. 16. 13. and consequently more Gods than one; which is contrary to the whole tenour of Scripture: neither did any ever affirm so much.

That he proceedeth from the Father, appeareth from that the Father Novat. *de Trin.* 31. is the fountain and first principle of all Essence: and by our Saviour the Spirit is said ἐκπορεύεσθαι, *to go out from the Father*; and he is called Joh. 15. 16. τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ, *The Spirit that is out of God* (the Father) by 1 Cor. 2. 12. S. *Paul*: and this is generally confessed.

That also he doth proceed from the Son (which is by the modern Greeks denied) may be proved.

1. Because as he is called the Spirit of the Father, so he is also often styled the Spirit of the Son; which signifies he is in a like manner related to the Son as to the Father; and that both therefore in a like manner conspire to his production. Matt. 10. 20. Gal. 4. 6. Rom. 8. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 11. Phil. 1. 19.

2. He is said to be sent as from the Father, so also from the Son. But mission and procession do not seem to differ, except in manner of speech (one more especially denoting the name whence, the other the act or effect of the same thing) Nor doth it agree to the Holy Spirit, who (as we have shewed) is God, to go out, or be sent otherwise than by reception of essence.

3. The Son saith of the Holy Spirit, ἐκ τοῦ ἐμοῦ λήψεται, *he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you*; and to the same purpose, *whatsoever he shall hear, he shall speak*; by which saying it is intimated that the Holy Spirit doth receive knowledg from the Son; the which, being God, he cannot otherwise do, than by receiving his essence from the Son. Joh. 16. 13, 14.

4. The Holy Spirit is a person third in order; seeing then the Son before him in order (in order I say, not in time) obtaineth the divine nature; so that, when the Holy Spirit doth proceed, it is common to both Father and Son, he cannot receive it from the Father separately, or without also deriving it from the Son. Thus our Lord himself seemeth to have argued, when he saith: *All things that the Father hath are mine, therefore said I that he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you.* Joh. 16. 15. 17. 10.

5. Lastly, our Saviour (as St. *Augustine* and *Cyril* conceive) did, signifie this procession from himself, when breathing on his disciples he said, *Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* Joh. 20. 22.

6. To these Arguments may be added the consentient authority of the Latin Fathers, *Hilary*, *Ambrose*, *Austin*, and the rest; which explicitely teach this doctrine. Also the more antient Greeks, *Athanasius*, *Basil*, both the *Gregories*, *Epiphanius*, *Cyrillus Alexandrinus* do (although seldom expressly in terms, yet equipollently, and according to sense) say the same. *Deum Patrem co-aeternum sibi.* Τὸν θεὸν πατέρα τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος Athan. *contra Apol.* T. 1. p. 601.

We proceed now to the peculiar offices, functions and operations of the Holy Spirit: Many such there are in an especial manner attributed, or appropriated to him; which as they respect God, seem reducible to

two general ones: the declarations of God's mind, and the execution of his will; as they are referr'd to man (for in regard to other Beings, the Scripture doth not ſo much conſider what he performs, it not concerning us to know it) are eſpecially, the producing in us all qualities and diſpoſitions, the guiding and aiding us in all actions requiſite or conducible to our eternal happineſs and ſalvation; to which may be added the interceſſion between God and man, which jointly reſpecteth both.

Joh. 15. 26. Eph. 1. 17. Rev. 19. 10. *Veritas ubicunque eſt, à Spiritu Sancto eſt.*

1. Firſt, it is his eſpecial work to declare God's mind to us: Whence he is ſtyled *the ſpirit of truth, the ſpirit of prophecy, the ſpirit of revelation*; for that all ſupernatural light and wiſdom hath ever proceeded from him. He inſtructed *all the Prophets that have been ſince the world began* to know, he enabled them to ſpeak the mind of God concerning things preſent and future. Holy men (that have taught men their duty, and led them in the way to bliſs) were but his inſtruments, *ſpeaking as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt.*

Luk. 1. 70. 2 Pet. 1. 21.

By his inſpiration the Holy Scriptures (the moſt full and certain witneſs of God's mind, the *law and teſtimony* by which our life is to be directed and regulated) were conceived. *He guided the Apoſtles into all truth*, and by them inſtructed the world in the knowledg of God's gracious intentions toward mankind, and in all the holy myſteries of the Goſpel: *That which in other ages was not made known unto the ſons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy Apoſtles and Prophets by the Spirit. Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit*, ſaith Saint *Paul.* All the knowledg we can pretend to in theſe things doth proceed meerly from his Revelation, doth wholly rely upon his authority,

1 Tim. 3. 16. Joh. 16. 13. Eph. 3. 5. 1 Cor. 2. 11.

2. To him it eſpecially belongs to execute the will of God in matters tranſcending the ordinary power and courſe of nature. Whence he is called the *power of the moſt high* (that is, the ſubſtantial power and virtue of God) the *Finger of God* (as by comparing the expreſſions of S. *Matthew* and S. *Luke* may appear) and whatever eminent God hath deſigned, he is ſaid to perform by him; by him he framed the World, and (as *Job* ſpeaketh) *garniſhed the Heavens.* By him he governeth the World, ſo that all extraordinary works of providence (when God beſide the common Law, and uſual courſe of nature, doth interpoſe to do any thing) all miraculous performances are attributed to his Energy. By him our Saviour, by him the Apoſtles, by him the Prophets are expreſly ſaid to perform their wonderful works; but eſpecially by him,

Luk. 1. 35. 24. 49. Luk. 11. 20. Matt. 12. 28. Pſal. 33. 6. Gen. 1. 1. Job 26. 13.

3. God manages that great work, ſo earneſtly deſigned by him, of our ſalvation; working in us all good diſpoſitions, capacifying us for ſalvation, directing and aſſiſting us in all our actions tending thereto.

We naturally are void of thoſe good diſpoſitions in underſtanding, will and affection, which are needful to render us acceptable to God, fit to ſerve and pleaſe him, capable of any favour from him, of any true happineſs in our ſelves: Our minds naturally are blind, ignorant, ſtupid, giddy, and prone to error, eſpecially in things ſupernatural, ſpiritual, and abſtracted from ordinary ſenſe. Our wills are froward and ſtubborn, light and unſtable, inclining to evil, and averſe from what is truly good; our affections are very irregular, diſorderly and unſetled: to remove which bad diſpoſitions (inconſiſtent with God's friendſhip and favour, driving us into ſin and miſery) and to beget thoſe contrary to them, the knowledg

knowledg and belief of divine truth, a love of goodneſs and delight therein, a well compoſed, orderly and ſteady frame of ſpirit, God in mercy doth grant to us the Virtue of his H. Spirit; who firſt *opening our Hearts*, ſo as to let in and apprehend the light of divine truth, then by repreſentation of proper Arguments perſuading our reaſon to embrace it, begetteth divine knowledg, wiſdom and faith in our minds, which is the work of illumination and inſtruction, the firſt part of his office reſpecting our ſalvation. Act. 16. 14. 1 Cor. 12. 8, 9.

Then by continual impreſſions he bendeth our inclinations, and mollifieth our hearts, and tempereth our affections to a willing compliance with God's will, and a hearty complacence in that which is good and pleaſing to God; ſo breeding all pious and vertuous inclinations in us, reverence toward God, charity to men, ſobriety and purity as to our ſelves, with the reſt of thoſe amiable and heavenly vertues of ſoul, which is the work of ſanctification, another great part of his Office.

Both theſe operations together (enlightning our minds, ſanctifying our will and affections) do conſtitute, and accompliſh that work, which is ſtiled the Regeneration, Renovation, Vivification, New-creation, Reſurrection of a man; the faculties of our ſouls being ſo improved, that we become, as it were, other men thereby; able and apt to do that for which before we were altogether indiſpoſed, and unfit. Tit. 3. 5. Col. 2. 12, 13. Eph. 2. 5. 4. 23, 24. 2. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 17.

He alſo directeth, and governeth our actions, continually leading, and moving us in the ways of obedience to God's holy will and law. As we live by him (having a new ſpiritual life implanted in us) ſo we *walk by him*, are continually led and acted by his conduct, and help. He reclaimeth us from error and ſin; he ſupporteth and ſtrengtheneth us in temptation; he adviſeth, and admoniſheth, exciteth and encourageth us to all works of piety and vertue. Gal. 5. 25. Rom. 8. 14.

Particularly, he guideth, and quickneth us in devotion, ſhewing us what we ſhould ask, raiſing in us holy deſires, and comfortable hopes, diſpoſing us to approach unto God with fit diſpoſitions of mind, love and reverence, and humble confidence. Rom. 8. 26, 27. 1 Joh. 15. 14.

It is alſo a notable part of the Holy Spirit's office to comfort and ſuſtain us, as in all our religious practice, ſo particularly in our doubts, difficulties, diſtreſſes and afflictions; to beget joy, peace and ſatisfaction in us, in all our performances, and all our ſufferings, whence the title of Comforter belongeth to him. Rom. 15. 13. Heb. 3. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 8.

It is alſo another part thereof, to aſſure us of God's gracious love and favour, and that we are his children; confirming in us the hopes of our everlaſting inheritance. We feeling our ſelves to live ſpiritually by him, to love God, and goodneſs, to thirſt after righteouſneſs, and to delight in pleaſing God, are thereby raiſed to hope God loves and favours us; and that he having by ſo authentick a ſeal ratified his word and promiſe, having already beſtowed ſo ſure a pledg, ſo pretious an earneſt, ſo plentiful firſt-fruits, will not fail to make good the remainder deſigned and promiſed us, of everlaſting joy and bliſs. Rom. 8. 23. 2 Cor. 1. 22. 5. 5. Eph. 1. 14.

4. The Holy Ghoſt is alſo our interceſſor with God; preſenting our ſupplications, and procuring our good. He cryeth in us, he pleadeth for us to God. Whence he is peculiarly called παράκλητος, he Advocate; that is, one who is called in by his good word, or countenance to aid him, whoſe cauſe is to be examined, or petition to be conſidered.

5. To which things we may add, that the Holy Ghoſt bears the office of a ſoul to God's Church, informing, enlivening and actuating 2 Cor. 12. 12, 13.

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the whole body thereof; connecting and containing its members in ſpiritual union, harmony, order, peace and ſafety; eſpecially quickning the principal members (the Governors and Paſtors) thereof; conſtituting them in their function, qualifying them for the diſcharge thereof, guiding and aiding them in it: *Take heed* (ſaid S. *Paul* to the Elders of *Epheſus*) *unto your ſelves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers:* And, *all theſe things worketh that one, and the ſelf-ſame Spirit, dividing to every man ſeverally as he willeth.*

Act. 20. 28. Eph. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 12. 11.

We have thus paſſed over the ſeveral main doctrines concerning the Bleſſed Holy Spirit; the application of which to practice briefly ſhould be this; the uſes which the conſideration of theſe points may have, are theſe.

1. We are upon the premiſes obliged to render all honour, and adoration, to the Majeſty of the divine Spirit.

2. The conſideration of theſe things ſhould work in us an humble affection, and a devout thankfulneſs to God for ſo ineſtimable a favour conferr'd upon us, as is the preſence and inhabitation, the counſel, conduct and aſſiſtance of God's Holy Spirit in us. Him we gratefully muſt own and acknowledg as the Author of our ſpiritual life, of all good diſpoſitions in us, of all good works performed by us, of all happineſs that we are capable of; to him therefore we muſt humbly render all thanks and praiſe, aſſuming nothing to our ſelves.

3. We ſhould earneſtly deſire, and pray for God's Spirit, the fountain of ſuch excellent benefits, ſuch graces, ſuch gifts, ſuch privileges, ſuch joys and bleſſings ineſtimable. If we heartily invite him, if we fervently pray for him, he aſſuredly will come to us; for ſo our Lord hath promiſed, *That our heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them which ask it.*

Luc. 11. 13.

4. We ſhould endeavour to demean our ſelves well toward the Holy Spirit; yielding to that heavenly gueſt, when he vouchſafeth to arrive, a ready entrance, and a kind welcome into our hearts; entertaining him with all poſſible reſpect and obſervance; hearkning attentively to his holy ſuggeſtions, and carefully obeying him; not quenching the divine light, or the devout heat which he kindleth in us; not reſiſting his kindly motions and ſuaſions; not grieving, or vexing him, that ſo with ſatisfaction he may continue, and reſide in us, to our infinite benefit and comfort. It ſhould engage us to cleanſe our ſelves from all filthineſs of fleſh, and ſpirit; that we may be fit temples for ſo holy, and pure a ſpirit to dwell in; leſt he, by our impurities, be offended, loath and forſake us.

5. It is matter of comfort, and encouragement (exceedingly needful and uſeful for us) to conſider that we have ſuch a guide, and aſſiſtant in all our religious practice and ſpiritual warfare. If our luſts be ſtrong, our temptations great, our enemies mighty; we need not be diſheartned, having this All-wiſe, and All-mighty friend to adviſe, and help us: his grace is ſufficient for us againſt all the ſtrength of hell, the fleſh, and the world. Let our duty be never ſo hard, and our natural force never ſo weak; we ſhall be able to do all things by him, that ſtrengtheneth us: if we will but faithfully apply our ſelves to his aid, we cannot fail of good ſucceſs.

THUS

THUS far the Author's Sermons upon the Creed. *As to the remaining Articles, he hath only left a short Explication of them, like to that upon the* Lord's Prayer, *&c. And there needed not much more, considering that the Substance of these Articles had been treated of before: That of the* Holy Catholick Church, *and of the* Communion of Saints *in his Discourse of the* Unity of the Church, *at the end of his* Treatise *of the* Pope's Supremacy; *and that of the* Forgiveness of Sins, *in his* Sermons *of* Justification; *and that of the* Resurrection of the Body, *in his* Sermon *of the* Resurrection of Christ.

The Holy Catholick Church.

THIS Article was, I conceive, adjoined, or inserted here, upon occasion of those many Heresies and Schisms, which from the beginning continually sprang up, to the danger of Christian doctrine, and disturbance of the Church; the introducers thereof meaning thereby to secure the truth of Religion, the authority of Ecclesiastical Discipline, the peace and unity of the Church, by engaging men to disclaim any consent or conspiracy with any of those erroneous, or contentious people (who had devised new conceits, destructive or dangerous to the Faith, against the general consent of Christians, or drave on troublesom factions, contrary to the common order, and prejudicial to the peace of the Church.) Their meaning of this Article therefore was, I take it, this: I believe, that is, I do adhere unto (for belief, as we at first observed, is to be taken as the nature of the matter requireth) or I am perswaded that I ought to adhere unto that Body of Christians, which diffused over the world retains the Faith which was taught, and the Discipline which was settled, and the Peace which was enjoyned by our Lord, and his Disciples; I acknowledg the Doctrines generally embraced by the Churches, founded and instructed by the Apostles; I am ready to observe the received customs, and practices by them derived from Apostolical Institution; I submit to the laws and disciplines by lawful authority established in them; I do persist in charity, concord and communion with them.

And that men antiently should be obliged to profess thus, there is ground both in Reason, and Scripture. In reason, there being no more proper or effectual argument to assure us, that any doctrine is true, or practice warrantable; no means more proper to convince Sectaries (deviating from truth or duty) than the consent of all Churches, of whom (being so distant in place, language, customs, humour; so independent, or coordinate in power) it is not imaginable, that they should soon, or easily conspire in forsaking the doctrines inculcated by the Apostles, or the practices instituted by them; it is the argument which *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, and other defenders of Christian truth and peace do press, and it may in matters of this kind pass for a demonstration.

It

It hath also ground in Scripture; which as it foretels, that pernicious heresies should be introduced, that *many false Prophets should arise, and seduce many*; that *grievous wolves should come in, not sparing the flock*; that *men should arise speaking perverse things, to draw disciples after them*; as they warn us to *take heed of such* men, to *reject* and *refuse hereticks, to mark those which make divisions and scandals, beside the doctrine which* Christians *had learnt*, and *to decline from them*; to *stand off from such men*, as do ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, that is, *teach things different from Apostolical Doctrine, the Doctrine according to Godliness*; as it injoins us *to hold fast the form of sound words, heard from the Apostles*; *to continue in the things, which we have learned, and been assured of, knowing of whom we learnt them*; *to obey from the heart, that form of doctrine, into which we were delivered*; *to keep the traditions*, as the Apostles delivered them to us; *to stand fast, and hold the traditions which we were taught, whether by word or writing*; *to strive earnestly for the faith once delivered to the Saints*; as it enjoins us to *walk orderly*, to *obey our guides*, or *rulers*; to *pursue peace*, to *maintain concord*, to *abide in charity* with all good Christians; as it declareth heresies, factions, contentions and separations to be the works of the flesh, proceeding from corrupt dispositions of soul, (pride, covetousness, vanity, rashness, instability, perverseness, craft, hypocrisy, want of conscience) so it also describes the universality of them, who stick to the truth and observe the Law of Christ, *keeping the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace*; to be *one body, knit together, and compacted of parts, affording mutual aid and supply to its nourishment and welfare*; joined to, and deriving life, motion, sense from *one Head*; informed *by one spirit*: as *one house built upon the foundation of Prophets and Apostles, Christ himself being the corner stone, in whom all the building is fitly framed and connected*; as one family under one Master; one City under one Governour; *one flock under one shepherd*; one nation or people subject to the same Law and Government, used to the same speech, custom and conversation; lastly, as one Church or Congregation: for as sometimes every particular Assembly of Christians, and sometimes a larger collection of particular Societies, combined together in one order, and under one Government, are termed Churches; so the whole aggregation of all particular Churches, or of all Christian people, is frequently called the Church; even as the whole body of those who lived in the profession of obedience to the *Jewish Law* (which was a type of the Christian Church) is called קהל ἐκκλησία, *the Congregation.*

1 Tim. 6. 3. 2 Tim. 1. 13, 14. 3. 14. Rom. 6. 17. 1 Cor. 11. 2. 2 Thess. 2. 15. 3. 6. Jud. 3. Eph. 4. 4.

Ubi tres sunt etiam Laici, ibi Ecclesia est. Tertul. *Exh. Cast.*

In relation to which Society, these are the duties which we here profess our selves obliged to, and in effect promise to observe:

1. That we do, and will persist in the truth of Christian doctrine, delivered by our Saviour and his Apostles, attested unto by the general consent of all Christians; avoiding all novelties of opinion deviating from Apostolical Doctrine.

2. That we are obliged to maintain a hearty charity and good affection to all good Christians.

3. That we are bound to communicate with all good Christians, and all Societies sincerely professing faith, charity and obedience to our Lord; so as to join with them, as occasion shall be, in all offices of piety; to maintain good correspondence and concord with them.

4. That we should submit to the discipline and order, should preserve the peace, and endeavour the welfare of that part thereof wherein

in we live; for what of good or harm is done to a member thereof, is alſo done to the whole.

5. That we ſhould diſavow and ſhun all factious combinations whatever, of perſons corrupting the truth of Chriſtian doctrine, or diſturbing the peace of the Church, or of any part thereof.

6. In fine, that we ſincerely ſhould wiſh in our hearts, earneſtly pray for, and by our beſt endeavours promote the peace and proſperity of the whole Catholick Church; whereof we profeſs our ſelves members and children; *following* (as S. *Paul* directs) *righteouſneſs, faith, charity, peace with thoſe that call upon our Lord, with a pure heart.* 2 Tim. 2. 22.

The Communion of Saints.

THESE words were not extant in any of the antient *Creeds*, but were afterward inſerted; nor as I conceive doth the meaning of them much differ from what was intended in the precedent *Article*; and perhaps it was adjoyned for interpretation thereof; for the meaning of them is, as I take it, that all the Saints (that is all Chriſtians, either in legal preſumption, or according to real diſpoſition of heart ſuch) do, in effect, or ſhould, according to obligation, communicate, partake, joyn together, conſent, and agree in what concerneth Saints, or members of the Holy Catholick Church; in believing and acknowledging the ſame heavenly truth, in performance of devotions, or offices of piety with and for one another, in charitable good will and affection toward one another, in affording mutual advices, aſſiſtances and ſupplies toward the good (either ſpiritual or temporal) of each other; in condolency and compaſſion of each others evils, in congratulation and complacency in each others good; in minding the ſame thing for one another; and bearing one anothers burdens; ſo that if one member ſuffers, all the members ſuffer with it; or if one member be honoured, all the members rejoyce with it. This briefly ſeems to be the meaning of this point; and I need not to inſiſt on clearing the truth, or ſhewing the uſes thereof; the doctrine ſo manifeſtly carrying its obligation and its uſe in the face thereof.

The Forgiveneſs of Sins.

THAT men are naturally apt to tranſgreſs the laws of God and the dictates of Reaſon; that ſo doing they incur guilt, and are expoſed to vengeance (from the great Patron of right and goodneſs, who is injured and diſhonoured thereby) that hence they are ſubject to reſtleſs fears, and ſtinging remorſes of conſcience; that they cannot be exempted from ſuch obnoxiouſneſs, otherwiſe than by the free grace and mercy of God, nor be freed from ſuch anxieties otherwiſe than by an aſſurance of pardon from him, are points, to natural light, ſufficiently manifeſt. Luke 24. 47. *And that repentance and remiſſion of ſins, &c.*

Of ſuch a diſpoſition or will in God to remit offences, that all men have ever had a preſumption, their application to him in religious practice doth ſhew (for no man would addreſs himſelf in ſervice to God without a hope, that God is reconcilable to him, and that his ſervice therefore may be acceptable) particularly that general practice of offering ſacrifice for expiation of ſin, and appeaſing God's wrath, doth plainly declare the ſame.

Heb. 11. 6.

But this was indeed but a preſumption, or conjecture, partly drawn from the neceſſity of their caſe (which admitted no other remedy beſide that hope) and from man's nature, apt to preſume that which moſt pleaſeth; partly grounded upon experience of God's forbearance to puniſh, and the continuance of his bounty toward men; upon which grounds no man could build a full confidence that he ſhould find mercy; much leſs could he be ſatisfied, upon what terms it would be granted, in what manner it ſhould be diſpenſed, or how far it ſhould extend; theſe things merely depending on the will of God, and the knowledg of them only upon revelation from him.

The *Jewiſh* diſpenſation (which was particular and preparatory to Chriſtianity) did indeed appoint and accept expiations for ſome leſſer faults, committed out of ignorance and infirmity; but it pretended not *to juſtifie* from all things; nor upon any terms did it promiſe remiſſion of great ſins wilfully committed, but threatned remedileſs exciſion for them; pronouncing dreadful imprecations not only upon the tranſgreſſors of ſome particular laws, but againſt all thoſe who continued not in all things written in the law to do them; ſo that the remiſſion tendred by *Moſes* was of a narrow extent, and could hardly exempt any man from obligation to puniſhment, and from fear thereof; although indeed (to prevent deſpair, and that which naturally follows thereon, a total neglect of duty) God was pleaſed by his Prophets, among that people, occaſionally to ſignifie ſomewhat of farther grace (beyond what he was tyed to by the terms of the Covenant with that people) reſerved for them, and that he was willing (upon condition of hearty repentance, and real amendment) to receive to mercy even thoſe, who had been guilty of the moſt heinous offences: but theſe diſcoveries, as they were ſpecial, and extraordinary, ſo were they preparatory to the Goſpel, and diſpenſed upon grounds only declared therein.

Numb. 15. 30. Deut. 27. 26. Gal. 3. 10.

It is the Goſpel only, which explicitely teacheth and tendreth remiſſion of all ſins, ſhewing for what reaſons, upon what conditions, to what purpoſes it is diſpenſed by God. It clearly, and fully declares, how God in free mercy and pity toward us (being all involved in ſin and guilt, and lying under a condemnation to death and miſery; all our works being unworthy of acceptance, all our ſacrifices being unable in the leaſt part to ſatisfie for our offences) was pleaſed himſelf to provide an obedience worthy of his acceptance, and thoroughly pleaſing to him (in effect imputable to us, as performed by one of our kind, and race, and for our ſake willingly undertaken, according to his gracious pleaſure) to provide a ſacrifice in nature ſo pure, in value ſo pretious, as might be perfectly ſatisfactory for our offences; in regard to which obedience, God is become reconciled, ſo as to open his arms of grace to mankind; in reſpect to which ſacrifice he doth offer remiſſion of ſins to all men, who ſhall upon the terms propounded be willing to embrace it; namely, upon condition of faith, and repentance; that is, upon ſincerely profeſſing the doctrine of Chriſt, and heartily reſolving

eſolving to obey his laws. This is that great doctrine ſo peculiar to he Goſpel, from whence eſpecially it hath its name, and is ſtyled he word of grace; this is that great bleſſing, which *Zachariah* in his rophetical Hymn did praiſe God for, *The giving knowledg of ſalvati-* Luk. 1. 77, *n to God's people in the remiſſion of their ſins: according to the tender* 78. *ercies of our God, in which the day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us*; Luk. 2. 10 his is the *good tidings of great joy to all people*, which the Angels id celebrate at our Saviour's birth; this is that main point which our ord eſpecially charged his Apoſtles to declare and teſtifie, *that in his* Luk. 24. 47. *ame repentance and remiſſion of ſins ſhould be preached to all nations*; hat *God had exalted him to his right hand, as a Prince and a Saviour to* Act. 5. 31. *ive repentance unto Iſrael and remiſſion of ſins*; *(to give repentance,* that s, to give, as *Clemens* in his *Epiſtle* well expoundeth it, μετανοίας τό- ον, a place for repentance in order to mercy; or that it ſhould be cceptable, and available for the remiſſion of our ſins, as all that on ur part is required toward it) all which points (together with he nature of this remiſſion, its cauſes, its grounds, its ends, its conditi- ns, its means and way of conveyance) are admirably couched in hoſe words of St. *Paul: All men* (ſaith he) *have ſinned, and are* Rom. 3. 4, *ome ſhort of the Glory of God; but we are juſtified freely by his grace, &c. y the redemption which is in Chriſt Jeſus; whom God hath propoſed a ropitiatory by faith in his blood, for the demonſtration of his righteouſneſs, oward the forgiveneſs of forepaſt offences.*

The conſideration of which point is of exceedingly great uſe and influence.

1. It ſhould engage us to admire the great goodneſs of God, and with grateful hearts to praiſe him for ſo great a favour: that God being ſo grievouſly affronted and wronged by our ſins (loaded with extreme aggravations) ſhould be at ſuch charge to purchaſe for us the means of pardon, ſhould offer it ſo freely, ſhould ſo earneſtly invite and intreat us to accept it; How inexpreſſible a clemency doth it demonſtrate? How great thankfulneſs doth it require from us?

2. It ſhould beget in us an ardent love to God, anſwerable to that love which diſpoſed him to beſtow on us ſo ineſtimable a benefit. We ſhould imitate the debtor in the Goſpel, *who moſt loved him, who had* Luk. 7. 41. *forgiven him moſt*; and the good Penitent St. *Magdalene*; who, *becauſe* Luk. 7. 47. *much was forgiven her, did love much.*

3. It is matter and ground of hope and of comfort to us, (is preventive of deſpair, and immoderate ſadneſs) for that our caſe cannot be ſo bad, but there is an aſſured remedy at hand, if we pleaſe to have recourſe thereto; the mercy of God upon our true repentance; whereby we infallibly ſhall obtain that happy ſtate, of which it is ſaid, *Bleſſed is he whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven——bleſſed is the man unto* Pſal. 32. 1, 2. *whom the Lord imputeth no iniquity.*

4. It is a great ingagement to obedience; for that it greatly aggravates our diſobedience, and endangers our eſtate. Having once from God's mercy obtained a cure and ſtate of health, we by relapſing into ſin do incur deeper guilt, and expoſe our ſelves to greater hazard; *Behold* (ſaith our Lord in like caſe) *thou art made whole, ſin no more, leſt* Joh. 5. 14. *a worſe thing come upon thee.*

5. Laſtly, it ſhews us how much (in conformity to God, and compliance with his will) we ſhould bear with, and forgive the offences, or injuries done to us. You know how ſtrongly our Lord in the Goſpel preſſeth the conſideration of God's free pardon beſtowed on us to

Matt. 18. 35, &c. Matt. 6. 14. this purpose; how he sets out the extreme unreasonableness and disingenuity of those, who (notwithstanding this dealing of God with them) are hard hearted, and unmerciful toward their fellow-servants; how he threatens implacable severity toward them, who *do not from their hearts forgive* to their brethren their trespasses; and promiseth remission of sins to them, who (according to what they profess to do in their prayers) shall forgive to men the offences committed against them; making it not only an indispensable condition, but a sufficient means of obtaining the divine favour and mercy.

Act. 26. 20. 3. 19. I shall only farther take notice, that although it be true, that God in the Gospel doth generally propound remission of sins (upon account of our Lord's performances, and in his name) to all that truly repent, and turn unto him; chiefly granting it on this consideration, and not withholding it from any, upon a blameless default of other performances; yet he requires (and complying with his will therein, is part of the duty, which repentance disposes to, and is declared by) that (as well for publick edification, and the honour of his Church, as for the comfort and advantage of persons concerned therein) this repentance should be solemnly declared and approved by the Church; that this remission should be formally dispensed by the hands of God's Ministers; being declared by expres words, or ratified by certain seals, or signified by mysterious representations appointed by God. And to remission of sins, as thus dispensed, I doubt not but this Article hath an especial reference; it being in St. *Cyprian*'s form of profession at Baptism expressed by, *Credo remissionem peccatorum in Ecclesia:* but because the Church's remitting of sins thus, is by virtue of that authority, which Christ imparted to his Church, called the *Power of the Keys*; I shall upon this occasion here briefly explain the nature of that Power.

THE
Power of the Keys.

Matt. 16. 19. THIS Power in part is founded upon (and this name of it was wholly drawn from) those words of our Lord to S. *Peter*; *And I will give thee the Keys of the Kingdom of heaven.* Where that which our Lord doth promise to S. *Peter* (not to him personally, but, as the *Fathers* interpret it, representatively; he then signifying the Church, and standing in the place of its Governours, however not exclusively; for it) is by a parity of reason to be extended to all the Apostles, and after them to all the Governours of the Church; unto whom the same power is other-where in terms equivalent committed, and by whom it was exercised; as may appear from comparing the practice of the Apostles, and of the Church in continual succession from them, with the nature or intent of this power; the which it is now our business very briefly to explain.

It

It is expreſſed in a metaphorical term; and it is therefore to be underſtood according to the analogy it beareth with the thing aſſumed to reſemble it; as the nature of the object thereof doth require, or admit. Wherefore it being the main property of a key, by opening, to give ingreſs, and egreſs; (admittance into a place, or emiſſion from it) or by ſhutting to exclude from entrance, or to detain within; this power may be ſuppoſed to imply a right, or ability to perform ſuch actions in reference to its object, which is the Kingdom of heaven.

By *the kingdom of heaven* is underſtood the ſtate of religion under the *Goſpel*; in diſtinction (as it ſeems) from the conſtitution and condition thereof under the *Moſaical Law*. In the times of the Law, God's Law was in a manner terreſtrial; he being King of the *Jewiſh* Nation particularly; *Jeruſalem* being his Royal ſeat; and the Temple his throne; where he was ſerved with external and viſible performances; where he expreſly promiſed earthly benefits and privileges (long life and proſperity in the land of *Canaan*) and threatned puniſhments anſwerable. But in the Goſpel God is worſhipped univerſally, as reſident in heaven, as requiring ſpiritual ſervices, addreſſed to heaven; as conferring rewards, and inflicting penalties relating to the future ſtate there. This ſtate therefore aptly is called *the kingdom of heaven*, of which all Chriſtians are ſubjects; the Body of whom conſequently may alſo be named the kingdom of heaven: for the word kingdom ſometime denoteth the conſtitution of things in, or under which a certain people do live, ſometimes the people themſelves.

Now whereas this ſtate hath two degrees, or the perſons under it two conditions, one here preſent upon earth in tranſition, and acquiſition; the other hereafter of reſidence, and fruition in heaven (one like that of the *Iſraelites* travelling in the wilderneſs, the other like their poſſeſſion of *Canaan*) in this caſe we may well underſtand both; but chiefly the firſt (the Kingdom of Grace here) wherein immediately this power is exerted; although its effects do finally refer and reach to the other (the Kingdom of Glory hereafter.)

Let us then conſider how this Kingdom may be opened, or ſhut by the Governours of the Church: this evidently may be performed ſeveral ways.

1. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened by yielding real helps, inducing to enter into the Church; it may be ſhut, by the ſame means inducing perſons to continue within it. So by inſtruction, advice, perſuaſion, admonition, reproof; by affording fit means, and occaſions; by preſcribing laws and rules conducing to thoſe purpoſes, the Governours are obliged to open and ſhut the Kingdom of heaven; and the doing ſo therefore may be conceived an ingredient of this power.

2. The kingdom of heaven may be opened by interceſſion, or imprecation from God of fit diſpoſitions qualifying perſons to enter, together with a mind willing to do ſo. Thus, as all Chriſtians in their way may open the Kingdom, ſo particularly the Governours by their office and function are obliged to do it, as the publick mouths of the Church. Wherefore St. *Paul* injoyns, that *Supplication be made for all men; becauſe God would have all men to be ſaved, and to* have them *come to the knowledg of the truth*; or would have all men brought into this Kingdom. 1 Tim. 2. 1, &c.

3. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened or ſhut by prudent diſcrimination of perſons, who are fit to be received into the Church (εὐθετοι εἰς εὐσπλείαν, well-diſpoſed for the kingdom, as St. *Luke* ſpeaks) or who deſerve to be rejected from it. This

Thus the Governours of the Church do open and ſhut the kingdom, when they determine who ſhall be admitted to Baptiſm (which is *Eccleſiæ janua*, and *porta gratiæ*, as St. *Auſtin* calls it) and who ſhall be refuſed; they admitted, who appear competently inſtructed in Chriſtian Doctrine, and well reſolved to obey it; they refuſed, who ſeem in thoſe points ignorant, or ill reſolved.

4. The Kingdom of heaven may be opened or ſhut by judicial acts; whereby unworthy perſons (whoſe converſation may be infectious, or whoſe continuance in the Church may be infamous thereto) are excluded from it, or kept without; or whereby perſons upon ſufficient preſumption of repentance and amendment, are reſtored to communion.

Thus, conſidering the ſenſe of the words with the nature of the matter, the Power of the Keys may be underſtood.

The ſame may be farther cleared by conſidering and explicating the Phraſes equivalent, by which it is expreſſed, or interpreted: Such are eſpecially, *Binding*, and *Looſing*; *Remitting*, and *Retaining ſins*.

By *Binding* and *Looſing*, our Lord himſelf interpreteth this power: *I will* (ſaith he) *give unto thee the Keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatſoever thou ſhalt bind on earth ſhall be bound in heaven; whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on earth, ſhall be looſed in heaven.* For underſtanding the ſenſe of which phraſes, we may conſider, that things or perſons may be ſeveral ways bound and looſed.

1. *Binding* may denote any ſort of determination, reſtriction or detention impoſed on perſons and things; and *Looſing* anſwerably may ſignifie the contrary effects. So by juſt authority to command, or prohibit a thing (whereby its moral quality is determined, it is made good or bad) is to bind that thing, and the perſons ſubject to that authority. Alſo to abrogate a law, or to diſpenſe with its obſervation, is to looſe the matter of that law, together with the perſons concerned in it. Thus it is ſaid, Matt. 23. 4. that the Scribes, by preſcribing many unprofitable obſervances, did bind heavy burdens on the people. Again likewiſe,

2. To interpret the ſenſe of a law or doctrine, is a kind of ligation, or ſolution: it binds by declaring what is commanded, or prohibited, and conſequently to what men are obliged: It looſes, by ſhewing what is permitted, or remains indifferent, ſo leaving men to their freedom. *Quam verò clavem habebant Legis doctores, niſi interpretationem le-*
In Mark. lib. cap. 27. *gis?* ſaith *Tertullian.* To bind and looſe thus, doth plainly belong to the Paſtors of the Church, they by office being the interpreters and teachers of God's law.

3. The exerciſe of any juriſdiction doth *aſtringe* the offender to puniſhment, or ſatisfaction; or doth abſolve him from them: it conſequently may be called *Ligation*, or *Solution* reſpectively.

4. The bringing perſons under any contract is a tying them to performance thereof. Thus do the Paſtors of the Church bind thoſe, whom they receive into the Church at Baptiſm, upon undertaking the conditions of Chriſtianity; and thoſe, whom after excluſion from Chriſtian Communion they abſolve, upon engagement to lead a better life.

5. The detention of a perſon in any ſtate, or under any power, is called *Ligation*; and a deliverance out of ſuch a ſtate, or power, *Solution*. So he that (by withholding means, or aſſurance of pardon) is detained under the guilt of ſin, is thereby bound; but he that hath the means and overtures of pardon conferr'd on him, is looſed: and thus do

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the paſtors of the Church bind and looſe; by retaining and remitting ſin; the doing which is an inſtance of this power, expreſly granted by our Lord: *Whoſeſoever ſins* (ſaith he) *ye remit, they are remitted to them; whoſeſoever ſins ye retain, they are retained.* John 20.

Now they may be underſtood to remit, or retain ſins divers ways.

1. They do remit ſins *diſpoſitivè*; by working in perſons fit diſpoſitions, upon which remiſſion of ſins, by God's promiſe, is conſequent; the diſpoſitions of faith and repentance.

2. They remit (or retain) ſins *declarativè*; as the Ambaſſadors of God, in his name pronouncing the word of reconciliation to the penitent, and denouncing wrath to the obſtinate in ſin.

3. They remit ſins *impetrativè*; obtaining pardon for ſinners by their prayers; according to that of St. *James*; *Is any man ſick among you, let him call the Elders of the Church, and let them pray over him*—And *the prayer of faith ſhall ſave the ſick, and the Lord ſhall raiſe him up; and if he have committed ſins, they ſhall be forgiven him.* Jam. 5. 14, 15.

4. They remit ſins *diſpenſativè*, by conſigning pardon in adminiſtration of the Sacraments; eſpecially in conferring Baptiſm, whereby, duly adminiſtred and undertaken, all ſins are waſhed away; and in the abſolving of Penitents, wherein grace is exhibited and ratified by impoſition of hands; the which S. *Paul* calls χαρίζεσθαι, to beſtow grace, or favour upon the penitent.

By conſidering all theſe things, we may competently underſtand wherein this Power of the Keys doth conſiſt. We might farther illuſtrate it, by obſerving the exerciſe thereof by the Apoſtles, and in the Primitive Church; by viewing the practice of a like power under the Law (which might perhaps be the riſe and pattern hereof) by conſidering the neceſſity and uſefulneſs of ſuch a power: but I cannot inſiſt on thoſe particulars, but proceed to the next *Article*.

The

The Resurrection of the Body, or Flesh.

THE doctrine of the immortality of the soul (whereby men are capable of rewards or punishments, according to their doings in this life) hath, in all Religions, been deemed a necessary Principle, and for such (as *Cicero* and *Seneca* expressly tell us) hath been embraced by all Nations; having indeed probably from original Tradition been conveyed over all the world. The same also divers *Philosophers* (*Socrates* especially, and his followers) did by natural reason strive to evince true. But Tradition being too slippery, and Reason too feeble throughly to perswade it; Christianity by a clear and full proof (of miraculous works, and sensible experiments) doth assure us of it: The certainty thereof we owe to his instruction, *who brought life and* 2 Tim. 1. 10. *immortality to light by the Gospel.* It plainly shews, that when we dy, we do not (like brute beasts, or other natural bodies, when they appear dissolved) wholly perish; that our souls do not vanish into nothing, nor are resolved into invisible principles, but do return into God's hand, or into the place by him appointed for them, there continuing in that life which is proper to a soul. Neither only thus much doth it teach us concerning our state after this life, but it farther informs us, that our bodies themselves shall be raised again out of their dust and corruption, that our souls shall be reunited to them, and that our persons shall be restored into their perfect integrity of nature: the bringing of which effects to pass, by divine power, is commonly called, *the resurrection of the dead*, or, *from the dead* (ἐκ νεκρῶν) and simply the Resurrection; as also being raised, being reduced from the dead—Sometimes also it is called, the *Regeneration* (or iterated nativity) and *being born from the dead*; which terms imply a respect to the body, and to the person of a man, as constituted of body and soul; for the mere permanency of our souls in being and life could not (with any propriety or truth) be called a resurrection; that which never had fallen could not be said to be raised again; that which did never die, could not be restored from death; nor could men be said to rise again but in respect to that part which had fallen, or that state which had ceased to be. And as to be born at first doth signifie the production and union of the parts essential to a man; so to be born again implies the restitution and reunion of the same; a man thereby becoming entirely the same person that he was before. The same is also signified in terms more formal and directly expressive; the *quickning of the dead*; the *vivification of our mortal bodies*; the *redemption of our body*; the *corruptible* (τὸ φθαρτὸν τοῦτο, this very same corruptible body) *putting on incorruption, and this mortal putting on immortality*; *those who are in the graves hearing Christ's voice*, and *proceeding forth to resurrection*, either of *life*, or *judgment*; the *awaking of them which sleep in the dust of the earth*; the sea, the death, the hell

hell (or universal grave) resigning their dead; which expressions, and the like occurring, do clearly and fully prove the reparation of our bodies, and their reunion to our souls, and our persons becoming in substance completely the same that we were. Which truth of all perhaps that Christianity revealed, as most new and strange, was the hardliest received, and found most opposition among Heathens, especially Philosophers: *Hearing the resurrection of the dead, some of them mocked, others said, we will hear thee again of this matter.* So was St. *Paul*'s discourse about this point entertained at *Athens*; they neglected or derided it, as a thing altogether impossible, or very improbable to happen (as *Pliny* somewhere counts the revocation of the dead to life impossible to to be performed, otherwhere calls it, *puerile deliramentum, a childish dotage* to suppose it.) But why it should be deemed either impossible to divine power, or improbable upon accounts of reason, no good argument can be assigned. To recollect the dispersed parts of a man's body, to range and *dispose* them into their due situation and order; to reduce them into a temper fit to discharge vital functions; to rejoyn the soul to a body so restored; why should it be impossible, or seem difficult to him, who did first frame, and temper our body out of the dust, and inspired the soul into it; to him, who out of mere confusion digested the whole world into so wonderful an order and harmony; to him, who into a dead lump of earth inserted such numberless varieties of life; who from seeds buried in the ground and corrupted there, doth cause so goodly plants to spring forth; who hath made all nature to subsist by continual vicissitudes of life and death; every morning, in a manner, and every spring, representing a general Resurrection? (Well might the Prophet *Jeremy* say, *Ah Lord God, thou hast made the heaven and the earth, by thy great power, and stretched out arm; and there is nothing too hard for thee:* there is indeed nothing too hard for omniscient Wisdom to contrive, for omnipotent Strength to execute.) And, what difficulties soever fancy may suggest; Can we doubt of that being possible, which experience attesteth done? *Ezekiel* saw *dry bones* rejoynted, and reinspired with life; divers instances of dead persons restored to life are recorded in the Prophetical Writings, and more in the New Testament; but most remarkable is that passage at our Saviour's death, when it is said, that *many tombs were opened, and many bodies of saints that had departed rose, and coming out of the tombs, after our Saviour's Resurrection, entred into the Holy City, and did appear to many* (or publickly to the many, τοῖς πολλοῖς) which was a most full and manifest experiment of a miraculous Resurrection, like to that which we believe: but of all, our Lord's own Resurrection doth irrefragably confirm the possibility of our Resurrection; so that St. *Paul*, with highest reason, might thus expostulate with the incredulous upon this account: *And if Christ be preached* (or assured by testimony) *that he rose from the dead, how say some, that there is no resurrection of the dead?* that is, how can any man deny that to be possible, which is so palpably exemplified?

Act. 17. 32.

Plin. *Hist. II.* 7. *VII.* 55.

Jer. 32. 17.

Ezek.

Mat. 27. 56.

1 Cor. 15. 12.

Neither can the point be shewed improbable, or implausible; but it is rather very consonant to the reason of the thing; and good causes may be assigned why it should be. Man, according to original design and frame, doth consist of soul and body; these parts have a natural relation, an aptitude, and an appetite (as it seems) to cohabit, and cooperate with each other; many actions very proper to man's nature cannot be performed without their conjunction and concurrence; many

capacities of joy and comfort (with their oppofites) do refult thence: the feparation of them we fee how unwilling, violent and repugnant it is to nature; and we are taught that it is penal, and confequent upon fin, and therefore cannot be good and perfect. Wherefore 'tis no wonder that God defigning to reftore man to his antient integrity, yea to a higher perfection; rewarding him with all the felicity his nature is capable of (on the one hand I mean, as on the other hand juftly to punifh and afflict him according to his demerit) fhould raife the body, and rejoin it to the foul, that it might contribute its natural fubferviency to fuch enjoyments, and fufferings refpectively. Not to omit the congruity in juftice, that the bodies themfelves, which did communicate in works of obedience and holinefs, or of difloyalty and profaneneſs (which in St. *Paul*'s language, were either fervants of righteoufneſs unto fanctity, or flaves to impurity and iniquity) fhould alfo partake in futable recompences; that the body which endured grievous hardfhips for righteoufneſs, fhould enjoy comfortable refreſhments; or that thofe, which did wallow in unlawful pleafures, fhould undergo juft afflictions.

Many other things might be faid to this purpofe, but I pafs to the next point annexed to this, as in nature, fo in order here.

The Life Everlafting.

THE immediate confequent of the Refurrection (common, as St. *Paul* expreſſeth, to juft, and unjuft) is, as we have it placed in the Catalogue of Fundamentals, fet down by the Apoftle to the *Hebrews*, κρίμα αἰώνιον, that judgment or doom, by which the eternal ſtate of every perſon is determined; and accordingly every man muſt (as St. *Paul* fays) *bear the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or evil.* Now this ſtate generally taken (as reſpecting both the righteous and bleſſed, the wicked and curſed perſons) for that it doth ſuppoſe a perpetual duration in being and ſenſe, may be called *everlaſting life*; although life (as being commonly apprehended the principal good, and becauſe all men naturally have a moſt ſtrong deſire to preſerve it; with reference alſo, probably, to the law, wherein continuance of life is propoſed as the main reward of obedience) is uſed to denote peculiarly the bleſſed ſtate; and death (the moſt abominable and terrible thing to nature, the moſt extreme alſo of legal puniſhments threatned upon the tranſgreſſors of the law) is alſo uſed to ſignify the condition of the damned; the reſurrection of life, and reſurrection of damnation; everlaſting life, and everlaſting puniſhment being oppoſed: although, I ſay, life be thus commonly taken (as alſo the reſurrection it ſelf, by an εὐφημισμός, is ſometimes appropriated to the righteous) yet the reaſon of the caſe requires, that here we underſtand it generally ſo as to comprehend both ſtates: both being matters of faith equally neceſſary, and of like fundamental conſequence; both yielding the higheſt encouragements to good practice, and determents from bad. For as on the one hand, what can more ſtrongly excite us to the performance of our duty, than an aſſurance of obtaining hereby ſo happy a ſtate? What can more efficaciouſly withdraw us from impiety, than being certain thereby to loſe, and fall

Act. 24. 15.
Heb. 6. 2.
2 Cor. 5. 10.
Joh. 5. 29.
Mat. 25. 46.
Dan. 12. 2.
Phil. 3. 11.
Luk. 20. 35.

fall short of it? so on the other hand, What can more vehemently provoke us to obedience, than being persuaded, that we shall thereby avoid eternal misery? What can more powerfully deter us from sin, than considering, that by the commission of it we shall expose our selves to that wretched state? Infinitely stupid and obdurate we must be, if the consideration what these states are doth not produce these effects.

What is the state of life? It is a state of highest dignity, and glory; of sweetest comfort and joy; of joy full in measure, pure in quality, perpetual in duration, in all respects perfect to the utmost capacity of our nature; wherein all our parts and faculties shall be raised to their highest pitch of perfection, our bodies shall become free from all corruptibility and decay, all weakness and disease, all grosness and unweildyness, all deformity and defilement; for they shall (as St. *Paul* teaches us) be rendred incorruptible, strong, healthful, glorious and spiritual; our souls also shall in their faculties be advanced, in their inclinations rectified, in their appetites satisfied; the understanding becoming full of light, clear and distinct in knowledg of truth, free from ignorance, doubt and errour; the will being steddily inclined to good, ready to comply with God's will; free from all weakness, and all perverseness; our affections being set in right order and frame; with a constant regularity tending unto that which is really best, and taking a full delight therein: wherein we shall enjoy the blissful sight of God, smiling in love and favour upon us; the presence of our gracious Redeemer, embracing us with most tender affection; the society of the Holy Angels, and of the just made perfect; whose company and conversation, how unconceivably sweet and delightful must it be? wherein nothing adverse, or troublesom can befal us; no unpleasant or offensive object shall present it self to us; no want or need of any thing shall appear; no care, or fear, or suspicion; no labour or toil; no sorrow or pain, no distaste or regret, no stir or contention, no listlesness or satiety shall be felt, or shall come near us; where God (as it is in the *Apocalypse*) will wipe every tear from our eyes (of them who shall come there) and death shall be no more; nor sorrow, nor clamour, nor pain any more: it is in fine a state in excellency surpassing all words to express it, all thoughts to conceive it; of which the brightest splendours, and the choicest pleasures here are but obscure shadows, and faint resemblances; comparable to which no eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard any thing; nor hath it ascended into any heart of man to conceive the like; as St. *Paul* out of the Prophet *Esay* telleth us. Which state, seeing by a pious life we certainly do acquire a right unto, and shall enjoy a possession of; but from an impious life do forfeit all pretence thereto, and shall infallibly be deprived of it: Are we not infinitely mad, are we not extremely enemies, and injurious to our selves, if we do not embrace the one, and eschew the other?

Apoc. 21. 4.

1 Cor. 2. 9.

Again, What is the other state, that of death? What but a state of lowest *disgrace* and ignominy; of utter shame and confusion; of intolerable pains and miseries, without any ease or respit, without any hope or remedy, without any cessation or end; wherein we shall not only for ever be secluded from God's presence and favour; not only be deprived of all rest, comfort and joy; but detruded into utmost wretchedness, into a condition far more dark and dismal, more forlorn and disconsolate than we can imagin; which not the sharpest pain of body, nor the bittereſt anxiety of mind, which any of us hath ever felt, can in any measure represent; wherein our bodies shall be afflicted continually

ly by a sulphureous flame, not only scorching the skin, but piercing the inmost sinews, our souls shall incessantly be gnawed upon by a worm (the worm of bitter remorse for our wretched perverseness and folly, the worm of horrid despair ever to get out of that sad estate) under which unexpressible vexations, always enduring pangs of death, always in sense and in desire dying, we shall never be able to die: which miserable state, since it is by performing our duty surely avoided, since by neglecting, or transgressing God's laws it is inevitably incurr'd; if we do not accordingly chuse to demean our selves, how infinitely careless are we of our own good, how desperately bent to our own ruin?

If these considerations make no impression on us; What can any reason effect? What can any words signify? how monstrously sottish, or wild do we appear to be? I conclude with Prayer to Almighty God, That according to his infinite mercy, he by his gracious assistance leading us in the ways of piety and righteousness, would bring us to everlasting life and happiness; that he by the same powerful grace withdrawing us from impiety and iniquity, would rescue us from eternal death, and misery: *To him, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, be for ever all glory and praise.* **Amen.**

A

A TABLE

Of Things, or the Chief Matters contained in the Expoſition of the *CREED.*

The SECOND VOLUME.

A.

Afflictions. Whence ſupport under them, 137, 345, 346. *Benefits* thereof, 347, 379, 420.

Almah, as ſpoken of the *Virgin Mary*, tranſlated ἀπόκρυφος by *Aquila*, 322.

Almighty; Why no other Attributes of God expreſſed in our Creed than that of Almighty, 154.

Angels. The Philoſophers Notions of them, 115. Their Account of their Quality and Production, 130. In Scripture ſtiled the Sons of God, 129. The manner of their Creation, why not manifeſtly expreſſed in Scripture, 156. The Heathens opinions of their Original, 157. Their Creation, 162.

Ambition, contrary to Chriſtian Religion, 10.

Anointing. The Uſe, Antiquity, and Perſons Conſecrated by it among the *Jews*, 216, 217.

Apoſtacy of the Devil, from Infidelity, 14.

Apoſtles. Their Method of teaching the Chriſtian Religion, 56. The Character of their Lives, and Doctrine, 375.

Apparitions. The Truth, and Reality of them, 121. Exceptions againſt them anſwered, *in ſeq.*

Ariſtotle, the leaſt credulous or fanciful of Philoſophers, 102. His Notions concerning God, *ibid.*

Aſcenſion of Chriſt, 394, 395, 433.

Aſſent. Proper grounds of it, 24.

Aſſent and Judgment, Their Relation to one another, 27.

Atheiſts. Their Principles, 12, 13.

S. *Auguſtines* opinion of Juſtifying Faith, and conſequence of that his opinion, 62, 63.

B.

Baptiſm. In which Juſtification diſpenſed, 78. Perſonality of the Holy Ghoſt ſhewed from thence, 452.

Bellarmine and *Grotius* their Allegations about Juſtifying Faith conſidered, 76.

Bellarmine, his improper Compariſons concerning the Union of the two Natures in *Chriſt*, 310.

Beza, *notatur*, 367.

C.

Careleſneſs, a cauſe of infidelity, 3.

Cenſuring, how regulated, 439. And by what means ſupported under it, 441.

Ceremonies of the Church, 206.

Chaldeans, *Phœnicians* and *Egyptians*, their Antiquity, 112.

Chaldee Paraphraſes, their Antiquity, 219.

Chance. The Abſurdities from imagining Chance to have produc'd any part of the World, 82, 90.

Chance and Neceſſity the ſame, 83, 90

Charity derived from Faith, 41.

Charity to one another, how promoted, 139.

Charity. The many great Advantages thereof, 204.

Charity to our Neighbour, how wrought in us, 251, 270, 440.

Charity to the Poor, whence learnt, 323, 439.

Chriſt. The Import, and Reaſon of the Name, 216. The Propheſies

concerning his Appearance, and Offices in the World, 221. *Porphyry*'s Objection against the Time of his coming answered, 222. *Christ*'s Genealogy not contested, *ibid.* Nature of the Prophecies concerning Him, 252. Character of his Conversation, 227. Offices, 272, 399, 400. Divinity, 280. In what regard called the Son of God, 278. Whence stiled our Lord, 291. To be the Judg of quick and dead, 429, *&c.* His Dominion, 294, *&c.* His Divinity shewed by his Conception by the Holy Ghost, 318. Manner of his Conception, Reasons and Use of it, 317. Incarnation, *ibid.* how performed, 319. The influence it ought to have on our Practice, 320, 321. The great Benefits hereof, 315. Christ's Sufferings, 326. Time thereof, 330. Advantages arising from the manner of them, 337, *&c.* Correspondence with antient Prophecies, 340. His Death, the Nature, and Adjuncts of it, 344, 351. Prophecies, Causes and Effects thereof, 352, 355, 358. *vid.* Resurrection and Ascension of Christ.

Christian Religion, The Truth and Divinity thereof, 171. Excellence and Perfection of it, 199. Directions therein for the Government of Life, 205.

Christian Religion. Manner of its Propagation, 377, *&c.*

Church. The Holy Catholick Church, 463, 464. Obligations from Belief thereof, *ibid.*

Collyridians, the first that attempted worshipping the *Virgin Mary*, 325. The Primitive Fathers detestation and reproof of this Error, *ibid.*

Communion of Saints, 465.

Complyance. Base Complyance; how avoided, 442.

Computation. Antient Manners, and Original hereof, 111.

Conscience, best satisfied by Christian Religion, 209.

Conscience. A good Conscience, whence obtained, 361.

Consent. Universal Consent. The great Author thereof, 105.

Consubstantialists, 405.

Contentedness, from Faith, 44, 136.

Covetousness. An Enemy to Christian Religion, 9. springs from Infidelity, 13.

Council of Trent, their false Notions of Justifying Faith, 61.

Creation. The Order, and Beauty thereof, 163. Manner and Reason of it, 164.

Credulity and Incredulity compared, 122. the former less dangerous, *ibid.*

Cross of Christ, *vid.* Christ's Sufferings.

Custom. The Authority thereof, 99.

Custom of Sinning, The Authority and Mischiefs thereof, 12.

D.

Death. Christ's death, Nature thereof, 345, *&c.*

Disputes. When most abounding in the Church, 67.

Dominion. Who have titles to it, 296.

Dreams. 121.

E.

Education. Good Education, its Advantages, 100.

Effects. Supernatural Effects wrought for divers causes, with an enumeration of them, 117. v. *Miracles.*

Enchantments, 121.

Enemies of Christian Religion, who and how conquered, 30.

Enemies. Arguments to love them from Christ's sufferings, 344.

Envy. Opposite to Christian Religion, 10.

Epicurus, his Opinion of the Production of Man, 94.

Eutychians. Their Heresy of Christ's Humane Nature converted into his Divinity, confuted by Christ's Ascension, 405.

Existence. What doth in a lower degree somewhere exist, doth probably otherwhere exist in higher perfections, 97.

F.

Faith. The Power, Reaſonableneſs and Benefits of it, 15, 36. Objections againſt it, with anſwers to them, 16. Nature of Faith, 17. The value thereof as implying Divine Knowledg, 17. Faith and a good Conſcience inſeparable, 9. Faith and Works conjoyned, 14, 47. Faith gives clear and certain Knowledg, 17. Faith without Reaſon impoſſible, 21. implies a good uſe of reaſon, 19. and compliance with the Providence and Grace of God, 22, 23.

Faith. The original and increaſe thereof, 22. proceeds from ſincerity and ſoundneſs of Judgment, 26. is increaſed by diligence and attention, *ib.* and by reſolution, 30. is voluntary, 32. The dangerous miſtakes about Faith, *ib.* the Antients deſcription of it, 33. the effects and influences of Faith, 37. Faith previous to Pardon, 61. Examples of its power, 83. increaſed from conſideration of Chriſt's ſufferings, 342. and reſurrection, *&c.* 383.

Faith, and Hope in God, whence wrought in us, 361.

Father. On what grounds the Title of Father attributed to God, 128. and what influence it ought to have on us, 134.

Fear. A cauſe of Infidelity, 8, 9. Power thereof, 413.

Fidelity. The manifold miſchiefs ariſing from contempt of it, 13.

Forgiveneſs of Sins, 465.

Fortune. Her pretended power diſclaimed.

Fortune. The character thereof, 180.

G.

German Ubiquitaries confuted from Chriſt's Aſcenſion, 405.

Gnoſtick Hereſy concerning two Gods, 163.

God. The benefits of having right conceptions of him, 25. theſe repreſented by Chriſtian Religion, 111, 112. His Exiſtence proved from the frame of the World, 80, 97. and of humane Nature, 92. from Univerſal conſent, 104. from ſupernatural Effects, 117. from Belief of a future Judgment, 418, 420. His Works unſearchable, 91. His Eternity, Immutability, *&c.* 115. proved from the making and governing the World, *ibid.* His Unity declared from that harmony which is in the world, and from the common ſuffrage of Mankind, 115. Plurality of Gods among the Philoſophers how to be underſtood, 116.

God. Names of him, their import, 140.

Goſpel. Doctrine thereof, and Benefits made void by infidelity, 2.

Goſpel. The unjuſt prejudices againſt it, 5.

Goſpel. Tenour thereof, 70. Perfection of it, 230.

Government. Civil Government deſtroy'd by Atheiſts, 13. v. *Societies.*

Grace, Falling from it, 62.

Gratitude, learnt from Chriſt's ſufferings, 341.

Grief and *Pain*, 165, 166.

H.

Hades. Interpretation thereof, 363, *&c.*

Hamakom, A name applied to God by the Jewiſh Doctors, 145.

Happineſs. Future Happineſs, 474, 475.

Hardneſs of heart. The miſchiefs of it, 5.

Heaven. The extent of the ſignification of the word, 156.

Heaven by the Antient Fathers thought inacceſſible before Chriſt's Aſcenſion, 402. The grounds of this Suppoſition, *ibid.*

Heavens. Their wonderful Frame diſcovers infinite Wiſdom, and Power, 91. Three Heavens according to the Jewiſh Notion, 158.

Heaven ſometimes in Scripture taken for the place of God's more eſpecial preſence, 395.

Hell. Chriſt's deſcent thither explained, 363. The vain conceits about

about the same, enumerated, and rejected, 369.
Hell Torments, 475.
Hermogenes's Error concerning the Creation of the World, 163.
Holy Ghost. Effusion thereof a great Attestation to the Christian Religion, 268.
Holy Ghost. The miraculous Efficacy thereof in our Blessed Saviour's conception, 317.
Holy Ghost. The Offices peculiarly attributed to him, 318, 319. His Divinity, 445. Personality, 446. Name, *ibid. & in seq.*
Holy Ghost. The Efficacy of the Holy Ghost in Scripture stiled the Holy Ghost, 447. The Holy Ghost is God, 453, *&c.* Procession of the Holy Ghost, 459, 460. His Offices and Operations, *ibid.* Whence called ἅγιος, 461.
Hope. Power thereof, 38, 53, 413.
Humility increaseth Faith, 28. proceeds from Faith, 38. Acceptableness thereof to God, 60. Wrought in us by the consideration of our Dependence upon God, 136. and of Christ's assuming humane Nature, 313, 323.
Humour. Delicacy and Niceness thereof, 6. a cause of Infidelity, *ibid.*
Hypostasis. Why the word not admitted by the Latin Fathers, 450.

I.

Idolatry. The Gospel hath shewn how to destroy it, 240.
Idolatry of the Church of *Rome* in worshipping the Virgin *Mary*, 325.
Jehovah, Attributed to Christ, 294.
Jesus, The true Messias, 213. Why the Name given to Christ, 214.
Jewish Religion. The imperfection thereof, 186. No imputation upon God from thence, 191.
Infidels. viz. Such as do not good Actions, 13.
Infidelity. The folly thereof, 122. The chief cause of Sin, 1. Character thereof, *ibid.*
Injuries. How we may learn to forgive them, 441.
Intemperance, An Enemy to Christian Religion, 42.
Joshua, A Type of Christ, 214.
Judaism. Antient Judaism no where to be found, 198.
Judg (Upright) his Character, 26.
Judgment. Bad Judgment a cause of Infidelity, 4.
Judgment. Future Judgment, what influence it hath on our Lives, 38.
Judgment. Future Judgment will clearly discover the Events of this Life, and justifie the Divine proceedings, 126.
Judgment. A Future Judgment, the Reasonableness and Equity thereof, 419. Belief hereof the greatest incentive to Virtue, 414.
Judgment. A Future Judgment, the certainty and circumstances thereof from Divine Revelation, 425.
Judgment. The last Judgment. Solemnity thereof, 433. Justice of God, Frequent instances thereof in this life, and on whom often executed, 123, 124.
Justice in our dealings, 439.
Justifie. That Word in prophane Writers seldom, or never applied to persons as it is in Scripture, 69.
Justification, 359. The Divine Acts to which that Term is applicable, 67. What it imports, *ibid.* The Fathers and Schoolmen did not differ about it, *ibid.* Disputes about it when they began, and how to be reconciled, *in seq.* The differences relate principally to the Notion of the Word, 69. Is not learnt from mere Grammarians, *ibid.* Nature thereof explained from S. *Paul*'s Epistles, 70, 75. Is not an infus'd quality, *Bellarmine* and *Grotius*'s Allegations insufficient in this point, 76. On what account S. *Austin* and some other Fathers may seem to use the word Justification

fication according to the ſenſe of the Tridentine Council, 77. Of the Time when the Act is performed or diſpenſed, *ibid.*

Juſtification, and Sanctification ſometimes in Scripture equivalent Terms, 78. when it is we deprive our ſelves of the Benefits of it, 79.

Juſtifying Faith. Embracing thereof ſuppoſes a virtuous mind, 31. The Nature of Juſtifying Faith, 50, *&c.* Errors concerning the ſame refuted, 63, 64. Whence the Jews and Gentiles objected againſt it, 77.

J. Martyr, notatur.

K.

Keys. Power of the Keys, 468. *Kingdom of Heaven.* The phraſe explained, 469. and what meant by opening the ſame, 470.

Knowledg. Divine Knowledg, the excellence of it, 16, 28. attained by Faith, *ibid.* Perfection thereof, 18.

Knowledg. Humane Knowledg, uncertainty of it, 18.

Knowledg. The natural deſire thereof, and Argument of the Soul's Immortality, and Original from God, 100.

L.

Laws. Humane Laws, the Nature and Obligation of them, 414, 416.

Limbus Patrum, 369.

Life Everlaſting, 474.

Love of God to men. A threefold manner thereof expreſſed in Scripture, *ibid.*

Love to God, wrought in us from conſideration of Chriſt's death, 361.

M.

Macedonians, or *Semi-Arians*, their Hereſy concerning the Holy Ghoſt, 454, *&c.*

Magicians, 256.

Magiſtrates. Their Authority from God, 382. their Power to inflict Puniſhment, *ibid.*

Malice, 339.

Mahometaniſm, 128.

Man, his Creation by God evidenced from Reaſon, 93. Abſurdities of the contrary, 96.

Manichæus, his vain Opinion of the Creation of the World, 155. and Two firſt Cauſes of Things, 164.

Marcion. His Hereſy of two Gods, 155, 163.

Mary. The *Virgin Mary*, her Relations, and Qualifications, 323. by whom firſt worſhipped, 325.

Matrimony. Original thereof, whence, 112.

Matter. The Philoſophers Opinions of it, 158.

Meekneſs; Faith productive of it, 22.

Merit, diſclaimed, 60.

Meſſias. The Names attributed to Him in Scripture, 213. Why the Name not openly expreſſed in the Antient Traditions, *ibid.*

Miracles. Their Power, Certainty and Original, 167, 252, 261. Divers cauſes, why wrought, 132. Not ceaſed, if there were neceſſary occaſion for the working of them, 268.

Miracles. True Miracles demonſtrate Divine Power, 120. and that they no wiſe depend upon Matter, *ibid.* Miracles, why beſtowed, 371.

Moſes's Hiſtory, moſt antient and credible, 112.

Mythology of the Heathen, 110, 111.

N.

Names antiently given by Divine Providence to Perſons anſwerable to their Employments, 214. The excellent uſe thereof, *ibid.*

Nations, which moſt antient, 11.

Nativity of Chriſt, how to be ſolemnized, 314, 315.

Nature. Union of the two Natures in Chriſt, 311, 312.

Nature. Humane Nature, the Dignity thereof, 314.

Neceſſity and Chance the ſame, 83.

Negligence, a Cauſe of Infidelity, 3.

Neſtorius's Hereſy concerning the two Natures in Chriſt, 319, 320.

Netser (or the *Branch*) the Name why attributed to the *Messias*, 214.

O.

Oaths, how conducive to the Preservation of humane Societies, 416.
Obedience to God, whence learnt, 134, 135, 341, 393.
Oracles; Their Antiquity, 119.
Original Sin, 73, 74, 297, 321, 356.

P.

Paganism, 198.
Pain and Grief, 166, 167.
παντοκράτωρ. That Title, why proper to God, 141, 142.
Paradise, lost by Infidelity, 14.
Paradise. Seat thereof, 369.
Passion, a cause of Infidelity, 8. contrary to the Christian Religion, 10.
Patience, accessory to Faith, 30. proceeds from Faith, 44, 45.
Peace, how advanced by Christ's Kingdom, 239.
Perfection. Some degrees thereof among the Creatures, and whence so wisely appointed, 164.
Philosophers, Their absurd Assertions, 105. Their Obscure Notions about Religion, 17, 18, 175. Their Precepts, how little useful to promote Virtue, or restrain Vice, 415.
Philosophers and Poets. Their Opinions concerning Man's Original, compared with the Scripture Account, 109, 110.
Philosophy, and Christianity farther compared, 207.
Plants. The great Power, and Wisdom of God in making them, 82, 84.
Pliny, his Opinion of a Resurrection, and Cause of his Error therein, 372.
Poets. The best Interpreters of the Popular Opinions, 114.
Pontius Pilate. A Character of him, 331.
Porphyrius. His acknowledgment of the Certainty of some Predictions, 120.
Possible. What is in kind possible, is in any Perfection of Degree possible, 97.
Power, and Wisdom of God in the Creation, 83.
Predictions. Their Original, Antiquity and Authority, 119.
Prejudice. A Cause of Infidelity, 5.
Pride, a Cause of Infidelity, 5. Opposition thereof to Christian Religion, 6, 7.
Probability. The Degrees thereof, according to *Aristotle*, 105.
Proof of Things, how to be managed, 122.
Prophesie, 118.
Providence of God. Disbelief thereof makes Covetous, 13.
Providence visible in the Constitution and Preservation of Societies, 103, 123.
Providence of God, 117, 147, 148, 151.
Providence vindicated by Belief of a Future Judgment, 418.
Prudence, Companion of Faith, 31.
Purgation and Sacrifices from Institution, 111.
Punishment. Causes and Consequences of it, 2, 13. What Influence Temporal Punishment hath to the pursuit of Virtue, or avoiding Vice, 417.

Q.

Quick and Dead. The Phrase explained, 435.

R.

Reason. Use thereof in Religion, 6, 19, 33, 172. Mischiefs arising from abuse thereof in Religion, 81.
Reason and Conscience determine the Excellence of the Gospel, 28.
Reason. The due Exercise thereof makes every part of the Creation useful to us, 88.
Redemption of the World. God's Infinite Love in it, 24. Mystery, and Reasons thereof, 309, *&c.*
Regeneration, how wrought, 320, 461. Necessity thereof, *ibid.*
Religion supported from Belief of a Future Judgment, 416.

Religion. The Atheists Objections against it, 11.
Religion. Christian Religion recommended to Reason and Experience, 20. Perfection of it, 231. Corresponds with antient Predictions, *ibid.* Testimonies given by God to it, 252, 270.
Repentance, whence wrought, 361.
Resignation, 29, 136, 304.
Resolution. Want thereof a cause of Infidelity, 8, 28, 44.
Resurrection of Christ, 344, 366, 371, 386. The great Attestation it gave to the Christian Religion, 267, 389. Expediency thereof, 385. An Act of the Divine Love, 388. Assurance of our Resurrection, *ibid.* vid. 371, *& in seq.*
Resurrection of the Body, 472. Sometimes called Regeneration, *ibid.*
Revelation. Divine Revelation, the Necessity and Benefits thereof, 175. Character of it, 180, 186, 189.
Revenge, contrary to Christian Religion, 10.
Rewards and Punishments, *v.* Judgment.
Right hand of God, The Import of that Phrase, 395, 396.
Romans, 5 *Ch.* 16, 18. vid. *Bellarmine*'s Mistakes about the Interpretation of them, 74.

S.

Sabellius and *Socinus*, not differing in their Notions concerning the Holy Spirit, 450.
Sabaoth, A Name of God, 141.
Sabbath, Whence Instituted among the *Jews*, 155.
Sacrifices, Their Original from Institution, 111.
Sacrifices. Expiatory Sacrifices, 465.
Sacrifices. Jewish Sacrifices Prefigurative of Christ's Death, 352, 353.
Sacrifice of Christ. Sufficiency thereof, 287.
Sanctification and *Justification* are in Scripture sometimes equivalent Terms, 78.
Scepticism; the unreasonableness and mischiefs of it, 123.
Scripture. Stile thereof, 210.
Self-denial, 25.
Sheol. Interpretation of that word, 364.
Sin. Whence it proceeds, 166. heinousness thereof, 361.
Sin. Wilful Sin, how prevented, 343.
Sincerity, 42, 444. attained and practised by consideration of a Future Judgment, 437.
Sloth, A cause of Infidelity, 4.
Societies destroy'd by Atheists, 13.
Societies evince the Being of a God, 102. Love thereof natural, *ibid.* Advantages of the same, 103. Preserved by belief of a Future Judgment, 415.
Soul and Body, their Union, 311.
Soul's Immortality, 94, 97, 373, 390, 472. Excellence and Operations, 95, 109. Creation by God, 162. Heathens Opinions of the State of Souls after their departure, 363, 364. *Jewish* account hereof, 365. various acceptations of the word *Soul* in Scripture, 366.
Spirit. The use of that Appellation. 446.
Spirit. A fierce Spirit, a Cause of Infidelity, 9.
Spirits. vid. Apparitions.
Spirits. Evil Spirits, 256, 257, 266.
Stupidity, a Cause of Infidelity, 4.
Sufferings of Christ, 326. The inconsistency of the Philosophers in objecting against them, 343.

T.

Talmudists. The Seven Things they say were constituted before the World, 214.
Temperance, 42.
Tithes, Of what sort they were paid in antient Times, 111. the Quantity allow'd, *ibid.*
Tradition. Whence corrupted, 113. this corruption no Argument against the Truth and Authority thereof, *ibid.* Agreement

ment thereof in Man's Original, and Creation of the World, 161.
Transubstantiation. Absurdity thereof from Christ's Ascension, 405.
Trinity. The Blessed Trinity, 447, 448.
Truth. Excellence thereof, 16, 36. attained by Faith, *ibid.*
Truth. Want of Love to it a cause of Infidelity, 6. how obstructed, 23. Power and Plainness thereof, 36.

V.

Valentinus and *Followers*, their Heresy concerning Christ's Conception, 318.
Ubiquitaries. German Ubiquitaries confuted from Christ's Ascension, 405.
Virgin Mary. The manner of our Blessed Saviour's being born of her, 320.
Virtue. The Practice, and Instances thereof even in this degenerate State, 98, 99.
Visions. Their Reality, and by what Authority confirmed, 121.
Unbelief. vid. Infidelity.
Volkelius. His Error of the Creation of the World, 163.

W.

THE *Will*, τὸ θέλημα, a Name by some Writers assigned to God, 447.
Will. Perverseness thereof a cause of Infidelity, 5.
Will. Freedom thereof, 32, 95.
Words. How used by the same Writers, 77.
World. Deluge thereof from Infidelity, 14.
World. Testimonies of Naturalists concerning the frame thereof, 86. Hence God's Existence proved, 86, 87. Every part subservient to Man, 88. Manner of its Creation, and reason thereof, 167. Philosophers Opinions on this subject refuted, 159, 160.
World. The imperfection of the antient Hebrew Language to express it, 344.
World. Contempt thereof taught from Christ's Sufferings, *ibid.*

Z.

ZEAL. Blind Zeal a cause of Infidelity, 9.
ζεὺς ζαβεάσιος.

The End of the Second Volume.

THE
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Of the Learned
Iſaac Barrow, D.D.
Late Maſter of *Trinity Colledge* in *Cambridge.*

Publiſhed
By his Grace Dr. *JOHN TILLOTSON,*
Late Arch-Biſhop of *CANTERBURY.*

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The Contents.

SERM. I.

OF doing all in the Name of Christ.

COLOSS. III. 17.

And whatsoever ye do in word, or in deed, do all in the Name of the Lord *Jesus.* pag. 1.

SERM. II.

Of Being Imitatours of Christ.

1 COR. IV. 16.

I beseech you be followers; or, I exhort you be imitatours of me. p. 13.

SERM. III.

Abiding in Christ *to be demonstrated by walking as* Christ *did.*

1 JOHN II. 6.

He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk as he walked. p. 25.

SERM. IV.

Of Submission to the Divine Will.

LUKE XXII. 42.

Nevertheless let not my will, but thine be done. p. 34.

SERM. V, VI, VII, VIII, IX.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. IV. 11.

I have learned in whatever state I am, therewith to be content. p. 43, 54, 62, 72, 86.

SERM. X.

Of Patience.

1 PET. II. 21.

Because also Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps. p. 97.

SERM. XI.

Rejoyce evermore.

1 THESS. V. 16.

Rejoyce evermore. p. 109.

SERM. XII, XIII.
Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

PROV. IV. 23.
Keep thy heart with all diligence, &c. p. 118, 125.

SERM. XIV, XV.
The Consideration of our Latter End.

PSAL. XC. 12.
So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto Wisdom. p. 136, 149.

SERM. XVI, XVII.
The danger and mischief of delaying Repentance.

PSAL. CXIX. 60.
I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments. p. 161, 171.

SERM. XVIII, XIX.
Of Industry in General.

ECCLES. IX. 10.
Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might. p. 180, 191

SERM. XX, XXI, XXII.
Of Industry in our General Calling, as Christians, as Gentlemen, as Scholars.

ROM. XII. 11.
Not slothful in business. p. 201, 217, 218

SERM. XXIII.
The unsearchableness of God's Judgments.

ROM. XI. 33.
How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his ways past finding out? p. 228

SERM. XXIV, XXV, XXVI, XXVII.
Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.
Obey them that have the rule over you. p. 238, 247, 256, 26

SERM. XXVIII.
Of Self-love in General.

2 TIM. III. 1.
For men shall be lovers of themselves. p. 27

SERM. XIXX.
Of Self-conceit.

2 TIM. III. 2.
For men shall be lovers of themselves, &c. p. 280

SERM. XXX.
Of Self-confidence, Self-complacence, Self-will and Self-interest.

2 TIM. III. 2.
For men shall be lovers of themselves, &c. p. 289.

SERM. XXXI.
Of Vain-glory, Arrogance, Talking and Thinking of ones self.

2 TIM. III. 2.
For men shall be lovers of themselves, &c. p. 297.

SERM. XXXII, XXXIII.
Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

ROM. XII. 17.
Provide things honest in the sight of all men. p. 303, 315.

SERM. XXXIV, XXXV.
Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

2 COR. VIII. 21.
Providing for honest things not onely in the sight of the Lord, but in the sight of Men. p. 326, 336.

SERM. XXXVI, XXXVII.
Of the Goodness of God.

PSAL. CXLV. 9.
The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. p. 348, 356.

SERM. XXXVIII.
No respect of Persons with God.

ROM. II. 11.
For, there is no respect of persons with God. p. 364

SERM. XXXIX, XL, XLI, XLII.
The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 TIM. IV. 10.
—The living God who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe. p. 380, 393, 404, 414,

SERM.

SERM. XLIII.
The Nativity of our Lord tidings of great joy.

LUKE II. 10.
And the Angel said unto them, Fear not, for Behold, I bring you tidings great joy, which shall be to all people. p. 42

SERM. XLIV.
The Sufferings of Christ *foretold in the Old Testament.*

ACTS III. 18.
But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his Prophe that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. p. 43

SERM. XLV.
A Whitsunday-*Sermon of the gift of the Holy Ghost.*

ACTS II. 38.
—— *And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.* p. 44

IMPRIMATUR,

Feb. 11. 168⅘. *C. Alston*, R. P. D. *Hen.* Episc. *Lond.* a Sacris.

TO

Her Royal Highneſs

THE

PRINCESS

ANNE

OF

DENMARK,

THOMAS BARROW,

The Authour's Father,

Humbly Dedicateth theſe

SERMONS.

ANNE

Vol. III.

SERMON I.

Of Doing all in the Name of Christ.

COLOSS. 3. 17.

And whatsoever ye do in word, or in deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus.

WHatsoever ye do in word, or deed: A Duty we see the Apostle injoyns us of a large extent, and therefore surely of a great Importance; indeed of an universal concernment; such as must go along with, must run through all our Words and all our Actions. We are therefore much obliged, and much concerned to attend thereto, and to practise it carefully. But first we must understand what it is; the doing whereof depends upon understanding the sense of that phrase (*doing in the name of Jesus*) being somewhat ambiguous, and capable of divers meanings; which both in common use, and in H. Scripture we find it to bear different, according to the variety of matters or occasions to which it is applyed; most of which are comprehended, and (as it were) complicated in that general one, according to which we may be said to do that in another person's name, which we do with any kind of reference or regard to him; such as our relations, or our obligations to that person do require; and the particular nature of the action doth admit. And according to this acception I conceive it safest and best to interpret Saint *Paul*'s meaning here, supposing it to comprehend all the more special, and restrained meanings of this phrase, truly applicable to the present matter; of which meanings I shall endeavour in order to propound the chief; and together, both to unfold and to inculcate the several respective branches of this duty. Yet first of all rejecting one or two, which cannot well be applied to this purpose.

To do in another's name, doth sometimes denote the assuming another's person, or pretending to be the same with him, the very He. So, *many shall come in my name*, (Prophesied our Saviour) *saying, I am Christ*: To do thus in *Jesus* his Name, is the part of an Antichrist, and an Impostor. What sence therefore hath nothing to do here. Matt. 24. 5.

Again; to do in anothers Name, doth often imply doing *alterius loco*, or *vice*; in another's Name, or stead, as a deputy, or substitute; representing the Person, or supplying the office of another. So did the Prophets

Jer. 7. 13. 26. 5. 14. 14. Jam. 5. 10. Jo. 5. 34. Matt. 10. 4. Ezr. 5. 1. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Rom. 13. 4. Deut. 1. 17. *come, and speak in God's Name*; what they declared, or injoined, being therefore said to be declared, and injoined by God himself: *I spake unto you, rising up early, and speaking* (*viz.* by the Prophets, whom he sent, and who are said to come and speak in his Name.) And thus the Apostles spake in *Christ*'s Name: *We are Ambassadours for Christ*; *we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled.* Thus also Princes govern, and Magistrates execute Justice in God's Name; whence they are stiled *Gods*, as being his Lieutenants, administring that Judgment, which belongs originally and principally to him. Now for this sense, neither is it so proper, or convenient here; it agreeing only to some particular Persons, and to some peculiar Actions of them; insomuch, that others presuming to act, according to that manner or kind, in *Jesus* his Name, shall thereby become usurpers and deceivers. We (and to us all this Precept is directed) shall heinously transgress our duty, doing any thing thus in his Name, without his Letters of Credence; without being specially called or sent; or being duly by him authorized thereto.

These, and such like senses the present matter doth not well admit; the rest that suit thereto I shall with some distinction in order represent.

I. To do in another's Name sometimes doth signify to do it out of affection or honour to another; for anothers sake, because we love, or esteem him; ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι being equivalent to ἕνεκα τοῦ ὀνόματος, and διὰ τὸ ὄνομα. Thus it is said, *Whosoever shall give you a cup of Water to drink in my name*; *because ye are Christ's* (is added by way of interpretation, that is, out of respect to *Christ*, because of your relation to him) *shall not lose his reward.* And thus surely we ought to do every thing in *Jesus* his Name; all our Actions ought to proceed from a Principle of grateful love, and reverence towards our gracious Redeemer. *Let all your Actions be done in Charity*, saith the *Apostle*; if in Charity to our Neighbour, then much more in love to him, for whose sake we are especially bound to love our Neighbour. Upon any undertaking, or applying our selves to action, we should so reflect thereupon as to consider, whether that we are going about be apt to please him, and conducible to his honour; if so, remembring what he hath done and suffered for us, (what excellent Blessings he hath purchased for us, what exceeding Benefits he hath conferr'd upon us) we should out of love and respect to him readily perform it; but if it otherwise appear displeasing, or dishonourable to him, we should, from the same Principles, carefully decline it. The duty is certain, and the reason thereof evident; for inducement to the practice thereof observe St. *Paul*'s example; who thus represents himself in the main imployment of his life, acting, *The love of Christ constrains us*; *judging this, that he died for all, that they who live might not live to themselves, but to him that died and rose for them*: The love of *Christ*, begot and maintained by a consideration of his great benefits conferr'd on him, was the spring that set St. *Paul* on work, that excited, and urged him forward to action. Thus doing, we shall do in *Jesus* his Name; but if we act out of love to our selves (to promote our own interests, to gratify our own desires, to procure Credit or Praise to our selves) we act onely in our own Names, and for our own sakes; not in the Name, or for the sake of *Jesus*.

Comp. Mark 9. 41. Matt. 10. 41. 24. 9. 19. 29. Matt. 18. 5. 1 Cor. 16. 14. Φιλοτιμεῖται ἐν ἑαυτῷ, ἀλλ' ἐν ἄλλῳ εἶναι. 2 Cor. 5. 9. 14. 19. 1 Thess. 2. 6. Tit. 1. 11. 1 Pet. 5. 2. Philip. 1. 15. Matt. 23. 5.

II. To do in another's Name implies doing (chiefly) for the interest, or advantage of another; upon another's behalf or accompt; as the servants, or factours of another. For, when the business is another's, and the fruit, or benefit emergent belong to another, he that prosecutes that business may well be, and is commonly supposed to act in that other's name. Thus our Saviour is in St. *John*'s Gospel expressed *to come, to speak,*

to

to act in God's Name; because he did God's business (*the work which God gave him to accomplish*) and entirely *sought the glory of God*, as he there himself often avouches and professes. And thus (in imitation of him) ought we also to do all things in his Name; remembring that we *are not our own Men, but the Servants of Jesus*, (Servants to him not only by nature, as to our Maker and Preserver; but by purchase, as to our Redeemer, who bought us with the greatest Price; and by compact also, we having freely undertaken his Service, and expecting wages from him) that we have therefore no business or imployment properly our own, but that all our business is (or should be) to serve him, and promote his glory; *Whether we eat or drink, or whatever we do, we should do all to the glory of our Lord.* Whatever I say, we do, we therefore should perform it with this formal reference, as it were, toward *Jesus*, as his Servants, from conscience of the duty we owe to him; with intention therein to serve him; in expectation of reward onely from him. So doth St. *Paul* (in prosecution of this same Precept) beneath in this *Chapter* injoyns us, that *whatever we do, we perform it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing* (or considering) *that from the Lord we shall receive the recompence of the inheritance*; *for that we serve the Lord Christ.* In like manner otherwhere he teaches us to do what we do *not as pleasers of men* (not upon any inferiour accompts) *but as Servants of Christ, knowing and considering that we have a Master in Heaven.* But,

Joh. 7. 18. 8. 54. 10. 25. 5. 43. 36. 6. 28. 9. 5, 4. 1 Cor. 6. 15. 7. 23. Heb. 9. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 18. Rom. 14. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 10. 31. Col. 3. 22, 23. Eph. 6. 6, 5.

III. Doing in another's Name imports frequently doing by the appointment and command, or by the commission and authority of another. Ἐν ποίᾳ δυνάμει ἢ ἐν ποίῳ ὀνόματι, *By what power, and in what name have ye done these things*, say the High Priests to the Apostles? that is, Who did appoint or authorize you to do thus? their answer was ready; *In the Name of Jesus*, who had sent, commissionated, and commanded them to Preach, and propagate that Doctrine. And thus we are also bound to do all things in the Name of *Jesus*, regulating all our actions by his Law; conforming our whole Lives to his Will; acting, not only out of good Principles (Principles of Love and Conscience) but according to right Rules; the Rules of his Word and Example, which he hath declared, and prescribed to us: for what is done beside his Warrant and Will, cannot be rightly esteemed done in his Name; will not as so be avowed, or accepted by him; no unjust or impious action will he upon any terms countenance or patronize. It was once a famous saying, *All Mischief begins in nomine Domini*; and much surely, more than one way, hath been done under the like Notion or Pretence; but this will not serve to excuse the doing of that, in the day of final reckoning for our actions. For, *there will be many* (we are taught) *that shall in that day by specious professions of having done this or that in Christ's Name*, veil their transgressions, and their neglects of duty, *saying, Lord, Lord, have we not in thy Name prophesied; and in thy Name cast out devils, and in thy Name done many wonderful things?* who yet, our Lord himself assures us, shall have this reply made to them, *I never knew you, depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* There will be those that shall claim acquaintance with *Christ* in such terms: *Lord, we have eaten and drank before thee; and thou hast taught in our Streets*; whom yet our Lord will disclaim with a *Depart ye from me, all ye workers of iniquity*: 'Tis not, we see, Prophesying in *Christ*'s Name (or Preaching about him) nor frequent attendance upon those who do so; nor speaking much or hearing much concerning him; 'tis not having great gifts or endowments conferr'd by *Christ* (not even so great as that of working Miracles) 'tis not familiar converse with *Christ*; or making frequent addresses to him,

Joh. 5. 36, 37, 43. 14. 54. 17. 18. Luc. 24. 47. 2 Cor. 5. 20. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Thess. 3. 6. Act. 4. 7. Joh. 16. 2. Matt. 7. 23. Luc. 13. 26.

that can sanctify all a Man's actions, or so entitle them to the Name of *Christ*, as to secure his Person from being disavowed and rejected by *Christ*; 'tis onely the conforming all our Actions to his holy Laws, that can assure us to be acknowledged and accepted by him. This I could wish they would consider, who seem, by such pretences, to commend, or excuse their actions, although otherwise irregular and plainly contrary to the laws of *Christ*; such as those of being meek and charitable toward all Men; living peaceably our selves, and endeavouring to promote Peace among others; abstaining from rash and hard censures; from reviling and defaming others; paying reverence and obedience to Superiours; and the like Laws of Christ, not only expres and manifest, but even of the highest rank and consequence among them; being mainly conducing to that which our Lord especially tenders, the publick welfare and benefit of Mankind; the violation whereof cannot be justified by pretending any special regard whatever to *Christ*, or any collateral performance done, whether truly or seemingly, in his Name. We do but deceive our selves, if we conceit, that because we think much, or speak much of *Jesus*; or have a zeal for something good, all our actions are done in his Name; No; it only can be justly impressed upon, can warrant and sanctify actions truly good and agreeable to his Law; it were an abuse and forgery to do it, like stamping the Kings Name (or Image) on counterfeit metal; upon brass or tin, instead of gold or silver. Good Intention and good Principles are indeed (as it were) the form and Soul of good Actions; but their being just and lawful are the body and matter of them; necessarily also concurring to their essence and integrity; they cannot subsist without it, but must pass (as it were) for ghosts and shadows. We are therefore concerned in all our doings to have an especial regard to *Christ*'s Law as their rule; that will render them capable of *Christ*'s Name, and denominate them Christian.

IV. Hereto we may add, that what we do in imitation of *Jesus*, and in conformity to his Practice (that living rule and copy proposed to us) we may be said peculiarly to do in his Name. As a Picture useth to bear his Name, whom it was made to represent, and whom it resembles; so if we set *Christ*'s Example before us, and endeavour to transcribe it; if our life in the principal lineaments of sanctity and goodness do resemble his holy life; they may well bear his Name. But if our practise be unlike and unsutable to his, we cannot affix his Name thereto without great presumption and abuse; such as would be committed, if to a draught of foul hue, and ugly features, we should attribute the Name of some most handsome and goodly Person, of high worth and quality. To do thus in *Jesus* his Name (with such a regard to him) is a duty often prescribed unto us, not only as relating to some cases and actions, (as when his Charity, his Patience, his Humility, his Meekness are signally commended to our imitation) but generally, *He, that saith he abideth in him, ought as he walked, so himself also to walk*; that is, whoever professes himself a Christian ought to conform the whole tenour of his Conversation to that of *Jesus*; to endeavour in every imitable Perfection to resemble him. So that whenever we undertake any action, we should do well to look upon this Pattern, thus (as it were) examining and inquiring of our selves; What did my Master in this or the like case; do I do the same thing, do I act from the same Principles, do I proceed in the same manner as he did; am I herein his Disciple and Follower? if so, in his Name let me go on chearfully, if not let me forbear. Doing this will not be only according to our duty, but an especial help and furtherance of good practice.

Eph. 5. 1, 2. 1 Cor. 10. 1. Joh. 15. 12. 13. 34. Heb. 12. 2. Joh. 13. 15. Phil. 2. 5. 1 Pet. 2. 21. 1 Joh. 2. 6.

V. To

V. To do in another's Name doth sometimes import doing by any power derived, or virtue imparted by another; for that a thing so done may be imputed, should be ascribed to that other. So, *Through thee* (saith the *Psalmist*) *will we push down our Enemies, in thy Name will we throw down those that hate us*, (through thee, and in thy Name signify the same thing.) So did the *Apostles* cast out Devils, and perform their other Miracles in *Jesus* his Name (διὰ τοῦ ὀνόματος, *by his Name*, 'tis sometime expressed) that is by a divine virtue imparted from him. To this I add another acception, scarce different (at least as to our purpose) from that, according to which doing in another's Name signifies doing it in trust, or confidence reposed upon another, with expectation of aid, or hope of good success from another. So, *we rest on thee*, (said good King *Asa*) *and in thy name we go against this multitude*; in thy Name, that is, hoping for assistance and success from thee. And thus it is said, that *David went out* against *Goliah in the name of the Lord of hosts*; that is, confiding in God's help as his onely weapon and defence: Thus also did the H. *Apostles* work their Miracles in *Jesus* his Name; διὰ τῆς πίστεως τοῦ ὀνόματος αὐτοῦ, *by faith in his Name*, (saith St. *Peter*) *his name hath made this Man strong*; that is, we did only trust in his divine Power, and it was that Power of his which restored that weak Person to his strength. And thus also it is our duty to do all things in our Saviours Name; with faith and hope in him; wholly relying upon him for direction and assistance; expecting from him only a blessing and happy issue of our undertakings. What we do in confidence of our own wisdom or ability; or in affiance upon the help of any other Person or thing, we do in our own Name, or in the Name of that thing (or that Person) in whom we so confide; to our selves, or to such auxiliaries we shall be ready to attribute the success, and to render the glory of the Performance; *glorying in our own arm*, and *sacrificing to our Net*. But what we undertake onely depending upon our Lord for ability, and success, may therefore bear his Name, because our faith derives the Power from him, which enables us happily to perform it; so that the performance may truly be attributed to him, and to him we shall be apt to ascribe it. And thus, I say, we are certainly obliged to do every thing in his Name; (in his Name alone;) retaining a constant sense both of our own infirmity, and of the impotency of all other created things; and consequently a total diffidence both in our selves, and in them, but reposing all our trust in the direction, and assistance of our All-wise, and All-mighty Lord; of *Jesus*, to *whom all power in heaven and earth is given*, (who indeed had it originally by Nature as God; but also farther hath acquired it by desert and purchase) into whose hands all things are given; and all things are put under his feet; who hath obtained this Power in design to use it for our good; and is thereby always ready to help us in our need, if we have recourse unto him, and rely upon him; making him what St. *Paul* stiles him, *Our hope*; our onely hope; renouncing all other confidences not subordinate to him. To do so is a duty evidently grounded as well upon the reason of the thing, as upon the will and command of God; to do otherwise is no less a palpable folly, than a manifest injury to God. For, in truth, neither have we, nor any other created thing any power, other than such as he is pleased freely to dispense; and which is not continually both for its being and its efficacy subject to him, so that he may at his pleasure subtract it, or obstruct its effect: *No King is saved by the multitude of an host; a mighty man is not delivered by much strength; a horse is a vain*

Ἐν τῷ ὀνόματι LXX. Psal. 44. 4. 6. Matt. 7. 22. Mar. 9. 38. Act. 3. 6. 4. 10, 30. Joh. 17. 11. 2 Chro. 14. 11. 1 Sam. 17. 45. Act. 3. 16. Hab. 1. 16. Mat. 28. 18. Joh. 3. 35. 13. 3. 17. 2. Heb. 1. 2. 2. 8. Eph. 1. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 27. Phil. 2. 9. Apoc. 5. 12. 1 Tim. 1. 1.

Eccl. 9. 11. *The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong.*

By strength shall no man prevail. 1 Sam. 2. 9. Psal. 33. 17. 146. 3. 44. 3. Isa. 36. 6.

thing

Isa. 43. 11. —— *Beside me there is no Saviour.* Hos. 13. 4, 10. Psal. 106. 21. Jer. 14. 8.

thing for safety : Whence 'tis plain, that we cannot, upon any created power, ground a solid assurance of success in any undertaking ; it will be *leaning upon a broken reed* (which cannot support us, and will pierce our hands) both a vain and a mischievous confidence ; that will abuse us, bringing both disappointment and guilt upon us ; the guilt of wronging our Lord many wayes ; by arrogating to our selves, or assigning to others what he only doth truly deserve, and what peculiarly of right belongs to him ; withdrawing the same from him ; implying him unable or unwilling to assist us, and do us good ; neglecting to use that strength which he so dearly purchased and so graciously tenders ; so disappointing him, and defeating (as it were) his purposes of favour and mercy toward us. On the other side, trusting onely upon our Saviour, we act wisely and justly ; gratefully and officiously ; for that in doing so, we build our hopes upon most sure grounds ; upon a wisdom that cannot be deceived ; upon a strength that cannot be withstood ; upon a goodness that hath no limits ; upon a fidelity that can never fail. For that we act with an humility, and sobriety of mind sutable to our condition, and to the reason of things ; for that we thereby declare our good opinion of him as onely able, and very willing to do us good ; for that we render him his just honour and due ; we comply with his earnest desires, we promote his gracious designs of mercy and kindness toward us. Hence it is that every where in H. Scripture God so highly commends, so greatly encourages this duty of trusting alone in him ; that he so ill resents, and so strongly deters from the breach or omission thereof ; *Thus saith the Lord, Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord ; for he shall be like the heath in the desart ; and shall not see when good cometh, but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness ; in a salt land and not inhabited. Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is ; for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river ; and shall not see when heat cometh ; but her leaf shall be green ; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit :* thus in that place, thus in innumerable others we are threatened not onely with disappointment, and bad success in our undertakings, but with severe punishment, if we betake our selves to other succours, and neglect or distrust, or (in so doing) desert God ; but are encouraged, not only with assurance of prosperous success, but of additional rewards, if intirely in our proceedings we depend upon and adhere to God. Thus we should do in all (even our most common and ordinary) affairs, which no less than the rest are subject to his power, and governed by his care. For you know how St. *James* dotl reprehend it as a piece of naughty boasting and arrogance, to say, *Th morrow we will go to this City, and stay there a year, and trade and gain* ; in stead of saying, *if the Lord will, we will live, and do this or that* ; that is to resolve upon, undertake, or prosecute any affair without submission to God's will, and dependance on his Providence : But especially w ought, in matters and actions more spiritual, to practise this duty ; so that to the performing of these, we have of our selves a peculiar impotence and unfitness ; needing therefore a more special assistance from ou Lord ; that the success of them more particularly depends upon him ; tha the glory of them in an especial manner is appropriate, and (as it were) consecrate to him.

Psal. 146. 5. 40. 4. 44. 6. 33. 18. 147. 11. 34. 22. 125. 1. 34. 22. 31. 19. 61. 4. 91. 4. 118. 8. 78. 22. 66. 2. 112. 7.

Isa. 51. 5. 57. 13. 50. 7. 26. 3. Jer. 14. 8. Jer. 17. 5, 6, &c.

Matt. 10. 29, 30. Jam. 4. 13.

I

If it be a folly and a crime, to think we can do any thing without God, 'tis much more so to think we can do any thing good without him; 'tis an arrogance, 'tis an idolatry, 'tis a sacrilege much more vain and wicked to do so. To imagine that we can, by the force of our own reason and resolution, atchieve any of those most high and hard enterprizes, to which, by the rules of vertue and piety we are engaged; that we can, by our own conduct and prowess, encounter and withstand, defeat and vanquish those so crafty, so mighty enemies of our salvation (our own fleshly desires; the menaces and allurements of the World; the slights and powers of Darkness) is much a worse presumption, than in other affairs of greatest difficulty to expect success without the divine assistance and blessing; than in other most dangerous battels, to think we can, *by our own bow, and by our own spear save our selves*; that we can obtain victory otherwise, than from his hand and disposal, who is the Lord of Hosts. Reason tells us, and experience also shews, and our Saviour hath expresly said it, That (in these things) *without him* (without his especial influence and blessing) *we can do nothing*; he tells us, that we are but branches, inserted into him; so that, without continually drawing sap from him, we can have no life or vigour spiritual. The wisest and best of Men, have, by their practice, taught us to acknowledge so much; to depend wholly upon him, to ascribe all to him in this kind. *Why* (say St *Peter* and St. *John*) *do ye wonder at this*; *or why gaze ye upon us, as if by our own power or piety, we had made this man walk?* —— *His name* (the name of *Jesus*) *through Faith in his name, hath made this man strong*: that acknowledgment indeed concerns a miraculous work; but spiritual works are in reality no less, they requiring as much or more of virtue supernatural, or the present interposition of God's hand to effect them; they make less shew without, but need as great efficacy within; so our Saviour, it seems, did imply, when he said, *He that believes in me, the works that I do he shall do, and greater works than these.* Every good and faithful Man doth not work Miracles, yet somewhat greater, it seems, by the grace of *Christ*, *he performs*: However, to these St. *Paul* referr'd, when he affirmed, *I can do all things in* Christ *that strengtheneth me*; nothing was so hard that he feared to attempt, that he despaired to master and go through with by the help of *Christ*; and, *Not* (saith he again) *that we are sufficient of our selves to think any thing of our selves*; *but our sufficiency is of God*: He was as sensible of his own inability, as he was confident in the gracious help of *Christ*. Thus should we do all things in the Name of *Jesus*; and 'tis not onely a duty to do it, but it may be a great encouragement to us, that we are capable of doing it; a great comfort to consider, that in all honest undertakings, we have so ready, and so sure an aid to second and further us in them; confiding in which, nothing is so difficult, but we may easily accomplish (*a grain of faith* will be able *to remove mountains*;) nothing is so hazardous, but we may safely venture on (*walking on the Sea, treading upon Serpents and scorpions*; daring *all the power of the enemy.*) In his Name we may, if our duty or good reason calls us forth (how small and weak soever, how destitute soever of defensive arms, or weapons offensive) naked and unarmed, with a sling and a stone, go out against the biggest, and best armed *Philistine*, nothing doubting of victory: Our weakness it self (if we be humbly conscious and sensible thereof) will be an advantage to us (as it was to St. *Paul*) to all effects and purposes, *the grace of our Lord will be sufficient for us*, if we apply it, and trust therein. But farther,

Οὐτε δὲ ἀνθρώπου τι εἶναι τῆς ὅλης τε θεία συναναφορᾶς δίχα. Ant. 3. 13.

Psal. 44. 6.

Joh. 15. 5.

Act. 3. 12, 16.

Joh. 14. 12.

Phil. 4. 13.

2 Cor. 3. 5.

Οὐδὲν ἀδυνατήσει ὑμῖν. Mat. 17. 20. 21. 21. Luk. 17. 6. Matt. 14. 29. Luk. 10. 19.

2 Cor. 5. 21.

VI. To

VI. To do in another's Name may denote, to do it with such regard to another, that we acknowledge (that, I say, we heartily and thankfully acknowledge) our hope of prospering in what we do; our expectation of acceptance, favour, or reward to be grounded on him; that they are procured by his merits and means, are bestowed only for his sake. Thus
Joh. 14. 13. 15. 16. 16. 23, 24. our Saviour bids us to *offer our prayers in his name*; that is, representing unto God his meritorious performances in our behalf, as the ground of our access to God, of our hope to obtain from him what we request. So also
Eph. 5. 20. 3. 21. we are injoined to *give thanks in his name*; that is, with perswasion and acknowledgment, that only in respect to him we become capable to receive, or enjoy any good thing; that in effect, all the blessings by divine mercy vouchsafed us have been procured by him for us, are through him conveyed unto us. And thus also we should do all things in the name of *Jesus*, offering all our deeds to God, as sacrifices and services unworthy of acceptance, both in themselves, and as proceeding from us; but pleasing, and acceptable to God onely for his sake. We should do well, upon all occasions, to remember our natural condition, and the general state of mankind; such as it was before he did undertake, such as it would have
Rom. 3. 23. 11. 32. Gal. 3. 22. continued still, had he not undertaken for it; That our race had forfeited, and was fallen from God's favour; having injured him beyond all power of making him any reparation or satisfaction; that thence it was secluded from all means and hopes apparent of happiness, was exposed and tended downright unto misery; that we consequently had no ground to hope, that God (from whom no less in mind and in deed, than by reason of our guilt and state of condemnation we were estranged) would, in kindness, bestow any good upon us, or from us accept favourably any thing we should do. But that, by our Saviour's performances, the case is altered; He, by his entire obedience, having so pleased God, by his patient submission to God's will, having so appeased his anger, and satisfi'd his justice, that God is not only reconciled, but hath an especial favour, bears an earnest good-will toward us. That now the good things we possess, we may truly esteem as blessings, and enjoy them with real comfort, as pro-
Acts 3. 46. ceeding from mercy and kindness; now what we honestly endeavour, we may hope shall please God; now we have a free access to God, and may
Eph. 2. 17. 3. 12. chearfully present our sacrifices of duty and devotion, with a full perswa-
Ἐν παῤῥησίᾳ. sion that they shall be accepted. But all this happiness, all these favours and priviledges, we must alwaies remember to come from the con-
Eph. 1. 6. tinued procurement and mediation of the *Beloved*; so as ever to be ready to acknowledge it, and to return our thanks therefore. To this sense that our *Apostle* here had an especial regard, the words immediately following imply —— *Doing all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God, and the Father by him*; that is, in all things we do, taking occasion to render thanks to God, as for his sake being merciful and bountiful to us; bestowing upon us the good we enjoy, blessing our endeavours, accepting our performances. We must not conceit, that any regard, any mercy, any favour, any reward is due to us in equity, is in effect conferr'd upon us upon our personal score (for, how mean things are we in comparison of his greatness; how vile and filthy things must we appear to his most pure, and all-discerning eyes; how unworthy of his regard and of his affection must we needs take our selves to be, if we do but well consider, and are acquainted with our selves?) But that *in him* (*i. e.* for his sake, and
Eph. 1. 3, 6. by his means) *God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings*, in him ἐχαρίτωσεν ἡμᾶς, *God hath favoured*, and cast his Grace upon *us*; valuing us notwithstanding all our imperfections; loving us notwithstanding the spots with which

which we are defiled; notwithstanding all the offences we have committed; for the relation and alliance we have to *Jesus*. Nor must we look on our services (the best we are able to perform) as in themselves grateful or satisfactory: For all of them, if we mark them well, we shall find not only quite *unprofitable to God*, but very defective in many respects; for, Who can say, he performs any thing both in kind, in manner, in degree throughly right and good; with that ardency of love he owes to God, with that purity of intention, with that earnest vigour of spirit, with that undistractedness of mind, with which he should perform it? No; in all our flock we cannot pick out a sacrifice entire and unblemished; such as God requires, such as duty exacts of us. They need therefore (all our services need) to be commended and compleated by the beloved Son his perfectly well-pleasing performances; they need to be cleansed and hallowed, by passing through the hands of our most Holy and undefiled high-Priest: to become sweet and savoury (or to receive that ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας, which St. *Paul* speaks of) from being offered up *in his censer*. In fine all our actions should, in our intention, be works of religion dedicated to God's service and honour; sacrifices, as it were, of gratitude and homage to God; so they ought all to be offered up in the Name of *Jesus*. I add farther,

Heb. 7. 26. Eph. 5. 2. Rev. 8. 3, 5.

VII. Lastly, that we do in the Name of *Jesus*, may well imply doing with invocation of him: thus we may understand that place of St. *James*, where the Elders are advised *to pray, and anoint the sick in the Lord's name*; for, to anoint them, imploring our Lord's blessing upon them, and upon those means used for their cure. And thus St. *Chrysostome* expounds the words; do all in *Jesus* his Name, *that is* (saith he, *imploring him for your helper in all things; alwaies first praying to him, undertake your business*. Doing thus, will indeed Christen, and consecrate our actions; for *all things* (saith our *Apostle*) *are sanctified by the word of God, and prayer*; that is, by God's blessing implored, and obtained by prayer; or, if God's word be there taken for his law, or revealed will, it is there signified, that our actions are not only sanctified by their lawfulness, or conformity to that good rule, Gods declared will; but also by the invocation of his name; however, all our actions, it seems, are unhallowed and profane, if not accompanied with devotion. That to do thus is our duty, appears by those frequent injunctions, to *pray indefinently*, to *pray alwaies*, to *abide instantly in prayer*; which do not onely import, that we should pray often, and continue with Patience, and earnestness in Prayer; but that we should annex it to, or interpose it among all our actions, undertaking nothing (at least of consideration or moment) without it. We should do it (our *Saviour* commands) ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, that is, *on every occasion*; and Saint *Paul* gives the same direction, *Praying*, says he, ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ, *on all opportunities, with all prayer and supplication in spirit*; (in spirit, that is, I take it, * *in our hearts* at least, and with secret elevations of our mind, if not with our mouth and voice.) And (more explicitely otherwhere saith he) *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing* (in all your affairs) *by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God*. And thus to do (to accompany all our undertakings with Prayer) we are indeed concern'd upon many accompts. We need God's direction (being our selves very blind and ignorant)

In locum.
Αὐτὸν καλῶν βοηθὸν, ἐπὶ πάντων αἰτήτεον αὐτῷ εὐχόμενον ἀπὸ τῶν πραγμάτων.

1 Tim. 4. 5.

Δεῖ πάσης τῆς πράξεως προηγεῖσθαι τὴν προσευχήν. M. Ephr.

Μηδὲν μήτε ποιῶμεν μήτε λέγωμεν πρὸ ἢ θεὸν καλέσαι καὶ παρακαλέσαι συνεφάπτεσθαι ἡμῖν ἐν ἅπασιν ἡμῶν ἀπάντων. Chrys.

Τῆς δὲ ἡμῶν πάντες ὅσοι καὶ χρῄζομεν σωφροσύνης μετέχειν δεῖ πάσης ὁρμῆς καὶ σμικρᾶς καὶ μεγάλης προσίεσθαι θεὸν ἀεὶ πανταχοῦ καλοῦντας Prot. Tim. *Vid. Epict.* 8. Arr. Epict. 11. 18. 1 Thes. 5. 17. Luk. 18. 1. Rom. 12. 12. Colos. 4. 2.

Ἐκτενῶς.

Ἐν παντὶ.
Bene ac sapienter majores instituerunt, ut rerum agendarum, ita dicendi initium a precationibus caperetur; quod nihil rite, nihilque providenter homines sine Deorum immortalium ope, consilio, honore auspicarentur. Plin. *in Panez.*

in the choice of what we attempt; that our ends and designs may be good; conducible to God's honour and our own true advantage. For, as the Prophet tells us, *The way of man is not in himself, neither is it in man that walketh to direct his steps*; And, as the Wise man adds, *Man's goings are of the Lord, how then can a man understand his own way?* (implying, since God only knows what is best for us, that we of our selves without his direction, know not what to do, whether to go:) The H. *Psalmist* signifies the same in those words (very encouraging to the practice of this duty) *What man is he that feareth the Lord?* (that feareth him, that is, who worshippeth him, and seeketh his guidance) *him shall he teach in the way that he shall chuse.* We need also (being our selves not onely weak and infirm, but inconstant and unstable) Gods assistance, and upholding hand in the pursuance of our well-chosen designs (that we may use the best means, and proceed in a streight course; that we may persist upright and steady in our Proceedings) that which the *Wise man* seems to call, the establishing of our thoughts, and promises, as a consequence, upon our seeking God's assistance in our actions, and relying thereon; *Commit*, saith he, *thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established*; (thou shalt drive on thy good purposes steadily, without stumbling or falling; at least irrecoverably. So the *Psalmist* assures us concerning a good man: *The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord; none of his steps shall slide; though he fall he shall not utterly be cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand.* We also farther, as to the final success of our affairs, stand in need of Gods blessing; that he, upon whose will altogether depends the disposal of all events, should bestow a good issue unto our endeavours, that they prove not matter of discouragement, or discomfort to us; that which also the *Psalmist* assures us of obtaining, upon condition of our imploring and depending upon God for it; *Commit thy way* (saith he) *unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass.* We do thus need in all our affairs, the direction, assistance and blessing of our Lord; but shall not have them without Prayer; for, the rule is, *Ask and have, seek and find*; without asking we are not likely to obtain those gifts; without seeking we must not hope to find those benefits from God. If we are so proud, as to think we do not need them, or so negligent, as not to mind them; or so distrustful of the divine power or goodness, that we imagine he cannot or will not afford them to us; we are like to be so unhappy as to want them. God expects from us, that we should, in whatever we do, acknowledge him; ('tis the *Wise man*'s expression, *In all thy waies acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths*;) acknowledge him as the only faithful guide and counsellour; as the only sufficient helper and protectour; as the only free arbitratour and donour of good success. Nothing therefore is well done, which is not thus done; we cannot be satisfied in what we do; we cannot hope for a comfortable end thereof; we cannot expect a blessing from God, if we have refused, or if we have neglected the recommending our proceedings to his care. We can, I say, do nothing; not eat, not sleep, not trade, not travel, not study with any true content, any reasonable security, any satisfactory hope, if we have not first humbly implored God's favour; committing our selves, and our business into his hand, that hand which dispenseth all good, which alone can keep off all danger and mischief from us. *God shall send his Angel before thee*: so did our Father *Abraham* send his servant about his business; having questionless before

Job 18. 7. Isa. 30. 1. Hos. 10. 6. Prov. 1. 25, 30. Psal. 106. 13. 16. 7. 73. 24. 107. 11.

Jer. 10. 23.

Prov. 20. 24. 16. 9.

Psal. 25. 12, 9.

Prov. 16. 9.

Psal. 37. 23, 24. 17. 31.

Psal. 37. 5. 119. 5. 133.

Luke 11. 9, 10. Joh. 14. 13. Psal. 9. 10.

Gen. 23. 7.

ore commended it to God by Prayer. *God Almighty give you mercy before* Gen. 43. 14.
he man : so did *Jacob* give his sons their dispatches toward *Ægypt* : In such manner did we enter upon all our affairs, we could not but be full of hope, and void of care concerning them ; for that commonly we are so full of anxiety about the event of what we undertake, whence doth it rise, but from a neglect of this duty ? for, having committed our business into so sure a hand, how could we farther be solicitous about it ? Had we, according to St. *Peter*'s advice, *Cast our care upon the Lord* ; or, 1 Pet. 5. 7.
cast our burden upon him (as the *Psalmist* exhorts us) had we duly sought Psal. 55. 22.
and invoked him, who *never faileth them that seek him*, who *is nigh to all* Psal. 9. 10. *Old Transl.*
them that call upon him ; we should not have such a load of troublesome 70. 4.
care resting upon us ; our hearts would be light, and free as to all these Psal. 145. 18.
things ; we should be secure, that nothing very bad, or disastrous, could Psal. 112. 7, 8. Isa. 26. 3.
befal us ; we should experience it true, what the Prophet affirms in that Phil. 4. 6, 7.
prayer or *Psalm* to God ; *Thou shalt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee* : *Be careful for nothing*, Saint *Paul* bids us, *but in every thing let your requests be made known to God* ; if we perform the latter part, the former will naturally be consequent thereon. Thus, in the last place, would we do all things in the name of *Jesus* (upon all occasions praying to him, or which is all one, to God in his name) which that we may do, (that we are allowed and encouraged to do it) is also a privilege, and an advantage unvaluable

In so many ways and particular respects may we, and ought we to perform all we do in the name of *Jesus* : We should do every thing out of grateful affection and respect to him, as our chief Principle ; every thing as his servants, aiming especially at the pleasing of him and promoting his honour, as our principal end ; every thing according to his will and commandment, as our constant rule ; every thing after his example, as our best pattern ; every thing, in confidence of his gracious assistance and blessing, as our onely strength and support ; every thing with hope of acceptance purely upon his accompt ; every thing with thankful sense and acknowledgment to God for the mercies and favours conveyed unto us by his means, conferred upon us for his sake ; every thing with humble invocation of him, or with prayer to God in his name : In sum, every thing with a due and proper regard had to him ; so that he be not passed over or left out in any thing we undertake ; but come always into consideration, according as our relations to him, and our obligations to him do require. In the performances of which duties the life indeed of our religion (of all our good practise, of all our devotion) doth consist.

To all this I shall only subjoin the mention of one general duty, implied in all and each of those we have propounded, which is this ;

VIII. That our Lord *Jesus* should be frequently (and in a manner continually ; always, as to the habitual disposition of our souls, actually upon all fit occasions) present to our minds and thoughts. This, I say, is plainly implied in the former duties. For, how is it possible we should perform all our actions (yea, utter all our words) with any sort of regard to him, if we seldom think of him ? Such is the nimbleness and activity of our minds, that it is feasible enough to do thus ; and, in respect to other objects, we commonly experience it done ; for *animus est bi amat* ; what ever we affect, our mind, however otherwise imployed, will be thinking on it, 'tis hard to restrain our thoughts from it ; (the covetous man's heart will be among his bags ; the voluptuous man's mind will be in his dishes ; the studious Person will be musing on his notions, do he what he can.) Why then may we not as well, as often direct

our minds toward our Lord, and mix the remembrance of him with all other imployments or entertainments of our thoughts? to do so is surely very requisite, and very expedient toward our good practice. Things far distant, or long absent, can have small efficacy, or influence; 'tis so we see in natural, and 'tis no less so in moral causalities; wherein representation to the fancy and memory have a force answerable to that, which real conjunction and approximation have in nature. As the heat and light of the Sun, the farther he goes, and the longer he stays from us, do the more (proportionably) decrease; so according to our less frequently, and less seriously thinking upon any object, our affection and our respect thereto decay. If therefore we desire, according to our duty, to maintain in our hearts such dispositions (due affection and due reverence) toward *Jesus*; if we intend to suit our actions accordingly with due regard to him; we should, in order to those purposes, apply this so necessary and useful mean, of frequently bending our minds toward him; the doing of which in likelihood, will conduce much to the sanctifying our affections, and to the governing our actions in a constant performance of our duty. For we can hardly sure (admitting we do seriously believe him to be such as we profess to believe him) with any competent attention think of him; but that thought will be apt to restrain us from doing ill, to incite us to do well; since together with that thought, some of his excellent Perfections, some of our principal relations, and some of our great obligations to him (each of which hath much vertue and force to those purposes) will interpose and represent themselves. Frequently thinking of him, we shall sometimes apprehend him with incessant toil, labouring in the service of God, and in promoting the welfare of men; sometime we shall imagine him undergoing all kind of contumelies and bitter pains; suffering by the cruel hands and tongues of spiteful men; we shall (as it were) behold him bleeding under the scourge, and hanging upon the cross for our sakes. Sometimes he will appear to our minds crowned with Majesty, reigning in Sovereign Power and glory, having all things in subjection under his feet; sometimes also he will be represented as our Judge, before whose tribunal we must all shortly stand, and be obliged to render an accompt of all our doings; which thoughts passing through our minds, will be apt to make some impression upon our hearts, to have some influence upon our actions. For, can that most amiable and most venerable *Idea* of a Person so entirely pure and holy, so meek and humble, so full of benignity and charity toward all men (particularly towards our selves) be otherwise then apt to forget some especial love and reverence toward him; than incline us strongly to do well, yea than teach us what and how we should do so, in conformity to such a Pattern set before us? it occurring to our thoughts, that he is our Lord and Master (who made us and maintains us, who purchased us to himself, and redeemed us from miserable slavery by his own heart-blood) how can it fail to raise in us some awe, some sence of duty toward him? Will not the apprehension of what he did and what he suffered for us powerfully mind us, that according to all justice and equity, in all ingenuity and gratitude we are bound to do only that which will please him? If we think of *Jesus*, when we are setting upon any action, shall we not thereupon be apt thus to interrogate our selves? Shall I do otherwise than he did, or would have done, so rendring my self unlike, or contrary to him? Shall I be so unfaithful to my glorious Master, as to disserve him, or to neglect his service? Shall I be so unworthy toward my gracious Redeemer, my best Friend, my most bountiful Benefactour, as to disoblige him, to wrong him, to dishonour him, to grieve him

Act. 10. 38.

him by thus doing? Shall I be so vain and rash as to cross him who is my King, able to controll and subdue me; as to offend him who is my Judge, resolved to condemn and punish me? Shall I wilfully forfeit that friendship and favour of his, upon which all my happiness doth depend? Shall I procure his displeasure and enmity, from which my utter ruin must inevitably follow? Such considerations have a natural connexion with our frequent thinking upon, and the Presence (as it were) of our Blessed Saviour to our minds, which therefore may be commended to us as an excellent instrument of bettering our hearts and our lives.

To conclude; Let us all alwayes remember, and consider, that we are Christians, related unto *Christ Jesus*, and called by his name, and as so, in his name, let us do all things.

Lord of all power and might; who art the Authour and giver of all good things; graft in our hearts the love of thy name; increase in us true religion; nourish us with all goodness; and of thy great mercy keep us in the same; through Jesus Christ *our Lord.*

SERMON II.

Of Being Imitatours of Christ.

1 COR. 4. 16.

I beseech you be followers of me: or, I exhort you be imitatours of me.

Παρακαλῶ ὑμᾶς μιμηταί μου γίνεσθε.

Saint *Paul* by an impartial reflexion upon his heart and life being well assured, that he by the divine Spirit was enlightened with a certain knowledge of all necessary truth, and endued with plentiful measures of divine grace; being conscious of a sincere zeal in himself to honour God and benefit men; being satisfi'd, that with integrity he did suit his conversation to the dictates of a good conscience, to the sure rule of God's Law, and to the perfect example of his Lord; that his intentions were pure and right; his actions warrantable, and the tenour of his life conspicuously blameless, doth, upon all occasions (not out of any self-conceitedness, arrogance, or ostentation, from which he, by frequent acknowledgment of his own defects and his miscarriages, and by ascribing all the good he had, or did, to the grace and mercy of God, doth sufficiently clear himself; but from an earnest desire to glorify God, and edifie his disciples) describe, and set forth his own Practice, proposing it as a Rule, pressing it upon them as an argument, an encouragement, an obligation to the performance of several duties. So by it he directeth and urgeth the *Ephesians* to a charitable compliance, or complaisance; a sweet and inoffensive demeanour toward other: *Give no offence* (saith he) *neither to the Jews nor to the Gentiles, nor to the Church of God; even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that*

1 Cor. 4. 32, & 10. 1. &c. 11

that they may be saved; *be ye followers of me* : so he guides and provokes the *Philippians* to endeavours of proficiency in grace, and the study of
Phil. 3. 16,17. Christian Perfection : *Nevertheless* (saith he to them) *whereto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing* : *brethren, be followers together with me, and mark such as walk so, as ye have us for an example.* By the like instance and argument, he moveth the *Thessalonians* to a sober and orderly conversation, to industry in their calling,
2 Thess. 3. 7. to self-denyal, and a generous disregard of private interest : *For your selves* (saith he) *know how ye ought to follow us*; *for we behaved not our selves disorderly among you*; *neither did we eat any man's bread for nought, but wrought with labours and travail day and night, that we might not be chargeable to any of you*; *not because we have not power, but to make our selves an example to you to follow us* : The same Persons he commendeth, as having by this
1 Thess. 1. 5. means been induced to a patient constancy in faith and good works : *Ye know* (saith he) *what manner of men we were among you for your sake, and ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction* : The practice of all virtue and goodness, he also thus recom-
Phil. 4. 8, 9. mendeth under this rule and obligation : *Those things, which ye have learned and received, and heard, and seen in me, do, and the God of Peace shall be with you.* Thus in our Text, (referring to the context) he urgeth the Christians, his disciples at *Corinth*, to fidelity and diligence in the charges and affairs committed to them, to humility, patience and charity; wherein he declareth himself to have set before them an evident and exact Pattern. Which Practice of Saint *Paul* doth chiefly teach us two things : That we be careful to give; and that we be ready to follow good example : the latter of which duties more directly and immediately agreeth to the intent of this place; and it therefore I shall only now insist upon : the subject and scope of my discourse shall be to shew, that it is our duty and concernment to regard the Practices of good men, and to follow their example. To which purpose we may observe.

I. That it is the manner of the *Apostles*, upon all occasions, to inculJam. 5. 10. cate this duty : we heard St. *Paul* : hear St. *James* : *Take* (saith he) *my brethren, the Prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord for an exJam. 5. 11. ample of suffering affliction* : *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord*; *that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy*;
Heb. 6. 11. and the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* : *We desire* (saith he) *that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end*; *that ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the proHeb. 12. 1. mises* : and again; *Wherefore seeing we are also compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so ea1 Pet. 3. 1, 6. sily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* And St. *Peter* : *Ye wives be in subjection to your own husbands*; *even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord.* And wherever the eminent deeds of holy men are mentioned, it is done with an intimation at least, or tacite supposition, that we are obliged to follow their example.

II. We may consider that to this end (that we might have worthy Patterns to imitate) the goodness of God hath raised up in all ages such excellent Persons, furnishing them with rare endowments, and with continual influences of his grace assisting them, to this purpose, that they might not onely instruct us with wholesome doctrine, but lead us also by good example in the Paths of righteousness. For certainly what St. *Paul* saith concerning the sins and punishments of bad men, is no less appli1 Cor. 10. 11. cable to the vertuous deeds and happy examples of good men : *All these things happened unto them for ensamples, and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.* III. *They*

III. *They are written for our admonition*; It was a special design of God's Providence in recording and recommending to our regard the divine histories. They were not framed as monuments of a fruitless memory and fame to them; they were not proposed to us as entertainments of our curiosity, as objects of wonder, as matters of idle discourse; that unconcernedly we should gaze upon them, or talk about them; as Children look on fine Gays; but they are set before us, as copies to transcribe; as lights to guide us in our way to happiness: So that if we will not ingratefully frustrate the intentions of Divine Providence for our good, we must dispose our selves to imitate those illustrious Paterns of Vertue and Piety.

Μεγίστη δὲ ὁδὸς πρὸς τὸ τὰ καθήκοντα εὑρεῖν καὶ μελέτη τῆ θειοπνεύστων γραφῶν ἐν ταύταις γὰρ καὶ τὰ παράδειγματα τῶν καλῶν εὑρίσκουσι, καὶ οἱ βίοι τῶν μακαρίων ἀνδρῶν ἀναγεγραπται παραδεδομένοι οἷον εἰκόνες πυκὲς ἐμφωλοι τῆς καλῆς τῶν πολιτείας, τοῦ μιμεῖσθαι τὰ ἀγαθῶν ἔργων παρέκειται. Bas. ad Greg. Ep. 2.

IV. We may farther consider that in the nature of the thing it self good example is of singular advantage to us, as being apt to have a mighty virtue, efficacy and influence upon our practice: which consideration should much ingage us to regard it, applying it as an instrument of making our selves good, and consequently of becoming happy. Good example is, as I say, of exceeding advantage to practice upon many accounts.

1. Examples do more compendiously, easily and pleasantly inform our minds, and direct our practice, than precepts, or any other way or instrument of discipline. Precepts are delivered in an universal and abstracted manner, naked, and void of all circumstantial attire, without any intervention, assistance, or suffrage of sense; and consequently can have no vehement operation upon the fancy, and soon do fly the memory; like flashes of lightening, too subtile to make any great impression, or to leave any remarkable footsteps, upon what they encounter; they must be expressed in nice terms, and digested in exact method; they are various; and in many disjointed pieces conspire to make up an entire body of direction; they do also admit of divers cases, and require many exceptions, or restrictions which to apprehend distinctly, and retain long in memory, needs a tedious labour, and continual attention of mind, together with a piercing and steady judgment: But good example with less trouble, more speed, and greater efficacy causes us to comprehend the business, representing it like a Picture exposed to sense, having the Parts orderly disposed, and completely united, suitably cloathed and dressed up in its circumstances; contained in a narrow compass, and perceptible by one glance, so easily insinuating it self into the fancy, and durably resting therein: in it you see at once described the thing done, the quality of the Actour, the manner of doing, the minute seasons, measures and adjuncts of the action; with all which you might not perhaps by numerous rules be acquainted; and this is the most facile, familiar and delightful way of instruction, which is by experience, history and observation of sensible events. A system of Precepts, though exquisitely compacted, is in comparison but a *Skeleton*, a dry, meagre, lifeless bulk, exhibiting nothing of person, place, time, manner, degree, wherein chiefly the flesh and blood, the colours and graces, the life and soul of things do consist; whereby they please, affect, and move us: But example imparts thereto a goodly corpulency, a life, a motion, renders it conspicuous, specious and active, transforming its notional universality into the reality of singular subsistence. This discourse is verified by various experience; for we find all Masters of Art and Science explicating, illustrating and confirming their general Rules and Precepts by particular examples: *Mathematicians* demonstrate

monstrate their *Theorems* by *Schemes* and *Diagrams*, which in effect are but sensible instances; *Oratours* back their *Enthymemes* (or rational Argumentations) with *Inductions* (or singular Examples;) *Philosophers* alledge the Practice of *Socrates*, *Zeno*, and the like Persons of famous Wisdom and Vertue to authorize their doctrine: *Politicks* and civil Prudence is more easily and sweetly drawn out of good history, than out of Books *de Republica*. *Artificers* describe *Models*, and set Paterns before their Disciples, with greater success, than if they should deliver accurate Rules and Precepts to them: For who would not more readily learn to build by viewing carefully the Parts and Frame of a well contrived structure, than by a studious enquiry into the rules of *Architecture*; or to *draw* by setting a good Picture before him, than by merely speculating upon the laws of *Perspective*; or to write fairly and expeditely by imitating one good copy, than by hearkening to a thousand oral Prescriptions; the understanding of which, and faculty of applying them to practice, may prove more difficult, and tedious, than the whole practice it self as directed by a copy? Neither is the case much different in Moral concernments; one good example may represent more fully, and clearly to us the nature of a vertue, than any verbose description thereof can do: in sooner time, and with greater ease we may learn our duty by regarding the deportment of some excellent Person, than by attending to many Philosophical discourses concerning it: for instance, if we desire to know what Faith is, and how we should rely upon the Divine Providence, let us propose to our consideration the practice of *Abraham*; wherein we may see the Father of the Faithful leaving a most pleasant countrey, the place of his nativity, and questionless most dear unto him under that notion; deserting his home and fixed habitation, his estate and patrimony; his kindred and acquaintance, to wander he knew not where in unknown Lands, with all his Family, leading an uncertain and ambulatory life in Tents, sojourning and shifting among strange People, devoid of Piety and Civility (among *Canaanites* and *Egyptians*) upon a bare confidence in the Divine Protection and Guidance: we may see him Aged 99 years, sensible of his own natural impotence, and an equal incapacity in his Consort as to such purposes, yet with a steady belief assuring himself, that from those dead stocks a numerous Progeny should spring, and that he who by all Power of Nature was unable to beget one Child, should by virtue of God's Omnipotent Word become the Father of a mighty Nation: We may see him upon the first summons of the Divine Command without scruple or hesitancy, readily and chearfully yeilding up his onely Son (the sole ground of his hope and prop of his Family, to whose very Person the promise of multiplication was affixed) to be sacrificed and slain; not objecting to his own reason the palpable inconsistency of counsels so repugnant; nor anxiously labouring to reconcile the seeming contrariety between the Divine Promises and Commands; but resolved as it were (with an implicit Faith in God) to believe things incredible, and to rely upon events impossible; contemplating these things let us say what Discourse could so livelily describe the nature of true Faith, as this illustrious Precedent doth.

Xen. Apomn. 4. *It was* Xenoph. *observation, grounded upon his own Experience that the memory of* Socrates's *Conversation did greatly profit his Acquaintance* (τὸ μεμνῆσθαι μὲν παρόν[τος] ἐμοῦ ὠφελεῖ τοὺς εἰωθότας αὐτῷ συνεῖναι) *and* Seneca *saith, that the Crowd of Philosophers, which followed the same Wise-man derived more of their* Ethicks *from his manners than his words* (plus ex moribus, quam ex verbis Socratis traxit) *Sen.* Ep. 11. *And he that shall reflect upon the Story concerning his behaviour, when he was by malicious envy persecuted to death, may perhaps be more edified thereby, than by all his subtile discourses about death, and the Souls state after it.*

Again, he that would learn how to demean himself in resisting the assaults of temptation, let him consider that one carriage of *Joseph*; of him

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together withstanding the courtships of an attractive beauty, and rejecting the solicitations of an imperious Mistress, advantaged by opportunities of privacy and solitude; when the refusal was attended with extream danger, and all the mischiefs which the disdain of a furious lust disappointed, of an outragious jealousie provoked, of a loving Master's confidence abused, could produce; and all this by one of meanest condition in a strange Place, where no intercession, favour, or patronage of friends could be had, no equal examination of his cause might be expected; of him doing this, merely upon Principles of Conscience, and out of fear of God; (saying, *How can I do this great evil and sin against God?*) and he that considers this example, how can he be ignorant of his duty in the like case?

Again, would we learn wisdom, constancy and resolution in the conduct of honest, and worthy designs, let us set before our eyes the Pattern of *Moses?* and therein take notice, how he obeying divine instinct and direction, having embraced that noble Purpose of rescuing his Countrymen from the *Egyptian* Bondage, of settling them in a method of happy Policy, and in bringing them into the promised Land of their enjoyment, did behave himself in the execution thereof; with how indefatigable industry he solicited their cause with a fickle, and deceitful, stupid, and hard-hearted King; enduring frequent disappointments and repulses, together with furious storms of anger, and most terrible menaces from him: how having there surmounted all obstacles, and effectually enlarged the People from their restraint in *Egypt*, he led them on foot through a valley, encompassed with mountains of Sea; and after that, undertook a tedious march (a march of 40 Years) through a wild, barren, and dry solitude, (where no water was, but such as issued from the stony bowels of a rock; no food or means of subsistence, but such as was supplyed by the miraculous purveyance of Heaven) in the mean while resisting the continual invasions of open enemies, in great numbers with armed violence striving to obstruct his passage, and defeat his purpose; having also (which was more) his Patience constantly exercised in supporting the froward perverseness of a most incredulous, and intractable People, which took all occasions of complaint and mutiny against him; in contesting with the factious rivality of envious Nobles, who repined at his successes, and maligned his authority among them; in bearing the indiscreet and untoward prevarications of his own most intimate friends and neerest relations, complying with the wicked humours and desires of the People; in sustaining many other Perplexities and Crosses; all which notwithstanding he with insuperable resolution happily atchieved his glorious undertaking; and will not this example, attentively regarded, beyond the power of any other means or method, explain to us the way of industry, courage and perseverance in good and worthy, though high and difficult enterprizes?

One instance more, and that of all most pertinent to our occasion, Would you be instructed, how faithfully to discharge the ministerial, or any other office? With a stedfast attention then behold the excellent Pattern of St. *Paul*; consider how in all his designs he zealously and singly aimed at the honour and service of God, neglecting his own safety, quiet, credit, and all worldly accommodations for the advancement of them. How affectionately he tendred the good and welfare of those, the care of whose spiritual condition was commended to him, using all his skill, care and strength in promoting their edification; declaring himself for their good to be content, not onely for a time to be absent from the Lord, being deprived of that happiness which he otherwise impatiently groaned for, and was fully assured of; but desirous, as it seems, to be secluded for

ever from his blisful presence by a dreadful *Anathema*, for their sake. How prudently, meekly and humbly he demeaned himself toward them; becoming all things to all men, forming himself into all allowable shapes and colours; undergoing all sorts of censure and imputations (of a despicable, an ignorant, a foolish Person) tempering his speech and deportment to their capacities and needs, bearing their miscarriages, and complying with their weaknesses; parting freely with his own just liberty, pleasure and satisfaction, for their spiritual advantage. How generously he despised his own profit and ease, refusing that supply he might with all reason and equity have required from them; chusing to maintain himself with the labour of his own hands, and the sweat of his brows, that he might render the Gospel no-wise burdensome, or offensive to them. How vigilantly and couragiously he withstood the mischievous endeavours of false Brethren, and treacherous Seducers; earnestly contending for the Churches peace and quiet against factious spirits, and for the substantial truths of the Gospel against the pernicious devices of Hereticks and false Teachers. How patiently he sustained all manner of Pains, Griefs, Travels, Wants, Losses, Hazards, Distresses, Disappointments, Affronts and Reproaches for the Honour of God, the benefit of his spiritual Children, the discharge of his Duty, and satisfaction of his Conscience: These things, I say, regard, and then tell me, if he might not reasonably inculcate this admonition, *Imitate me*; and if his example be not of rare use to instruct us, how faithfully we should in our respective charges and employments demean our selves. I might in like manner instance how excellent a rule of Devotion the practice of the Royal Prophet may be unto us; how *Elias* his practice might teach us to be zealous Champions for truth and righteousness; how they who would be good Judges, or honest Patriots may receive direction from the carriage of *Samuel*, *Daniel* and *Nehemiah*. But I proceed to say that farther,

Ὑπομονῆς ἕνεκα διδάσκαλος ἐστὶ τῶν μαθητῶν Ἰὼβ ὁ ἀνεξικακίας ὁ τῆς Μωσέως, πραότητος ὁ τοῦ Δαβὶδ, &c. Chryf. T. V. p. 656.

II. Good Examples do not only inform; but they perswade and incline our reason to good practice, commending it to us by plausible authority: a way of reasoning the most plain, easie and suitable to all mens capacities; less subject to errour and doubt, than any other in particular cases; whereby as it is always more easie to know what is good and fit, so commonly it is most safe: there being few who can so well discern what is good, as they may rest in the judgments of others. For that wise and vertuous Persons do any thing, is a very probable argument, that we are obliged, and concerned to do the like; seeing such Persons may in all their actions be supposed to have an unbiassed regard to the rules of truth and justice. He therefore who can say, that *Abraham*, or *David*, or St. *Paul*, did so in such a case, supposeth that he hath no small reason to do the like; it is accounted pardonable, yea almost commendable, to err with such Persons; because it is done with good appearance of reason, seeing such Persons were themselves unlikely to err: *Will you* (saith *Cicero*) *commemorate to me* Scipio's, *and* Cato's, *and* Lælius's, *and say they did the same thing; though the thing displeases me, yet I cannot withstand the authority of such men: Their authority is so great, that it can cover even the suspicion of a fault.* 'Tis obvious in temporal concernments, how great a stroak this way of discourse hath; how boldly men adventure their dearest interests in following such, whom they probably deem honest, and able to guide them: For Instance, in travelling, if one being ignorant or doubtful of his way happen to meet a Person, whom he conceives able, and no-wise concerned, or disposed to mislead him,

Africanos mihi, & Catones, & Lelios commemorabis, & eos fecisse idem dices, quamvis res mihi non placeat, tamen contra hominum authoritatem probare non potuero. Magna est hominum authoritas, & etiam tanta, ut delicti suspicionem tegere possit. Cic. in Verr. 3.

im, he without ſcruple follows him, and confidently relies on his dire-
tion: In like manner, all good men in the way of vertuous practice
ending directly toward happineſs (our common journies end;) it being
heir deſign, their intereſt, and their endeavour not to miſtake the way,
or to defect from the right and neareſt courſe thereto, men are apt to
hink it reaſonable, and ſafe to accompany, in their Progreſs, or to preſs
fter them in their ſteps: and ſurely, next to a clear, and certain rule,
here is not any more rational warrant for Practice, and conſequently no
etter inducement thereto, than ſuch good Precedents. Farther,

III. Examples do incite our Paſſions, and impel them to the perfor-
nance of duty. They raiſe hope, they enflame courage, they provoke
mulation, they urge upon modeſty, they awaken curioſity, they affect
ancy; they ſet in motion all the ſprings of Activity. It may not be
miſs to ſhew how, particularly,

1. They raiſe hope, by diſcovering to us and aſſuredly proving the
aſibleneſs of matters propounded, or the poſſibility of ſucceſs in under-
aking good deſigns, and that by the beſt and moſt convincing of argu-
ents, experience. Nothing ſo depreſſeth hope, and advanceth deſpon-
ency as an apprehenſion of impoſſibility, or which is equivalent there-
o, an extream difficulty (appearing to ſurmount our preſent forces) in
he buſineſs to be attempted: of ſuch a conceit deſperation ſeemeth a
eaſonable conſequence. For πᾶν ἀδυνάτων ἐφίεσθαι μανικόν, 'tis *a madneſs to aim*
t impoſſibilities; and ſuch conſidering the great infirmity of humane na-
ure, its ſtrong propenſions to evil, and averſeneſs from good, together
ith the manifold impediments, and allurements objecting themſelves in
he way of good practice, all duties as barely repreſented in Precepts,
nd preſſed by rational inducements might ſeem to be, if good example
id not clearly demonſtrate them to be poſſible, yea ſometimes facile;
ven thoſe, which upon a ſuperficial view do ſeem moſt difficult, and in-
perable by our weak endeavour. The *Stoical* Doctrine, which deſcri-
ed a fine and ſtately Portraicture of vertue; and inculcated very ſtrict
ules (a cloſe following of God and nature, a perfect victory over ſelf,
he ſubduing all Paſſions and over-ruling all corporeal Appetites; an en-
ire freedom, compoſure and tranquillity of Mind; a total indifferency in
eſpect of Fortune, and all external events; with the like duties, rarely
ractiſed, although upon all accounts acknowledged conformable to rea-
on) was therefore by moſt rejected as uſeleſs, or exploded as ridiculous,
s being preſumed to propound matters purely imaginary and unpracti-
able, yet he that had ſeen this doctrine in great meaſure exemplified by
Zeno, the firſt Maſter of it, would have had no ſuch reaſon to contemn
, nor to deſpair of practiſing according to it, if he would ſeriouſly en-
eavour it: exemplified, I ſay, by *Zeno*, whereof we have an illuſtrious
eſtimony from a ſolemn decree of the *Athenians*: ἐπειδὴ Ζήνων Μνασέου, &c.
aert. *in* Zen. *Whereas* Zeno *the Son of* Mnaſeas *the Cittican, having ma-
y years profeſſed Philoſophy in this City, and as well in all other things hath
emeaned himſelf like a good man, as particularly exhorting the young men, who
ent to be inſtructed by him, hath provoked them to vertue, and ſobriety; with-
l exhibiting his own life a pattern of the beſt things anſwerable to the diſcour-
es he uſed to make; it is therefore auſpiciouſly decreed by the people, that* Zeno
he Son of Mnaſeas *be ſolemnly praiſed and crowned* (*according to the uſage*)
*ith a golden crown; and that a monument be erected for him at the publick
harge in the* Ceramicum (the Place where thoſe were interr'd, who had
ravely expoſed their lives for publick defence.) This was indeed a noble
ttеſtation, and a comely reſpect exhibited to a vertuous Converſation:

Chryſ. *Tom.* I. *p.* 69.

making in some measure a satisfaction for the heinous affront done thereto, when instead of honouring it with a crown, they rewarded it with a cup of Poison, given to the excellent *Socrates*. Suitably to which testimony *Seneca* saith of *Cleanthes*, that his vertuous Practice depended more upon the observation of *Zeno*'s life, than the information of his doctrine. *Zenonem Cleanthes non expressisset sicum tantummodo audisset; vita ejus interfuit, secreta perspexit, observavit illum an ex formula sua viveret.* Cleanthes (saith he) *had not so nearly resembled* Zeno, *if he had onely attended to his discourses: he was present to his life, he took notice of his private carriage, he observed whether his practice did suit to his doctrine.* So that *Stoicism* it self which speaketh such Prodigies, was it seems founded not onely upon big words, the issues of a speculative fancy, but more upon the good Practice of its first Master and Institutour. And indeed he that would effectually perswade the undertaking of any enterprise, must either suppose it, or prove it effectible; and the most easie, the most evident way of proving it is by Example. *Men* (saith *Pliny Junior* well) *are better instructed by examples, which have in them chiefly this advantage, that they do prove the things may be done which they enjoyn.* And, *Humane infirmity* saith (*Salvian* to the same purpose) *requires the assistance of example, that it may more easily now perform that, which it knows others to have before done; all posterity being admonished by hearing that what hath once been done, may be done again*: And, *The Example* (saith St. *Bernard*) *of a work done is a lively and efficacious Oration, easily perswading what we intend, by proving that feasible, which we strive to perswade unto.* Upon which score we therefore are exceedingly obliged to those holy men who by their Practice have assured us, that the highest duties exacted of us by our religion (the mortification of unreasonable desires, the suppression of irregular passions; the loving and blessing our Enemies; the renouncing worldly vanities and pleasures, the rejoycing in afflictions, the voluntary abdication of our estates in some cases, yea, exposing life it self to inevitable hazard and loss) are not chimerical Propositions of impossible Performances; but duties (if we shall seriously and vigorously apply our endeavours to them, and suffer our hopes to be elevated by their example) really practicable: Piety abstractedly view'd in Precept may seem an aiery Project, a Name, a Notion; but it being seen in Example will prove a matter substantial, true and feasible. A direct and pure speculation thereof may dazle our sight, and dash our hopes; but as being reflected from Persons practising it we may bear its lustre, and hope to attain it.

Melius hominesexemplis docentur, quæ imprimis hoc boni habent, quæ approbant, quæ præcipiunt fieri posse. Plin. Jun. *Paneg.*

Adjuvari se exemplis exoptat humana infirmitas, quo facilius ipsa nunc faciat, quæ alios fecisse ante cognoscat; dum admonetur auditu ætas omnis fieri posse, quod factum est. Salv. *ad Eccl. Cath.*

Sermo quidam vivus, & efficax exemplum operis est, facile persuadens quod intendimus, dum factibile probat esse, quod suademus. Bern. *de Resur. Serm.* 3.

Ex aliorum factis fieri posse credunt, quod forte cum putant fieri non posse pigrescunt. Cyp. *Ep.* l. 2. 2.

2. Examples do enflame courage. So the Apostle to the *Hebrews* signifieth, when to this purpose he intimateth that he mentioned and setteth before them the examples of the *Patriarchs*; that he thereby might excite their courage, and cause them resolutely to undertake that obedience, and patiently to undergo those afflictions, which they performed and sustained; *that* (saith he) *ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises.* For that heat, and active Spirit, which in some degree resideth in all mens breasts, is by example kindled, as one flame is kindled by the contact, or approach of another. How many Persons timorous, and averse from dangerous undertakings, have notwithstanding become very bold and adventrous in war by the discipline and influence of an exemplary valour? 'Tis *Plutarch*'s observation concerning *Cæsar*'s Souldiers, that they who in service under other Commanders did

Heb. 6. 12.

did not exceed the ordinary rate of courage, nor excel their fellows, did yet when he lead them become irreſiſtibly valiant, being animated and inſpired by his unparallel'd Gallantry; and who is there indeed ſo incurably heartleſs? ſo deſperately ſluggiſh or ſtupid, whom the ſight of a valiant Leader, marching before into the mouth of danger, will not infuſe fire and vigour into, and inſtigate forward into a participation of brave adventure? So example doth by a kind of contagion inſinuate courage, or inveagle men thereinto; beſide that it is a kind of daring, and proclaimeth him a Daſtard that will not imitate it; which imputation the loweſt courage of Man can hardly digeſt; and will therefore by doing ſomewhat anſwerable ſtrive to decline it.

——*Fortis in armis*
Cæſareis Labienus erat.

3. Again, Examples provoke emulation; which is another ſtrong Principle of activity; moving us earneſtly to deſire, (and thence eagerly to purſue) whatever good, privilege, or advantage we ſee another to enjoy. To obſerve another of the ſame nature and capacities with our ſelves to have ſhone with an illuſtrious vertue, to be conſecrated to Poſterity by a *laſting* fame, and to be crowned with glorious rewards above; what other reflections of thought can it produce in us, than ſuch as theſe? ſhall he a man, like my ſelf, endued with the ſame faculties, appetites and paſſions; ſubject to the ſame infirmities, temptations, needs, cares and encumbrances of life, ſhall he by noble diſpoſitions of Soul, and worthy Performances render himſelf highly conſiderable; while I by ſordid qualities, and unworthy Practices debaſe, and render my ſelf deſpicable? ſhall he leave behind him monuments of eternal Praiſe, while I do nothing worthy of regard or memory? ſhall he enjoy the favour of the great God, and the comforts of a bleſſed Eternity but I be wholly deprived of that joyful Eſtate, and plunged into endleſs ſorrows, and deſperate miſery? ſhall a *Joſeph* ſtoutly reſiſt and overcome the ſtrongeſt Temptations, and I be eaſily baffled by the leaſt ſolicitation of Vice? ſhall a ſtripling *David* glorioufly triumph over Giants, while I baſely am vanquiſhed by Dwarfs? ſhall *Job* be ſtripped of all his Goods with contentedneſs, and endure the moſt grievous Pains with Patience, while I am diſcompoſed for any ſmall loſs, and diſmayed by the leaſt croſs accident? ſhall *Abraham* here by his faith, and obedience attain to be called the Friend of God, and reſt for ever in his glorious and happy Boſom, while I deſervedly am refuſed the honour and comfort of that Heavenly communion here, and ſhall hereafter be caſt out from that bliſsful Preſence into the diſmal manſions of wretched folly and wickedneſs? Did *Paul*, once a ſtubborn Jew, a blind Phariſee, a grievous Blaſphemer, a bloody Perſecutour, by a ſeaſonable Converſion repair his State, approve himſelf to God by an eminent zeal for his glory, undergo reſtleſs Pains, run deſperate hazards, and endure all ſorts of diſtreſſes for the propagation of Gods Heavenly truth, obtaining thence a never-fading crown of Glory in Heaven, and a perpetual renown upon Earth; and ſhall I then, who from my youth have been educated in the moſt true and holy religion, who have by ſolemn engagements devoted my ſelf thereto; who may without any trouble, or danger profeſs and practice according to that holy diſcipline, proceed in wicked courſes, provoking God's wrath, and attracting his vengeance upon me? No: ſince the capacities are alike, ſince the means are common, ſince the rewards of Piety are promiſcuouſly expoſed and offered unto all, why ſhould I by deplorable perverſeneſs or negligence ſuffer my ſelf to be deprived of it and its benefits? Why ſhall not I become

Chryſ. T. 1. p. 77. T. 6. p. 148. T. 5. Orat. 101.
Φύσει γὰρ φιλόκαλον ἔσαν τὴν φύσιν τῶν ἀνθρώπων εἶδὼς ὁ Κύριος, &c.

as good, as commendable, as happy as any other man? These are the conceits and voices of natural emulation, that mighty Passion (so often and by many effects it discovereth it self to be) implanted in our original constitution to be as a spur and incentive, stimulating and enflaming us unto the ready undertaking, and vigorous pursuit of good purposes; the which perhaps hath produced more noble effects, than any other Passion, or Inclination of our Souls: for all manner of excellency in knowledge, in prowess, in vertue how often doth it issue from this source? Doth not the admired fame of men notable for Learning (recorded in Story, or subject to present observation) and a jealousie of being surpassed in accomplishments competent to humane nature, sharpen the appetite, and rouse the industry of most Scholars, whom neither the love of knowledge, nor its apparent usefulness could any-wise perswade to bear so much toil in acquist thereof? Do not all Histories acquaint us, that the most gallant enterprizes and exploits of famous Warriours have derived their beginning from an emulation of the glory purchased by their Ancestours? (wisdom and valour have thus especially been propagated; one Man's signal excellency being Parent to the like in many other.) And that this Passion may in like manner be subservient to the Production of Vertue and Piety, is plain enough from parity of reason, and from experience; and we have (for farther argument thereof) the *Apostles* Practice using it to this purpose: St. *Paul* employed it as an engine for the conversion of his dear countreymen; whom by raising in them a jealousie of being out-stripped (in God's favour, and its effects) by the *Gentiles*, he endeavoureth to provoke to the embracing of the Christian Faith: *I speak to you Gentiles* (saith he) *in as much as I am the Apostle of the Gentiles, I magnifie my Office,* εἴ πως παραζηλῶσω μου τὴν σάρκα, *if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.* And St. *James* instigateth us unto fervency of Prayer, by minding us, that *Elias was a man of like passions with our selves*; yet was able by his Prayers to shut and open Heaven, to procure barrenness and fertility to the Earth. And the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* chargeth us, to *consider one another,* εἰς παροξυσμὸν ἀγάπης, καὶ καλῶν ἔργων, *so as to provoke one another* (or by mutual emulation to sharpen one another) *to charity and good works.*

—*Tentanda via est, qua me quoque possim Tollere humo.*—

Rom. 11. 14. 10. 19.

Jam. 5. 17.

4. Examples do work upon modesty, that *preserver and guardian of vertue*, as *Cicero* calls it. For every good action of another doth upbraid, reproach and shame him, who acteth not conformably thereto. Can we without a trembling heart, and blushing forehead view the Practices of the ancient Saints, if ours be altogether unlike them? If they to please God, and secure their salvation did undergo such *prodigious* Pains in assiduous devotions, abstinencies, watchings, and we contrary-wise are extreamly sluggish, cold and negligent in the Performance of our ordinary duties; if they willingly renounced all sensual complacencies, and we either cherish our selves in a soft delicacy of life, or wallow in a profane dissolution of manners; if they to free themselves from distracting cares voluntarily disburthened themselves of all needless encumbrances, and we are wholly busie in *heaping up* wealth, and driving on worldly interests; if they gladly embraced and endured the sharpest afflictions, and we are terrified by the thought, are overwhelmed by the sense of the least disappointment, or distastful occurrence; how can we without extream regret of mind, and confusion of face consider their Practice, or compare it with ours? It is a profligate impudence of him that can daily hear, and rea-

Custos omnium virtutum, dedecus fugiens, laudemque maxime consequens verecundia est. Cic. *Part. Rhet.*

read the Stories of their doings, without being deeply ſenſible, and aſhamed at the diſſonance appearing between their courſe of life, and his.

5. Example awakens that curioſity, which is natural to us, and of no mean efficacy upon our actions. For whatever we ſee done, we are apt to be inquiſitive concerning it; why and to what purpoſe it is done, what the grounds are, and what the fruits of the Performance; eſpecially if the matter ſeem conſiderably important, and the action proceedeth from a perſon deſerving reſpect; whereof having paſſed ſome competent judgment, we are by the ſame inſtinct of curioſity farther tranſported into a deſire of diſcerning by our trial and experience whether the event correſpondeth to our expectation; ſo are we eaſily induced to imitate the actions of others. By which means as vice ordinarily is conceived and propagated, (men by a prepoſterous and perverſe curioſity being inveagled to try what they ſee others affect or enjoy) ſo may vertue alſo by the ſame means be engendred and nouriſhed; the general ways of producing and maintaining thoſe contrary habits being alike. As therefore, 'tis a great blemiſh and reproach to humane nature, that,

——— *Faciles imitandis* Juven.
Turpibus & pravis omnes ſumus———

we (as the *Satyriſt* truly obſerveth of us) *have a great proclivity to follow naughty examples*; ſo there is from hence ſome amends, that we have alſo ſome inclination to imitate good and worthy Precedents; the which is ſomewhat more ſtrong and vigorous, becauſe countenanced and encouraged by the approbation of reaſon, our moſt noble faculty.

6. Examples alſo do pleaſe the mind and fancy in contemplation of them, thence drawing a conſiderable influence upon practice. No kind of ſtudious entertainment doth ſo generally delight as Hiſtory; or the tradition of remarkable examples: even thoſe who have an abhorrency or indiſpoſition toward other ſtudies (who have no *genius* to apprehend the more intricate ſubtilties of Science; nor the patience to purſue rational conſequences) are yet often much taken with hiſtorical narrations; theſe ſtriking them with a delectable variety of accidents, with circumſtantial deſcriptions, and ſenſible repreſentations of objects, do greatly affect and delight their fancies; eſpecially the relation of notable adventures, and rare accidents, is wont to be attended with great pleaſure and ſatisfaction. And ſuch are thoſe, which preſent to us the lives and examples of holy men, abounding with wonders of providence and grace: no attempts ſo gallant, no exploits ſo illuſtrious as thoſe, which have been atchieved by the faith and patience, by the prudence and courage of the ancient Saints; they do far ſurpaſs the moſt famous atchievements of *Pagan* heroes. It was (I dare ſay) more wonderful, that *Abraham* with his retinue of Houſhold Servants ſhould vanquiſh four potent and victorious kings; and that *Gideon* with three hundred unarmed men ſhould diſcomfit a vaſtly numerous hoſt; than that *Alexander* with a well appointed army of ſtout and expert Souldiers ſhould overturn the *Perſian* Empire. The Siege of *Jericho* is ſo far more remarkable, than thoſe moſt famous ſieges of *Numantia*, and *Saguntus*, as it is more ſtrange, that the blaſt of trumpets, and the noiſe of People ſhouting ſhould demoliſh Walls, than the ſhaking them with Rams, or diſcharging maſſy Stones againſt them. And he that carefully will compare the deeds of *Sampſon* and *Hercules*, ſhall find, that one true exploit performed by the former doth much in force and ſtrangeneſs ſurmount the twelve fabulous labours of the other:

No

No triumphs indeed are comparable to thoſe of Piety; no trophies are ſo magnificent and durable, as thoſe which victorious faith erecteth: that hiſtory therefore which reports the *res geſtæ*, the acts and ſufferings of moſt pious men, muſt in reaſon be eſteemed not only the moſt uſeful, but alſo the moſt pleaſant; yeilding the ſweeteſt entertainment to well diſpoſed minds; wherein we ſee vertue expreſſed, not in bare *ideæ* only, but in actual life, ſtrength, motion; in all its beauty, and ornaments: than which no ſpectacle can be more ſtately; no object more grateful can be preſented to the diſcerning eye of reaſon.

7. We may farthermore conſider, that God hath provided and recommended to us one example, as a perfect ſtandard of good practice, The example of our Lord; the which declareth the uſe and efficacy of good example, as one principal inſtrument of Piety. That indeed is the moſt univerſal, abſolute and aſſured Pattern; yet doth it not ſuperſede the uſe of other examples: Not onely the valour and conduct of the General, but thoſe of inferiour officers, yea, the reſolution of common Souldiers do ſerve to animate their fellows: The Stars have their ſeaſon to guide us, as well as the Sun; eſpecially when our eyes are ſo weak, as hardly to beer the day. Even, conſidering our infirmity, inferiour examples, by their imperfection ſometime have a peculiar advantage. Our Lords moſt imitable practice did proceed from an immenſe vertue of divine grace, which we cannot arrive to; it in it ſelf is ſo perfect and high, that we may not ever reach it; looking upon it may therefore ſometimes dazle, and diſcourage our weakneſs; but other good men had aſſiſtances in meaſure, ſuch as we may hope to approach unto; they were ſubject to the difficulties, which we feel; they were expoſed to the perils of falling, which we fear: we may therefore hope to march on in a reaſonable diſtance after them; we may, by help of the ſame grace, come near in tranſcribing their leſs exact Copy.

To conclude, ſince upon ſo many accounts we are obliged to follow good examples; ſince they are of ſo great uſe toward our proceeding in the way to happineſs; thence they conduce to the clear inſtruction of our underſtanding, to the forcibly inclining our reaſon, to the vehement excitement of our Paſſions, to the delightfully affecting our imagination in ſubſerviency to good practice; let us make that due and profitable uſe of them, which we ſhould and may do. Let us with diligent attention peruſing the ſacred hiſtory meditate upon the lives of holy men therein propounded as Patterns of a perſevering Faith in God, and conſcionable obedience to his commandments. Let the light of their exemplary practice in all kind of piety and vertue continually ſhine upon our ſouls, to direct our minds, to inflame our affections, to quicken our reſolutions, to detect the errours, and correct the faults of our lives, that we imitating their vertuous and pious converſation, may partake of thoſe comfortable rewards; of that joy, and bliſs, whereof they reſt poſſeſſed: The which God Almighty, and our Bleſſed Saviour the authour and finiſher of our Faith, by his gracious aid and bleſſing grant unto us; to whom be all glory and praiſe for ever and ever. *Amen.*

SER.

SERMON III.

Abiding in Christ to be demonstrated by walking as Christ did.

1 JOHN 2. 6.

He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk as he walked.

TO *abide in Christ*, to *be in Christ*, to *put on Christ*; and reciprocally *Christ*'s *being in us*, *living*, *dwelling*, *being formed in us*; and the like expressions occurring in H. Scripture, do not denote any Physical inherence, or Essential conjunction between *Christ* and us (such as those who affect unintelligible misteries rather than plain sense, would conceit) but onely that mutual relation accruing from our profession of being *Christ*'s Disciples, our being inserted into his body the Church, being governed by his Laws, partaking of his Grace, with all the privileges of the Gospel, relying upon his promises, and hoping for eternal salvation from him. By vertue of which relation we may be said in a mystical, or moral manner to be united to him, deriving strength and sustenance from him, as the members from the head, the branches from the tree, the other parts of the building from the foundation; by which similitudes this mysterious union is usually expressed in Scripture; in effect briefly, to be in, or to abide in *Christ* implyeth no more, but our being truly, in faith and practice, Christians; so that the meaning of St. *John*'s words seemeth plainly and simply to be this; Whoever pretends to be a Christian (that is, to believe the Doctrine, and embrace the Discipline of *Christ*) ought to walk (that is, is obliged to order the whole course of his life and actions) as *Christ* walked (that is, as *Christ* did live and converse in the World:) Or, it is the duty of every one, professing Christianity, to conform his life to the pattern of *Christ*'s life, to follow his example, to imitate his practice. This is the importance of the words, this the subject of our present discourse. Rom. 8. 10. Gal. 2. 20. Eph. 3. 17. Gal. 4. 19.

I. For illustration and confirmation of which point, we may observe, that the H. *Apostles* do, upon all occasions, assume this supposition, when they would perswade their Disciples to the practice of any vertue, or performance of any duty; enforcing their exhortations, by representing the practice of *Christ*, as an unquestionable ground of obligation, and an effectual inducement thereto. Hence they incite them to holiness: *But* (saith St. *Peter*) *as he that hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation*; to Charity: *And walk in love* (saith Saint *Paul*) *as Christ also loved us*: to Patience; *Because* (saith St. *Peter*) *Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps.* And *Let us* 1 Pet. 1. 15. Eph. 5. 2. 1 Pet. 2. 21.

Heb. 12. 1. (saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) *run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the authour and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that*
Phil. 2. 2. *was set before him endured the cross* : to humility ; *Let* (saith St. *Paul*) *the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it no robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation* : to charitable compliance, and inoffensive demeanour toward o-
1 Cor. 10. 33. 11. 1. thers, intimated by St. *Paul*, when he says, *Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they might be saved* ;
Rom. 15. 2. *Be ye followers of me, as I am of Christ* ; and again, *Let every one please his neighbour for his good to edification* ; *for even Christ pleased not himself.* Thus do the *Apostles* take all occasion, from the like practice of *Christ*, to perswade the performance of duty ; and the strength of their argument lyeth upon the evidence of this supposition, that all professing themselves Christians are especially obliged to imitate *Christ*'s example. And their authority may be backed and inforced by several reasons.

II. Doing so hath a reasonableness and decency grounded upon our relations to *Christ* : it is fit and comely that the manners of the Disciple should be regulated by those of his Master ; that the Servant should not, in his garb and demeanour, dissent or vary from his Lord; that the Subject should conform his humour to the fashion of his Prince ; especially that we should thus comply and conform to such a Master, such a Lord, such a Prince, whom (upon highest considerations) by a most voluntary choice, and in a most solemn manner we have absolutely devoted our selves unto : This
Joh. 13. 13. reason our Lord doth himself urge : *Te* (saith he to his Disciples) *call me Master, and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am* ; *if I then your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers feet.*

III. Following *Christ*'s example is requisite to demonstrate the sincerity of our faith, love and reverence to him. It is the most natural way of testifying affection and respect to imitate the manners of those persons, who are the objects of those acts and dispositions ; to esteem what they approve, to delight in what they affect, and consequently (since actions do proceed from affections) to do as they do. Contrary actions are plain arguments of contrary judgments, inclinations and affections : Who can imagine we sincerely believe in *Christ*, or heartily love him, or truly honour him, that seeth us to loath what he liked, or affect what he detested ; to contemn what he prized, or value what he despised ; to neglect what he pursued, or embrace what he avoided ? but if our lives resemble his, any Man will thence collect our respect and affection to him : this argu-
Joh. 13. 35. ment our Saviour doth also intimate : *By this* (saith he) *shall all men know ye are my disciples, if ye love one another*; that is, it will be an evident sign and strong argument, that ye really do believe in, love and honour me, if ye imitate me in my charity.

IV. By pretending to be Christians we acknowledge the transcendent goodness, worth and excellency of our Saviour ; that he was incomparably better, and wiser than any person ever was, or could be; that he alwayes acted with the highest reason, out of the most excellent disposition of mind, in order to the best purposes ; and that his practice therefore reasonably should be the rule and pattern of ours. For the best and exactest in every kind is the measure of the rest. All that would obtain exquisite skill in any Art, or Faculty, think best to imitate the works of the best Masters therein ; A Painter to draw after the pieces of *Zeuxis* or *Apelles* (of *Raphael*, or *Titian*) an Oratour to speak in the style of *Cicero*, or *Demosthenes* ; a Souldier to emulate the military Atchievements of *Hannibal*, or *Cæsar* : in like manner, reason requireth, if we would

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live well and happily, that we should endeavour to conform our practice to that of our Saviour, the most perfect mirrour of all vertue and goodness.

V. The practice of our Saviour did throughly agree with his Doctrine and Law; he requireth nothing of us which he did not eminently perform himself. He *fulfilled* in deed as well as taught in word *all righteousness*. He was not *ignava opera, Philosopha sententia*; like those Masters of Philosophy, so frequently taxed and derided by the *Satyrists*; who, by a horrid garb, supercilious looks, and loud declamations, would seem to discountenance those vices which themselves practised; nor like those hypocritical Lawyers in the Gospel, who laded other men with *heavy burthens*, such as themselves would *not touch with one of their fingers*: No, he imposed nothing on us, which he did not first bear upon his own shoulders: the strictness of his life did, in all respects, correspond with the severity of his Precepts; or rather did indeed much exceed them. They therefore who pretend to believe his doctrine, and avow themselves bound to observe his Law, are consequently engaged to follow his practice, in which his Doctrine and Law are signally exemplified.

Οὐδὲν ἀχρόπεων τῶν κατὰ λόγους φιλοσοφούντων. Chryf.

Ὧν τὸ βῆμα τῶ τρόπω κατήργων. Naz.

Luc. 11. 46.

VI. It being the design of divine goodness, in sending our Saviour, to render us good and happy, to deliver us from sin and misery, to instruct us in the knowledge, and excite us to the practice of all vertue; and thereby to qualify us for the enjoyment of a blessed immortality; effecting all this in a way agreeable to our natural condition and capacity; there could not be devised any more powerful means, or more convenient method of accomplishing those excellent purposes, than by propounding such an example, and obliging us to comply therewith: the which may appear, 1. by considering in general the advantage and efficacy that good example is apt to have upon practice; 2. by weighing the peculiar excellency of our Saviour's example above all others, in order to those ends; and 3. by surveying the particular instances of imitable goodness represented in the life of our Saviour.

1. Good example is naturally an effectual instrument of good practice; for that it doth most compendiously, pleasantly and easily instruct; representing things to be done at one view, in a full body, cloathed with all their modes and circumstances; it recommends them to us, by the most plain and plausible way of reasoning, (and withal the most sure and safe) the authority of wise and good men; it encourageth, by evidently declaring the practicableness of rules prescrib'd; it kindleth and rowseth mens courage, by a kind of contagion, as one flame doth kindle another; it raiseth a worthy emulation of doing laudable things, which we see done; or of obtaining a share in the commendations and rewards of vertue. It urgeth modesty, breeding shame and regret in them who act contrarily thereto; it awakeneth curiosity, thereby producing a desire to make trial of what it proposeth; it affecteth and pleaseth the fancy, thereby insinuating an approbation, admiration and liking of the good things, which it representeth; briefly, it exciteth and engageth all our affions, setting on work all those powerful springs of activity, it consequently is, in its own nature, an efficacious mean of good practice. This we may, in general, say of all good examples; but,

2. More especially the example of *Christ* doth in efficacy and influence upon good practice, surpass all others; upon several accompts.

First, In that it is a sure and infallible rule; an entire and perfect rule of practice; deficient in no part, swerving in no circumstance from truth

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and right, which priviledges are competent to no other example. The Practice of the best men is not always to be imitated, nor ever absolutely as a certain ground of action; it is to be (so far as we have ability) considered, examined and compared to more certain rules; (the Divine Laws, and the Principles of right Reason) according to their agreement with which they are to be followed; they are indeed (before trial of the case) probable arguments of what is done by them being good and lawful; they do outweigh slender and obscure reasonings about the goodness of things; they may, when opportunity, leisure, or ability of farther enquiry and judgment about things are wanting, serve to direct us; but they are not throughly sure rules, or perfect measures of our duty. We should beware least we be seduced even by holy persons; and therefore with circumspection and caution should peruse their story, and contemplate their demeanour; whereof those which are explicitely commended, or allowed by the divine judgment, we may, being assured that we are in the same circumstances, safely follow (taking them for monitories, encouragements and excitements to our duty) but those that are directly condemned by the same sentence, or apparently devious from God's Law, we as carefully should avoid; such as are of a doubtful and unaccountable nature we are to suspend about, and not to ground upon; nor to argue from the fact to the rightfulness of them; the safest way being always (as we are able) to have recourse to the simple, plain and perspicuous precepts of God, and dictates of reason. For the best men have been always subject to errours and infirmities; the fountain of original corruption in them was never so dried up, or closely stopped, but that some impure streams have bubbled forth; the fire of natural concupiscence was never so utterly quenched, but that sometimes it would blaze, or smoke out in bad actions; that inteſtine enemy (the flesh) was never throughly subdued, nor the body of sin quite slain and mortified in any other mortal man: Good men have ever had some foul spots, or deforming wrinkles appearing in the beauteous face of their conversation; they have had their inequalities and indispositions of humour; their ebbs of devotion; their fits of sloth; their wanton freaks; their slips often, and sometimes their falls; they have been subject to be deluded by mistake, to be surprized by inadvertency, to be transported by passion, to be swayed by temper, to be biassed by interest, to be allured by temptation into false and unwarrantable proceedings; they might sometime fail in the substance, oftner in the degree, in the manner, in the circumstances of action; we find them often complaining of their proneness to do amiss, bemoaning the wretched frailty of their state; yea often repenting and bitterly mourning for their actual transgressions: There hardly is any Saint, recorded in Scripture, without some blemish in his actions; which shews our weakness, and ingageth us to be wary. They were indeed endowed with sufficient competencies of divine light and graces sutable to their private needs, or to the publick exigencies of their times, places, occasions and affairs; but not with the perfection and extream degrees thereof, requisite to preserve them from all miscarriage; so that we are not alwayes, or in all cases, to conform our actions to their examples: We must not learn to equivocate of *Abraham*, nor to circumvent of *Jacob*, nor to be cholerick of *Moses*, (so as in our excess of passion to break the Tables of the Divine Law) nor of *Eli* to be fondly affectionate, or indulgent to our relations, nor of *David* to utter uncharitable imprecations; nor to dissemble of St. *Peter*; nor of St. *Paul* to revile

It was ill said of *Seneca*: *Catoni ebrietas objecta est, & facilius efficiet, quisquis objecerit hoc crimen, honestum, quam turpem Catonem.*

Magi

Magistrates: The use we are to make of many practices, of most eminently pious men, is not to be misguided by them into wrong paths; not by them to authorize, or excuse our presumptuous misdeeds; but to make us to admire, and to relye upon the Divine Mercy, which so graciously did overlook and pardon their offences; to provoke us to an imitation of their repentance; to render us watchful in shunning those rocks, upon which persons, so skilful in the conduct of their lives, have dashed; to engage us to humility, by considering so manifest arguments of our frailty, and our being obnoxious to greater and more frequent miscarriages.

But as to our Saviour's example, the case is quite different; for though he did Miracles as God, he commanded as *Christ*; he did many heroical things in discharge of his office, *&c.* in which things, we cannot, or may not imitate him; yet whatever in his life was in its own nature imitable by us, which did not exceed our natural powers, nor disagree with our condition and quality; whatever he as Man, in a private capacity, as subject to the divine Law, with regard thereto performed, we may with all freedom, confidence and security imitate; nor can so doing incur any danger of errour, or guilt; for we cannot, without great folly and impiety, suspect any fault, or imperfection in his most pure, righteous and innocent life: He was *holy, harmless, undefiled, and separated from sinners*: He was *a lamb without blemish and without spot*; *He was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. He did no sin, nor was any guile found in his mouth. God gave him of his Spirit not by measure*: these are the voices and elogies of the Sacred Oracles concerning him. The heavenly extraction, even of his humanity, derived no original contagion from our polluted stock, and rendred him free from the common incentives of evil concupiscence. The inseparable presence of the Divinity with him (*for God was with him*, as St. *Peter* expressed it) and the unrestrained effusion of the H. Spirit upon him did preserve him from all defilements of infectious conversation in this World; a clear evidence of divine light always shining in his Soul, directed him infallibly in the paths of truth and righteousness: No tempest of cross accidents without, nor any estuations of internal passion could discompose the steady calm and serenity of his mind; no allurement of worldly pleasure, nor temptation of profit could pervert his practice, or seduce his heart, being enflamed with most intense love of God, and entire charity to men: so that his example must needs be a perfect rule and sure direction to us. Which consideration cannot but yeild great encouragement and comfort in following him; freeing us from all anxious doubt, and suspicion of mistake in our spiritual progress; like the presence of a sure guide to the bewildred Traveller; like the appearance of a Star to the weather-beaten Mariner; like that miraculous Pillar of Fire, which safely conducted the wandring *Israelites* through the unknown and unfrequented Passages of a wild Desart. But farther,

Heb. 7. 26. 1 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 4. 15. 1 Pet. 2. 22. Joh. 3. 34. Act. 10. 38.

Secondly, The peculiar excellency of our Lord's Example appears, in that he was, by the Divine Providence, to this very purpose designed, and sent into the World, as well by his Practice as by his Doctrine, to be the guide and master of holy life, and obedience to all men; and did accordingly propound to himself this end of his actions, that he might be imitated by his disciples. So he declareth himself, as to some considerable passages of his life, and thence, by reasonable inference, we may suppose the same of the rest, so far as they might be conducible to the same end; especially, since of some performances, no other, or no so probable

Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ αὐτὸς ἐνήστευσεν ἐκ αὐτοῦ τούτου δείκνυσιν, ἀλλ' ἡμᾶς παιδεύων. Chryf. *Tom.* 2. p. 81.

accompt

accompt can be given, as that they were done for exemplarity: For why should he fast, who had no sins to be repented of, no rebellious flesh to be tamed, no intemperate desires to be mortifi'd, no coldness of devotion to be enlivened thereby? And why did he offer himself to be Baptized, who had no original stain to be cleansed of, no fault to be forgiven, no want of special grace to be conferr'd? Why, but by his exemplary fulfilling all righteousness, to teach us ready obedience to all Divine Institutions, and peaceable compliance with all laudable customs: So an ancient Writer wisely descanteth upon those Practices of our Saviour: *He was* (saith that Writer) *Baptized, and fasted, not because he had need of any cleansing, or fasting, who in nature was pure and holy; but that he might attest to the truth of St.* John, *and might exhibit a pattern to us.* What induc'd him to condescend to such a mis-beseeming employment to appearance, as the washing of his disciples feet, he doth himself tell us: *If I then* (saith he) *your Lord and Master have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one anothers feet; for I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you.* This was his professed scope and drift, in that admirable deportment of his, to teach us humility, charity and condescension toward the meanest of our Brethren. What did those exuberant instances of charity, Practised by him, import? this especially, that we should imitate them; hither he drives them; *This* (saith he) *is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you.* Why was he, in his disposition, so meek and gentle, in his conversation so humble and lowly? to this purpose, that we might of him learn those excellent qualities: *Learn of me* (saith he) *for I am meek and lowly in heart.* And St. *Peter* saith, *That Christ suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow his steps*; signifying, that he designed his patience to be exemplary to us. If then our Saviour, in his humility, his charity, his meekness, his patience, intended his life to be exemplary, and expresly propounded it as such; then certainly, in his devotion, his self-denial, his justice, in all other vertues he had the same intention; and what he intended, God designed to be; and what God designed to be, was doubtless eminently conducible to the end designed; and therefore our Saviour's life was most exemplary. Other Saints indeed were o very exemplary conversation, but either proved to be so, according to ordinary course of providence, without any peculiar designation thereto (thei free choice conspiring, with God's Grace, in producing good works shin ing before men) or at most, by a restrained determination to some particu lar time, place or people; as *Moses* was chosen and appointed to conduct th *Israelites*; David *was taken from the sheepfold, and following the ewes great wit young, to feed* Jacob *God's people, and* Israel *his inheritance*; *Jeremy* wa sanctified from his birth, and ordained to be a Prophet of the Nation in his times, and St. *Paul* was separated from the womb to be a Preache of the Christian Faith: these, and such like eminent persons, Almight God, in his goodness, was pleased to raise up, to be, in their generation as it were partial and temporary Saviours, as by declaring his will, an revealing his truth to men, so by guiding them with a remarkable exam ple; these *burning and shining* * *Lamps* (as St. *John* the *Baptist* is called were indeed, like lamps set up in some particular families, with a com petent lustre, to dispel the present darkness, shining within their definit sphere, and for a determinate time; but our Saviour, like the Sun, fixe in a higher orb, was ordained with a perpetual and unconfined splendou to illuminate the Universe; to cause a general and everlasting day of healt ful and comfortable knowledge over the face of the whole earth. F

Ἐβαπτίσθη καὶ ἐνήστευσεν οὐκ αὐτὸς ἀπορυπώσεως ἢ νηστείας χρείαν ἔχων ἢ κωλύσεως ὁτῇ φύσει καθαρὸς καὶ ἅγιος, ἀλλ' ἵνα τοῦτο τὴν ἀλήθειαν βεβαιώσῃ καὶ ἡμῖν ὑπογραμμὸν παραδείξῃ.

John 15. 12.

Mat. 11. 2.
1 Pet. 2. 21.

Acts 7. 35.
Psal. 106. 23.
Psal. 78. 70.
Jer. 1. 5.

Joh. 5. 35.
* Λύχνος ὁ καιόμενος καὶ φαίνων.

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was *that true light, which enlighteneth every man coming into the world*; *He was prepared before the face of all people, to be a light to lighten the Nations* (not *Israel* onely, but the *Nations* indefinitely, or all Nations.) He was ordained, not Commander of a single Regiment, or Party, but Captain-General of all Mankind, to conduct all those who were disposed to follow him, by a victorious obedience, into that triumphant state of everlasting joy and happiness. His example doth belong unto us all without exception, by divine ordination; for *we*, all of us, *were* (to use St. *Paul*'s expression) *predestinated to be conformed to the image of God's Son*; *that he might be the first-born among many brethren.* So it was, and so it became the infinite goodness, and philanthropy of God, to bestow upon mankind one perfectly good example, inviting to all vertue, and so fit to countervail all those many bad ones, wherewith we converse, enticing to vice; to set forth, among so many imperfect ones, one accomplished piece of his heavenly workmanship, able to attract the eyes, and ravish the hearts of all men with admiration of its excellent worth and beauty; to offer to our view some discernible representation of his invisible perfections; that so we might better be induced and inured to apprehend, love, reverence and imitate himself, by contemplation of that most exquisite image of him; to give an evident proof, that the highest vertue is not unpracticable, that humane nature, by aid and guidance of the Divine Spirit, may arrive to the sublimest pitch of perfection in goodness; in fine, to expose such a common, sweet and lovely pattern, as we with assurance, joy and comfort may follow.

John 1. 9. Luc. 2. 31, 32. Heb. 2. 10. Rom. 8. 29. Joh. 5. 10. Ἃ γὰρ ἂν ἐκεῖνος ποιῇ ταῦτα καὶ ὁ υἱὸς ὁμοίως ποιεῖ.

Thirdly, Our Saviours example is especially influential upon practice, in that it was, by an admirable temperament, more accommodated for imitation than any others have been. That the perfect copy of his most holy life seems more easie to be transcribed, than the ruder draughts of other holy Men; for though it were written with an incomparable fairness, delicacy and evenness; not slurred with any foul blot, nor any where declining from exact streightness; yet were the lineaments thereof exceeding plain and simple; not by any gaudy flourishes, or impertinent intrigues rendred difficult, to studious imitation; so that even women and children, the weakest and meanest sort of people, as well as the most wise and ingenuous, might easily perceive its design, and with good success write after it. His was a gentle and steady light, bright indeed, but not dazling the eye; warm, but not scorching the face of the most intent beholder; No affected singularities, no supercilious morosities, no frivolous ostentations of seemingly high, but really fruitless performances; nothing that might deter a timorous, discourage a weak, or offend a scrupulous disciple, is observable in his practice: but on the contrary, his conversation was full of lowliness and condescension, of meekness and sweetness, of openness and candid simplicity; apt to envite and allure all men to approach toward it, and with satisfaction to enjoy it. He did not seclude himself into the constant retirements of a Cloister, nor into the farther recesses of a Wilderness (as some others have done) but conversed freely and indifferently with all sorts of men, even the most contemptible and odious sort of men, *Publicans* and *Sinners*; like the Sun, with an impartial bounty, liberally imparting his pleasant light and comfortable warmth to all. He used no uncouth austerities in habit, or diet, but complied, in his garb, with ordinary usage, and sustained his life with such food as casual opportunity did offer; so that his indifferency, in that kind, yielded matter of obloquy against him from the fond admirers of a humorous preciseness. His devotions, (though exceedingly sprightful and fervent)

fervent) were not usually extended to a tedious and exhausting durance, nor strained into ecstatical transports, charming the natural senses, and overpowering the reason; but calm, steady and regular, such as Persons of honest intention and hearty desire (though not endued with high fancy, or stirring passion) might readily imitate. His zeal was not violent or impetuous, except upon very great reason, and extraordinary occasion, when the honour of God, or good of Men, was much concerned. He was not rigorous in the observance of traditional rites and customs, (such as were needlesly burthensome, or which contained in them more of formal shew, than of real fruit) yet behaved himself orderly and peaceably, giving due respect to the least institution of God, and complying with the innocent customs of men; thereby pointing out unto us the middle way between peevish superstition and boisterous faction; which as always the most honest, so commonly is the most safe and pleasant way to walk in. He delighted not to discourse of sublime misteries (although his deep wisdom comprehended all) nor of subtile speculations and intricate questions, such as might amuse and perplex, rather than instruct and profit his Auditors; but usually did feed his Auditors with the most common and useful truths, and that in the most familiar and intelligible language; not disdaining the use of vulgar sayings, and trivial proverbs, when they best served to insinuate his wholesome meaning into their minds. His whole life was spent in exercise of the most easie and pleasant, yet most necessary and substantial duties; obedience to God, charity, meekness, humility, patience, and the like; the which, that he might practise with the greatest latitude, and with most advantage for general imitation, he did not addict himself to any particular way of life, but disentangled himself from all worldly care and business; chusing to appear in the most free, though very mean condition; that he might indifferently instruct, by his example, persons of all callings, degrees and capacities; especially the most, that is the poor; and might have opportunity, in the face of the world, to practise the most difficult of necessary duties; lowliness, contentedness, abstinence from Pleasure, contempt of the World, sufferance of injuries and reproaches. Thus suited and tempered by Divine Wisdom was the life of our blessed Saviour, that all sorts of men might be in an equal capacity to follow him, that none might be offended, affrighted, or discouraged, but that all might be pleased, delighted, enamoured with the homely Majesty, and plain beauty thereof: And in effect so it happened that ordinary people (the weakest, but sincerest, and unprejudic'd sort of men) were greatly taken with, most admired and applauded his deportment; many of them readily embracing his doctrine, and devoting themselves to his discipline; while onely the proud, envious, covetous and ambitious *Scribes* and *Lawyers* rejected his excellent doctrine, scorned the heavenly simplicity, and holy integrity of his life.

Fourthly, The transcendent excellency of our Lords example appeareth in that it is attended with the greatest obligations (of gratitude and ingenuity, of justice, of interest, of duty) mightily engaging us to follow it. For 'tis not the example of an ordinary, or inconsiderable Person, of a stranger, of one indifferent, or unrelated to us; but of a glorious Prince of heavenly extraction; (the first-born Son of the Almighty God, sole heir of eternal Majesty) of our Lord and Master, to whom we are for ever bound, by indispensable bands of duty and obedience; of our great Captain, who hath undertaken to subdue our enemies, and hath obliged us to follow his conduct, in a holy warfare, against them, by most solemn sacraments and vows; of our best friend, from whom we have received

received the greateſt favours and benefits imaginable; of our moſt gracious Saviour, who, for our ſake, hath voluntarily ſuſtained moſt bitter pains, and ſhameful contumelies; having ſacrificed his deareſt heart-blood to redeem us from intolerable ſlaveries, and from extremities of horrible miſery; of him, to whom, in all reſpects, we do owe the higheſt reſpect, love and obſervance that can be: Now it is the nature and property both of reſpect and love (ſuch as upon ſo many grounds we owe to him) to beget in the perſon reſpecting and loving, an endeavour (anſwerable to the degrees of thoſe diſpoſitions) of conforming to, and reſembling the qualities and manners of the perſon reſpected, or beloved. We ſee how readily Children do comply with the cuſtoms of their Parents and Tutours; Servants of their Maſters and Patrons; Subjects of their Princes and Governours, with a ſtudious earneſtneſs compoſing themſelves to expreſs in their carriage, not onely their good or their indifferent faſhions and manners, but even their moſt palpable deformities and vices; inſomuch, that a whole family, a city, a nation may be debauch'd from its ſobriety, or reform'd from its diſſoluteneſs, even inſtantly, by the example of one perſon, who, by his place, power and authority, challengeth extraordinary reverence from men: and much greater influence hath hearty love to transform our manners into an agreement with the manners of him we love: *What a man loves, that he imitateth ſo much as lies in his power*, ſaith *Hierocles*, truly. For love being founded on a good eſteem, and a benevolent inclination thence reſulting, engageth the affectionate perſon to admire the qualities of him he affecteth, to obſerve his deportments, to make the moſt advantageous conſtruction of what he doeth; to fancy he doeth all things with beſt reaſon and diſcretion; to deem therefore, that all his actions deſerve and require imitation: hence doth love either find, or ſoon produce a competent ſimilitude in the parties, (a ſimilitude of mind, of will, of inclination and affection; an *Eadem velle & nolle*:) It doth forcibly attract as to a vicinity of place and converſe, ſo to an agreement of affections and actions; it uniteth the moſt diſtant, it reconcileth the moſt oppoſite, it turneth the moſt diſcordant natures into a ſweet conſent, and harmony of diſpoſition and demeanour. We then having the greateſt reaſon both to honour and love our Saviour, ſurely his example being duly ſtudied and conſidered by us, muſt needs obtain a ſuperlative influence upon our practice, and be very powerful to conform, and aſſimilate it to his.

Ὁ γὰρ ἀγαπῶν πᾶς τις ᾧ μιμεῖται ὅσον δύναται. Hier.

Theſe conſiderations may ſuffice, to ſhew the peculiar excellency of our Saviour's example in vertue, and efficacy upon our practice; the ſame more abundantly might be deduc'd from a ſurvey of the moſt conſiderable particulars, in which we may and ought to imitate him. But the time will not ſuffer us to launch forth into ſo vaſt a ſea of diſcourſe. I ſhall onely therefore, from the premiſſes, exhort, That if any earneſt deſire of happineſs, any high eſteem of vertue, any true affection to genuine ſanctity do lodge in our breaſts, we ſhould apply this moſt excellent means of attaining them; the ſtudy and endeavour of imitating the life of our Lord: If we have in us any truth and ſincerity, and do not vainly prevaricate in our profeſſion of being *Chriſt*'s Diſciples, and votaries of that moſt Holy Inſtitution, let us manifeſt it by a real conformity to the practice of him who is our Maſter, and authour of our faith: If we have in us any wiſdom, or ſober conſideration of things, let us employ it in following the ſteps of that infallible guide, deſigned by heaven to lead us in the ſtreight, even and pleaſant ways of righteouſneſs, unto the poſſeſſion of everlaſting bliſs: If we do verily like, and approve

the practice of *Chriſt*, and are affected with the innocent, ſweet and lovely comelineſs thereof, let us declare ſuch our mind by a ſedulous care to reſemble it. If we bear any honour and reverence, any love and affection to *Chriſt*; if we are at all ſenſible of our relations, our manifold obligations, our duties to our great Lord, our beſt friend, our moſt gracious Redeemer; let us teſtify it by a zealous care to become like to him: Let a lively image of his moſt righteous and innocent, moſt holy and pious, moſt pure and ſpotleſs life be ever preſent to our fancies; ſo, as to inform our Judgments, to excite our affections, to quicken our endeavours, to regulate our purpoſes, to correct our miſtakes, to direct, amend and ſanctify our whole lives. Let us, with inceſſant diligence of ſtudy, meditate upon the beſt of hiſtories, wherein the tenour of his divine practice is repreſented to us; revolving frequently in our thoughts all the moſt conſiderable paſſages thereof, entertaining them with devout paſſions, impreſſing them on our memories, and ſtriving to expreſs them in our converſations; Let us endeavour continually to walk in the ſteps of our Lord, and *to follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goeth*; which that we may be able to do, do thou, O Bleſſed Redeemer, draw us, draw us by the cords of thy love; draw us by the ſenſe of thy goodneſs; draw us by the incomparable worth and excellency of thy perſon; draw us by the unſpotted purity and beauty of thy example; draw us by the merit of thy precious death, and by the power of thy Holy Spirit; *Draw us*, good Lord, *and we ſhall run after thee.* Amen.

Coll. after *Eaſter*, 2. *Almighty God, who haſt given thine onely Son, to be unto us, both a ſacrifice for ſin, and alſo an enſample of godly life; give us grace, that we may always moſt thankfully receive that his ineſtimable benefit; and alſo daily endeavour our ſelves to follow the bleſſed ſteps of his moſt holy life, through the ſame* Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord.* Amen.

SERMON IV.

Of Submiſſion to the Divine Will.

LUKE 22. 42.

Matt. 26. 39. *Nevertheleſs let not my will, but thine be done.*

THE great controverſie, managed with ſuch earneſtneſs and obſtinacy between God and Man, is this, whoſe will ſhall take place, his or ours: Almighty God, by whoſe conſtant protection and great mercy we ſubſiſt, doth claim to himſelf the authority of regulating our practice, and diſpoſing our fortunes; but we affect to be our own Maſters and Carvers; not willingly admitting any Law, not patiently brooking any Condition, which doth not ſort with our

our fancy and pleasure: to make good his right, God bendeth all his forces, and applieth all proper means both of sweetness and severity (perswading us by arguments, soliciting us by entreaties, alluring us by fair promises, scaring us by fierce menaces, indulging ample benefits to us, inflicting sore corrections on us, working in us and upon us by secret influences of grace, by visible dispensations of Providence) yet so it is, that commonly nothing doth avail, our will opposing it self with invincible resolution and stiffness.

Here indeed the business pincheth; herein as the chief worth, so the main difficulty of religious practice consisteth, in bending *that iron sinew*; in bringing our proud hearts to stoop, and our sturdy humours to buckle, so as to surrender and resign our wills to the just, the wise, the gracious will of our God, prescribing out duty, and assigning our lot unto us. We may accuse our nature, but it is our pleasure; we may pretend weakness, but it is wilfulness, which is the guilty cause of our misdemeanours; for by God's help (which doth always prevent our needs, and is never wanting to those who seriously desire it) we may be as good as we please, if we can please to be good; there is nothing within us that can resist, if our wills do yeild themselves up to duty: to conquer our reason is not hard; for what reason of man can withstand the infinite cogency of those motives, which induce to obedience? What can be more easie, than by a thousand arguments, clear as day, to convince any man, that to cross God's will is the greatest absurdity in the world, and that there is no madness comparable thereto? Nor is it difficult, if we resolve upon it, to govern any other part or power of our nature; for what cannot we do, if we are willing? what inclination cannot we check, what appetite cannot we restrain, what passion cannot we quell or moderate; what faculty of our soul, or member of our body is not obsequious to our will? Even half the resolution with which we pursue vanity and sin, would serve to engage us in the ways of wisdom and vertue.

Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 12. *in* 1 Cor. *Or.* 17. *Tom.* 5. *Or.* 28, 43.

Quodcunque sibi imperavit animus obtinuit. Sen. *de Ira.* 2. 12.

Wherefore in overcoming our will the stress lieth; this is that impregnable fortress, which everlastingly doth hold out against all the batteries of reason and of grace; which no force of perswasion, no allurement of favour, no discouragement of terrour can reduce: this puny, this impotent thing it is, which grappleth with Omnipotency, and often in a manner baffleth it: And no wonder; for that God doth not intend to overpower our will, or to make any violent impression on it, but onely to *draw it* (as it is in the *Prophet*) *with the cords of a man,* or by rational inducements to win its consents and compliance; our service is not so considerable to him, that he should extort it from us; nor doth he value our happiness at so low a rate, as to obtrude it on us, His victory indeed were no true victory over us, if he should gain it by main force, or without the concurrence of our will; our works not being our works, if they do not issue from our will; and our will not being our will, if it be not free; to compel it were to destroy it, together with all the worth of our vertue and obedience: wherefore the Almighty doth suffer himself to be withstood, and beareth repulses from us; nor commonly doth he master our will otherwise, than by its own spontaneous conversion and submission to him: if ever we be conquer'd, as we shall share in the benefit, and wear a crown; so we must join in the combat, and partake of the victory, by subduing our selves: *we must take the yoke upon us*; for God is onely served by volunteers; he summoneth us by his Word, he attracteth us by his Grace, but we must *freely come unto him.*

Hos. 11. 4.

Ἐπεὶ τοῦτο ἡ αὐτὰ διαδάλλει τὰ ἀγαθὰ εἰ μὴ τοιαύτη αὐτῶν ἐστιν ἡ φύσις, ὡς ἡ ἑκόντας προσδέχεσθαι, καὶ χάριν ἔχειν πολλήν. Chrys. *in* 1 Cor. *Orat.* 2.

Our will indeed of all things is most our own; the onely gift, the most proper sacrifice we have to offer; which therefore God doth chiefly desire, doth most highly prize, doth most kindly accept from us. Seeing then our duty chiefly moveth on this hinge, the free submission and resignation of our will to the will of God; it is this practice, which our Lord (who came to guide us in the way to happiness, not onely as a teacher by his word and excellent doctrine, but as a leader, by his actions and perfect example) did especially set before us; as in the constant tenour of his life, so particularly in that great exigency which occasioned these words, wherein, renouncing and deprecating his own will, he did express an entire submission to God's will, a hearty complacence therein, and a serious desire that it might take place.

For the fuller understanding of which case, we may consider, that our Lord, as partaker of our nature, and, *in all things* (bating sin) *like unto us*, had a natural humane will, attended with senses, appetites and affections, apt from objects incident to receive congruous impressions of pleasure and pain; so that whatever is innocently grateful and pleasant to us, that he relish'd with delight, and thence did incline to embrace; whatever is distastful and afflictive to us, that he resented with grief, and thence was moved to eschew; to this probably he was liable in a degree beyond our ordinary rate; for that in him nature was most perfect, his complection very delicate, his temper exquisitely sound and fine; for so we find, that by how much any man's constitution is more sound, by so much he hath a smarter gust of what is agreeable or offensive to nature: If perhaps sometimes infirmity of body, or distemper of soul (a savage ferity, a stupid dulness, a fondness of conceit, or stiffness of humour, supported by wild opinions, or vain hopes) may keep men from being thus affected by sensible objects; yet in him pure nature did work vigorously, with a clear apprehension and lively sense, according to the design of our maker, when into our constitution he did implant those passive faculties, disposing objects to affect them so and so, for our need and advantage; if this be deemed weakness, it is a weakness connexed with our nature, which he therewith did take, and *with which* (as the *Apostle* saith) *he was encompassed.* Such a will our Lord had, and it was requisite he should have it; that he thence might be qualified to discharge the principal instances of obedience, for procuring God's favour to us, and for setting an exact pattern before us; for God imposing on him duties to perform, and dispensing accidents to endure, very cross to that natural will, in his compliance and acquiescence thereto, his obedience was throughly tried; his vertue did shine most brightly; therefore (as the *Apostle* saith) *he was in all points tempted*; thence, as to meritorious capacity, and exemplary influence, *he was perfected through suffering.*

Ἐπεὶ καὶ αὐτὸς περίκειται ἀσθένειαν. Heb. 5. 2.

Heb. 4. 15. 2. 10, 18.

Hence was the whole course of his life and conversation among men, so designed, so modelled, as to be one continual exercise of thwarting that humane will, and closing with the divine pleasure: it was predicted of him, *Loe I come to do thy will O God*; and of himself he affirmed, *I came down from Heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me*; whereas therefore such a practice is little seen in atchieving easie matters, or in admitting pleasant occurrences; it was ordered for him, that he should encounter the rougheſt difficulties, and be engaged in circumstances, most harsh to natural apprehension and appetite; so that if we trace the footsteps of his life from the sordid manger to the bloody cross, we can hardly mark any thing to have befallen him apt to satisfy the will of nature. Nature liketh respect, and loatheth contempt; therefore was he

Heb. 10. 7. Psal. 40. 7. Joh. 6. 38. 5. 30. 4. 34.

he born of mean Parentage, and in a moſt homely condition; therefore did he live in no garb, did aſſume no office, did exerciſe no power, did meddle in no affairs, which procure to men conſideration and regard; therefore an impoſtor, a blaſphemer, a ſorcerer, a looſe companion, a ſeditious incendiary were the titles of honour, and the elogies of praiſe conferred on him; therefore was he expoſed to the laſh of every ſlanderous, every ſcurrilous, every petulant and ungoverned tongue.

Nature doth affect the good opinion, and good will of men, eſpecially when due in grateful return for great courteſie and beneficence; nor doth any thing more grate thereon, than abuſe of kindneſs; therefore, could he (the world's great friend and benefactor) ſay, *the world hateth me*; Joh. 5. 18, 25. 7. 7.
therefore were thoſe, whom he, with ſo much charity and bounty had inſtructed, had fed, had cured of diſeaſes (both corporal and ſpiritual) ſo ready to clamour, and commit outrage upon him; therefore could he thus expoſtulate, *Many good works have I ſhewed you from my father, for* Joh. 10. 31.
which of thoſe works do ye ſtone me? therefore did his kindred ſlight him, therefore did his diſciples abandon him, therefore did the grand traitor iſſue from his own boſome; therefore did that whole Nation, which he chiefly ſought and laboured to ſave, conſpire to perſecute him, with moſt Joh. 13. 18.
rancorous ſpite and cruel miſuſage.

Nature loveth plentiful accommodations, and abhorreth to be pinched with any want; therefore was extream penury appointed to him; he had no revenue, no eſtate, no certain livelyhood, not *ſo much as a houſe* Mat. 8. 20.
where to lay his head, or a piece of money to diſcharge the tax for it; he 17. 25. 21.
owed his ordinary ſupport to alms, or voluntary beneficence; he was to 19. Luc. 8. 3.
ſeek his food from *a fig-tree on the way*; and ſometimes was beholden for it to the courteſie of Publicans; *Δι ὑμᾶς ἐπτώχευσε, he was* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *a* 2 Cor. 8. 9.
beggar for us.

Nature delighteth in eaſe, in quiet, in liberty; therefore did he ſpend his days in continual labour, in reſtleſs travel, in endleſs vagrancy, *going* Joh. 4. 16.
about and doing good; ever haſtening thither, whither the needs of men Matt. 4. 23. 8. 35.
did call, or their benefit invite; therefore did he *take on him the form of a* Act. 10. 38.
ſervant, and was among his own followers *as one that miniſtreth*; there- Phil. 2. 7.
fore he *pleaſed not himſelf*, but ſuited his demeanour to the ſtate and cir- Luc. 22. 27. Marc. 6. 6.
cumſtances of things, complied with the manners and faſhions, compor- Matt. 21. 28.
ted with the humours and infirmities of men.

Nature coveteth good ſucceſs to its deſign and undertakings, hardly brooking to be diſappointed and defeated in them: therefore was he put to water dry ſticks, and to waſh *Negroes*; that is, to inſtruct a moſt dull and ſtupid, to reform a moſt perverſe and ſtubborn generation; therefore his ardent deſires, his ſolicitous cares, his painful endeavours for the good of men did obtain ſo little fruit; had indeed a contrary effect, rather aggravating their ſins than removing them, rather hardening than turning their hearts, rather plunging them deeper into perdition, than reſcuing them from it: therefore ſo much in vain did he, in numberleſs miraculous works, diſplay his power and goodneſs, convincing few, converting fewer by them; therefore although he taught with moſt powerful authority, with moſt charming gracefulneſs, with moſt convincing evi- Luc. 4. 22, 23.
dence, yet, *Who* (could he ſay) *hath believed our report?* though he Joh. 12. 38.
moſt earneſtly did invite and allure men to him, offering the richeſt boons that heaven it ſelf could diſpenſe, yet, *Ye will not* (was he forced to ſay) Joh. 5. 40.
come unto me, that ye may be ſaved; although with aſſiduous fervency of affection he ſtrove to reclaim them from courſes tending to their ruin, yet now he proſpered, ſad experience declareth, and we may learn from that doleful

Luc. 13. 34. 19. 42. doleful complaint, *How often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, but ye would not :* ἠθελήσατε, your will did not concur, your will did not submit.

Marc. 1. 13, 35. Luc. 5. 16. Joh. 4. 6, 31. Luc 6. 12. Matt. 14. 23. 18. 12. In fine, natural will seeketh pleasure, and shunneth pain ; But what pleasure did he taste ; what inclination, what appetite, what sense did he gratifie ? How did he feast, or revel ? How, but in tedious fastings, in frequent hungers, by passing whole nights in prayer, and retirement for devotion upon the cold mountains ? What sports had he, what recreation did he take, but feeling incessant gripes of compassion, and wearisome roving in quest of the lost sheep ? In what conversation could he divert himself, but among those, whose doltish incapacity and forward humour, did wring from his patience those words, *How long shall I be with you, how long shall I suffer you* ? What Musick did he hear ? What but the ratlings of clamorous obloquy, and furious accusations against him ? to be desperately maligned, to be insolently mocked, to be stiled a King, and treated as a slave ; to be spit on, to be buffetted, to be scourged, to be drenched with gall, to be crowned with thorns, to be nailed to a cross ; these were the delights which our Lord enjoyed, these the sweet comforts of his life, and the notable prosperities of his fortune : such a portion was allotted to him, the which he did accept from God's hand with all patient submission, with perfect contentedness, with exceeding alacrity, never repining at it, never complaining of it, never flinching from it, or fainting under it ; but proceeding on in the performance of all his duty, and prosecution of his great designs, with undaunted courage, with unwearied industry, with undisturbed tranquillity and satisfaction of mind.

Ἅγιος 17. 17.

Had indeed his condition and fortune been otherwise framed ; had he come into the world qualified with a noble extraction ; had he lived in a splendid equipage, had he enjoyed a plentiful estate and a fair reputation, had he been favoured and caressed by men ; had he found a current of prosperous success, had safety, ease and pleasure waited on him ; Where had been the pious resignation of his will ; where the precious merit of his obedience ; where the glorious lustre of his example ? how then had our frailty in him become victorious over all its enemies ; how had he triumphed over the solicitations and allurements of the flesh ; over the frowns and flatteries of the world ; over the malice and fury of hell ; how then could he have so demonstrated his immense charity toward us, or laid so mighty obligations upon us ?

Such in general was the case, and such the deportment of our Lord ; but there was somewhat peculiar, and beyond all this occurring to him, which drew forth the words of our Text : God hath tempered for him a potion of all the most bitter and loathsome ingredients that could be ; a drop whereof no man ever hath, or could indure to sip ; for he was not onely to undergo whatever load humane rage could impose, of ignominious disgrace, and grievous pain ; but to feel dismal agonies of Spirit, and those *unknown sufferings*, which God alone could inflict, God onely could sustain : *Behold, and see*, he might well say, *if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me ; wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger* ? He was to labour with pangs of Charity and through his heart to be pierced with deepest commiseration of our wretched case : he was to crouch under the burthen of all the sins (the numberless most heinous sins and abominations) ever committed by mankind : he was to pass through the hottest furnace of Divine Vengeance and by his blood to quench the wrath of Heaven flaming out against iniquity ; he was to stand (as it were) before the mouth of Hell, belching fire

Δὶ ἀγνοῶν σε παθημάτων ἐλέησον ἡμᾶς γνώεις. Lit. Gr. Lam. 2. 12.

fire and brimſtone on his face: his grief was to ſupply the defects of our remorſe, and his ſuffering in thoſe few moments to countervail the eternal torments due to us: He was to bear the hiding of God's face, and an eclipſe of that favourable aſpect, in which all bliſs doth reſide; a caſe which he that ſo perfectly underſtood, could not but infinitely reſent: theſe things with the cleareſt apprehenſion he ſaw coming on him; and no wonder that our nature ſtarted at ſo ghaſtly a ſight; or that humane inſtinct ſhould dictate that petition, *Father if thou wilt, let this cup paſs from me*; words implying his moſt real participation of our infirmity; words denoting the height of thoſe ſad evils which encompaſſed him with his lively and lowly reſentment of them; words informing us, how we ſhould entertain God's chaſtiſements, and whence we muſt ſeek relief of our preſſures (that we ſhould receive them, not with a ſcornful neglect or ſullen inſenſibility, but with a meek contrition of ſoul; that we ſhould entirely depend on God's pleaſure for ſupport under them, or a releaſement from them) words which in conjunction with thoſe following do ſhew how inſtantly we ſhould quaſh and over-rule any inſurrection of natural deſire againſt the command or providence of God. We muſt not take that prayer to ſignify any purpoſe in our Lord to ſhift off his paſſion, or any wavering in reſolution about it; for he could not any wiſe mean to undo that, which he knew done with God before the world's foundation; he would not unſettle that, which was by his own free undertaking, and irreverſible decree; He that ſo often with ſatisfaction did foretel this event, who with ſo *earneſt deſire* longed for its approach; who with that ſharpneſs of indignation did rebuke his friend offering to divert him from it; who did again repreſs St. *Peter*'s animoſity with that ſerious expoſtulation, *The cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it?* who had adviſedly laid ſuch trains for its accompliſhment, would he decline it? Could that heart all burning with zeal for God and charity to men admit the leaſt thought or motion of averſeneſs from drinking that cup, which was the Sovereign medicine adminiſtred by divine wiſdom for the recovery of God's Creation? No; had he ſpake with ſuch intent, legions of Angels had flown to his reſcue; that word, which framed the worlds, which ſtilled the tempeſts, which ejected Devils, would immediately have ſcattered his enemies, and daſhed all their projects againſt him; wherefore thoſe words did not proceed from intention, but as from inſtinct, and for inſtruction; importing, that what our humane frailty was apt to ſuggeſt, that his divine vertue was more ready to ſmother; neither did he vent the former, but that he might expreſs the latter.

Ἐπιθυμίᾳ ἐπεθύμησα. Luc. 22. 15. Joh. 18. 11. Matt. 26. 53.

He did expreſs it in real effect; immediately with all readineſs addreſſing himſelf to receive that unſavoury potion; he reached out his hand for it, yeilding fair opportunity and advantages to his perſecutours; he lifted it up to his mouth, innocently provoking their envy and malice; he drank it off with a moſt ſteady calmneſs, and ſweet compoſure of mind, with the ſilence, the ſimplicity, the meekneſs of a lamb, carried to the ſlaughter; no fretful thought riſing up, no angry word breaking forth, but clear patience, enlivened with a warm charity, ſhining in all his behaviour, and thorough every circumſtance of his paſſion.

Such in his life, ſuch at his death was the practice of our Lord; in conformity whereto we alſo readily ſhould undertake whatever God propoſeth, we gladly ſhould accept whatever God offereth, we vigorouſly ſhould perform whatever God enjoyneth, we patiently ſhould undergo whatever God impoſeth, or inflicteth how croſs ſoever any duty, any diſpenſation may prove to our carnal ſenſe or humour.

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To do thus, the contemplation of this example may ſtrongly engage us, for if our Lord had not his will, can we in reaſon expect, can we in modeſty deſire to have ours? muſt we be cockered and pleaſed in every thing, when as he was treated ſo courſely, and croſſed in all things? can we grutch at any kind of ſervice, or ſufferance; can we think much (for our trial, our exerciſe, our correction) to bear a little want, a little diſgrace, a little pain, when the Son of God was put to diſcharge the hardeſt tasks, to endure the ſoreſt adverſities?

But farther to enforce theſe duties, be pleaſed to caſt a glance on two conſiderations. 1. What the Will is to which. 2. Who the Willer is to whom we muſt ſubmit.

1. What is the Will of God? Is it any thing unjuſt, unworthy, or diſhonourable, any thing incommodious or hurtful, any thing extremely difficult, or intolerably grievous that God requireth of us, to do or bear? No: he willeth nothing from us, or to us, which doth not beſt become us, and moſt behove us; which is not attended with ſafety, with eaſe, with the ſolideſt profit, the faireſt reputation, and the ſweeteſt pleaſure.

Two things he willeth; that we ſhould be good, and that we ſhould be happy; the firſt in order to the ſecond, for that vertue is the certain way, and a neceſſary qualification to felicity.

1 Theſ. 4. 3. *The will of God*, ſaith St. *Paul, is our ſanctification*; what is that? what, but that the decaies of our frame, and the defacements of God's Image within us ſhould be repaired; that the faculties of our ſoul ſhould be reſtored to their original integrity and vigour; that from moſt wretched ſtaveries we ſhould be tranſlated into a happy freedom, yea, into a glorious kingdom; that from deſpicable beggary and baſeneſs we ſhould be advanced to ſubſtantial Wealth, and ſublime dignity; that we ſhould be cleanſed from the fouleſt defilements, and decked with the goodlieſt ornaments; that we ſhould be cured of moſt loathſome diſeaſes, and ſetled in a firm health of ſoul; that we ſhould be delivered from thoſe brutiſh luſts, and thoſe deviliſh paſſions, which create in us a hell of darkneſs, of confuſion, of vexation; which diſhonour our nature, deform our ſoul, ruffle our mind, and wrack our conſcience; that we ſhould be endowed with thoſe worthy diſpoſitions and affections, which do conſtitute in our hearts a heaven of light, of order, of joy and peace; dignify our nature, beautify our ſoul, clarify and chear our mind; that we ſhould eſchew thoſe practices, which never go without a retinue of woful miſchiefs and ſorrows, embracing thoſe which alwaies yeild abundant fruits of convenience and comfort; that in ſhort, we ſhould become friends of God, fit to converſe with Angels, and capable of Paradiſe.

1 Tim. 2. 7. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Ezek. 33. 11. *God* (ſaith St. *Paul* again) *willeth all men to be ſaved*; *he willeth not* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *that any man ſhould periſh*; He ſaith in himſelf, yea, he ſweareth it, *that he hath no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked ſhould turn from his way and live*: And what is this will, what, but that we ſhould obtain all the good whereof we are capable; that we ſhould be filled with joy, and crowned with glory; that we ſhould be fixed in an immoveable ſtate of happineſs, in the perpetual enjoyment of God's favour, and in the light of his bliſsful preſence: that we ſhould be rid of all the evils, to which we are liable; that we ſhould be releaſed from inextricable chains of guilt, from incurable ſtings of remorſe, from being irrecoverably engaged to paſs a diſconſolate eternity in utter darkneſs and extream Woe? Such is God's Will; to ſuch purpoſes every command, every diſpenſation of God (how grim, how rough ſoever it may ſeem) doth tend: and do we refuſe to comply with that good Will; do

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we ſet againſt it a Will of our own, affecting things unworthy of us, things unprofitable to us, things prejudicial to our beſt intereſts; things utterly baneful to our ſouls? Do we reject the Will that would ſave us, and adhere to a Will that would ruine us; a fooliſh and a ſenſeleſs Will, which ſlighting the immenſe treaſures of Heaven, the unfading glories of God's Kingdom, the ineffable joys of eternity doth catch at ſpecious nothings, doth purſue miſchievous trifles; a ſhadow of baſe profit, a ſmoak of vain honour, a flaſh of ſordid pleaſure; which paſſeth away like *the mirth of fools*, or *the crackling of thorns*, leaving onely ſoot, black and bitter behind it. Eccleſ. 7. 6.

But at leaſt e'er we do thus, let us conſider, whoſe Will it is, that requireth our compliance.

It is the Will of Him, whoſe Will did found the earth, and rear the Heaven; whoſe Will ſuſtaineth all things in their exiſtence and operation; whoſe Will is the great law of the World, which univerſal nature in all its motions doth obſerve; which reigneth in Heaven, the bleſſed Spirits adoring it, which ſwayeth in Hell it ſelf, the curſed Fiends trembling at it; And ſhall we alone (we pitiful Worms crawling on earth) preſume to murmur, or dare to kick againſt it? Pſal. 148. 5. Apoc. 4. 11.

It is the Will of our Maker, vvho together vvith all our other faculties did create and confer on us, the very povver of Willing: and ſhall vve turn the Work of his hands, the gift of his bounty againſt him?

It is the Will of our Preſerver, vvho together vvith all that vve are, or have continually, doth uphold our very Will it ſelf; ſo that vvithout employing any poſitive force, merely by ſetting us fall out of his hand, he can ſend us and it back to nothing: and ſhall our Will claſh vvith that, on vvhich it ſo vvholly dependeth; vvithout vvhich it cannot ſubſiſt one moment, or move one ſtep forvvard in action?

It is the Will of our Sovereign Lord, vvho upon various indiſputable accounts hath a juſt right to govern us, and an abſolute povver to diſpoſe of us: ought vve not therefore to ſay vvith old *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do to me as it ſeems good to him*? Is it not extream iniquity, is it not monſtrous arrogance for us, in derogation to his Will, to pretend giving lavv, or picking a ſtation to our ſelves? Do vve not manifeſtly incur high treaſon againſt the King of Heaven by ſo invading his office, uſurping his authority, ſnatching his Sceptre into our hands, and ſetting our Wills in his Throne? 1 Sam. 3. 8.

It is the Will of our Judge, from whoſe mouth our doom muſt proceed, awarding Life or Death, Weal or Woe unto us; and what ſentence can we expect, what favour can we pretend to, if we preſumptuouſly ſhall offend, oppoſe that Will, which is the ſupream Rule of Juſtice, and ſole Fountain of Mercy?

It is the Will of our Redeemer, who hath bought us with an ineſtimable price, and with infinite pains hath reſcued us from miſerable Captivity under moſt barbarous enemies, that obeying his VVill we might command our own, and ſerving him we might enjoy perfect freedom; and ſhall we, declining his call and conduct out of that unhappy ſtate beleave him of his purchaſe, fruſtrate his undertakings, and forfeit to our ſelves the benefit of ſo great Redemption?

It is the VVill of our beſt friend; who loveth us much better, than we do love our ſelves; who is concerned for our welfare, as his own deareſt intereſt, and greatly delighteth therein; who by innumerable experiments hath demonſtrated an exceſs of kindneſs to us; who in all his dealings with us purely doth aim at our good, never charging any duty on us, or

diſpenſing any event to us, ſo much with intent to exerciſe his power
Lam. 3. 39. over us, as to expreſs his goodneſs towards us; who never *doth afflict or grieve us* more againſt our Will, than againſt his own deſire; never indeed but when goodneſs it ſelf calleth for it, and even mercy doth urge thereto; to whom we are much obliged, that he vouchſafeth to govern and guide us, our ſervice being altogether unprofitable to him, his governance exceedingly beneficial to us: And doth not ſuch a Will deſerve regard, may it not demand compliance from us? to neglect or infringe it, what is it? is it not palpable folly, is it not foul diſingenuity, is it not deteſtable ingratitude?

So doth every relation of God recommend his Will to us; and each of his Attributes doth no leſs: for,

It is the Will of him, who is moſt holy, or whoſe Will is eſſential rectitude: how then can we thwart it, without being ſtained with the guilt, and wounded with a ſenſe of great irregularity and iniquity?

It is the Will of him who is perfectly juſt; who therefore cannot but aſſert his own righteous Will, and avenge the violation thereof: is it then adviſeable to drive him to that point by wilful provocation; or to run upon the edge of neceſſary ſeverity?

It is the Will of him, who is infinitely wiſe; who therefore doth infallibly know what is beſt for us, what doth moſt befit our capacities and circumſtances; what in the final reſult will conduce to our greateſt advantage and comfort: ſhall we then prefer the dreams of our vain mind before the oracles of his Wiſdom; ſhall we forſaking the direction of his unerring Will follow the impulſe of our giddy humour?

It is the Will of him, who is immenſely good and benign; whoſe Will therefore can be no other than good Will to us; who can mean nothing thereby but to derive bounty and mercy on us: Can we then fail of doing well, if we put our ſelves entirely into his hands; are we not our own greateſt enemies, in withſtanding his gracious intentions?

It is finally the Will of him, who is uncontrollably powerful; whoſe Will therefore muſt prevail one way or other: either with our Will, or againſt it, either ſo as to bow and ſatisfy us, or ſo as to break and plague
Iſa. 46. 11. us: for *My counſel* (ſaith he) *ſhall ſtand, and I will do all my pleaſure.* As to his diſpenſations, we may fret, we may wail, we may bark at them but we cannot alter or avoid them: ſooner may we by our moans check the tides, or by our cries ſtop the Sun in his carriere, than divert the current of affairs, or change the ſtate of things eſtabliſhed by God's high decree; what he layeth on, no hand can remove; what he hath deſtined no power can reverſe; our anger therefore will be ineffectual, our impatience will have no other fruit, than to aggravate our guilt, and augment our grief.

Dan 5. 23. As to his commands, we may *lift up our ſelves againſt him*, we may fight ſtoutly, we may in a ſort prove Conquerors; but it will be a miſerable victory, the Trophies whereof ſhall be erected in Hell, and ſtand upon the ruines of our happineſs; for while we inſult over abuſed grace we muſt fall under incenſed juſtice: If God cannot fairly procure his Will of us in way of due obedience, he will ſurely execute his Will upon us in way of righteous vengeance; if we do not ſurrender our Wills to the overtures of his goodneſs, we muſt ſubmit our backs to the ſtroaks of his anger: He muſt reign over us, if not as over loyal Subjects to our comfort, yet as over ſtubborn Rebels to our confuſion; for this in that caſe will be our doom, and the laſt words God will deſign to ſpend upon us

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Thoſe mine enemies, which would not that I ſhould reign over them, bring them hither, and ſlay them before me. Luc. 19. 27.

Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jeſus, that great Shepherd of the ſheep, through the blood of the everlaſting Covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleaſing in his ſight, through Jeſus Chriſt; to whom be glory for ever and ever: Amen. Heb. 13. 20.

SERMON V.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatever ſtate I am, therewith to be content.

Ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔμαθον ἐν οἷς εἰμὶ αὐτάρκης εἶναι.

IN theſe words by the example of an eminent Saint is recommended to us the practice of an excellent duty, or vertue: a practice in it ſelf moſt worthy, very grateful to God, and immediately of great benefit to our ſelves; being indeed neceſſary towards the comfortable enjoyment of our lives: It is Contentedneſs, the vertue, which of all other doth moſt render this World acceptable, and conſtituteth a kind of temporal Heaven; which he that hath, is thereby *ipſo facto* in good meaſure happy, whatever other things he may ſeem to want; which he that wanteth, doth, however otherwiſe he be furniſhed, become miſerable, and carrieth a kind of Hell within him: it cannot therefore but well deſerve our beſt ſtudy about it, and care to get it; in imitation of St. *Paul*, who *had learned in whatever ſtate he was therein to be content.*

Τὸ δ' αὐταρκὲς πᾶσιν, ὁ μονούμενον αἱρετὸν ποιεῖ ἢ βίον, καὶ μηδενὸς ἐνδεᾶ. Ariſt. *Eth.* l. 7.

In diſcourſing upon which words I ſhall conſider two particulars; firſt the vertue it ſelf (Contentedneſs in every ſtate) the nature of which I ſhall endeavour to explain; then the way of attaining or producing it, implied by St. *Paul* in the words, *I have learned.*

I. For explication of the vertue: The word here expreſſing it is, αὐτάρκεια, which ſignifieth ſelf-ſufficiency, or having enough of ones ſelf; the which is not to be underſtood abſolutely, as if he took himſelf to be independent in nature, able to ſubſiſt of himſelf, not wanting any ſupport or comfort without himſelf (for this is the property and privilege of the great *El-ſhaddai*, who alone ſubſiſteth of himſelf, needing toward his being and felicity nothing without himſelf? this is repugnant to the nature of man, who is a creature eſſentially dependent for his being and ſubſiſtence, indigent of many things for his ſatisfaction and welfare) but relatively conſidering his preſent ſtate, the circumſtances wherein he was, and the capacities he had; which by Gods diſpoſal and providence were ſuch, that he could not want more, than he had in his poſſeſſion, or reach.

Τὸ δ' ἱκανὸν ἀπέχειν πάντα δὲ δέλει πυπλωθοικέναι, ἅ δ' ἄλλος δεῖ προσεῖναι, ἕως λιμόν. Arr. 3. 24.

reach. He meant not to exclude God, and his Providence; but rather ſuppoſed that as the ground and cauſe of his ſelf-ſufficiency; according
2 Cor. 3. 5. as otherwhere he expreſſeth it: *Not as if we were ſufficient of our ſelves, but our ſufficiency is of God*: Nor did he intend to exclude the need of other creatures otherwiſe than as conſidered without his poſſeſſion, or beyond his power; But he meaneth onely, that he did not deſire or lack more than what God had ſupplyed him with; had put into his hand, or had ſet within his reach; that his will did ſuit to his ſtate, his deſire did not exceed his power.

This is the meaning of the word, which the Apoſtle uſeth; but for the more full and clear underſtanding the vertue it ſelf, we ſhall firſt conſider the object, about which it is converſant, then the ſeveral acts, which it requireth, or wherein the exerciſe thereof conſiſteth.

1. The object of contentedneſs is the preſent ſtate of things whatever it be (whether proſperous or adverſe, of eminency or meanneſs, of abundance or ſcantneſs) wherein by divine Providence we are ſet: τὰ ἐν οἷς ἐσμὲν, *the things in which we are*, that is our preſent condition, with all its circumſtances: ſo it may be generally ſuppoſed, conſidering that it is ordinary, and almoſt natural for men (who have not learned as St. *Paul* had done, or are not inſtructed, and exerciſed in the practice of this duty) to be diſſatisfied, and diſquieted in every ſtate; to be always in want of ſomething; to find defects in every fortune; to fancy they may be in better caſe, and to deſire it earneſtly: If we eſtimate things wiſely, rich men are more liable to diſcontent then poor men. It is obſervable, that proſperity is a peeviſh thing, and men of higheſt fortune are apt moſt eaſily to reſent the ſmalleſt things: a little neglect, a ſlight word, an unpleaſing look doth affect them more than reproaches, blows, wrongs, do thoſe of a mean condition.

Proſperity is a nice and ſqueamiſh thing, and it is hard to find any thing able to pleaſe men of a full and proſperous ſtate, which being uncapable of bettering in ſubſtantial things they can hardly find matter of ſolid delight. Whereas a poor eſtate is eaſily comforted by the acceſſion of many things which it wanteth: a good meal, a ſmall gift, a little gain, or good ſucceſs of his labour doth greatly pleaſe a poor man with a very ſolid pleaſure: but a rich man hath nothing to pleaſe him, but a new toy, a puff of applauſe, ſucceſs at a horſe-race, at bowls, at hunting; in ſome petty ſport and paſtime, which can yeild but a very thin and tranſitory ſatisfaction to any man not quite brutified and void of ſenſe: whence contentedneſs hath place, and is needful in every condition, be it in ap-
Job 20. 22. pearance never ſo proſperous, ſo plentiful, ſo pleaſant. *In the fulneſs of his ſufficiencies, he ſhall be in ſtraits.*

Chryſ. *Tom.* 7. *p.* 68. The formal object thereof may indeed ſeem to be a condition diſtaſtful to our ſenſe, or croſs to our fancy; an adverſe or ſtrait condition; a condition of Poverty, of diſgrace, of any great inconvenience or diſtreſs incident to us in this World; but ſince the moſt men are abſolutely in ſuch a condition, expoſed to ſo many wants and troubles; ſince many more are needy comparatively, wanting the conveniencies that others enjoy and which themſelves affect; ſince there are few, who in right eſtimation are not indigent and poor, that is, who do not deſire and fancy themſelves to want many things which they have not (for wealth conſiſteth not ſo much in the poſſeſſion of goods, as in apprehenſion of freedom from want, and in ſatisfaction of deſires) ſince care, trouble, diſappointment, ſatiety and diſcontent following them, do not onely haunt cottages and ſtick to the loweſt ſort of people, but do even frequent palaces, and

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purſue men of higheſt rank; therefore any ſtate may be the object of contentedneſs; and the duty is of a very general concernment; Princes themſelves need to learn it; the leſſons teaching it, and the arguments perſwading it may as well ſuit the rich and noble, as the poor and the peaſant; ſo our *Apoſtle* himſelf doth intimate in the words immediately following our Text: *I know both how to be abaſed, and I know how to abound*; Phil. 4. 12. *Every where, and in all things I am inſtructed both to be full, and to be hungry: both to abound and to ſuffer need*; he had the art not onely to manage well both conditions, but to be ſatisfied in either.

But ſeeing real adverſity, poverty and diſgrace have naturally the ſtrongeſt influence in diſturbing and diſordering our minds; that contentedneſs is plainly moſt needful in ſuch caſes, as the proper ſupport, or medicine of our mind in them; that other ſtates do need it onely as they, by fancy or infirmity, do ſymbolize or conſpire with theſe; therefore unto perſons in theſe ſtates we ſhall more explicitely apply our directions, and perſwaſions, as to the proper and primary ſubjects of contentedneſs; the which by analogy, or parity of reaſon may be extended to all others who by imaginary wants and diſtreſſes do create diſpleaſure to themſelves. So much for the object, or the ſubject, of the vertue.

2. The acts, wherein the practice thereof conſiſteth (which are neceſſary ingredients, or conſtant ſymptoms of it) belong either to the mind and underſtanding, or to the will and appetite, or to external demeanour and practice; being 1. right opinions and judgments of mind, 2. fit diſpoſitions and affections of heart, 3. outward good actions and behaviours, in regard to our condition and the events befalling us; the former being as the root and ſtock, the latter as the fruits and the flowers of the duty: unto which may be reduced the correſpondent negations, or abſence of bad judgments, affections and deportments in reſpect to the ſame objects.

(1.) As to our opinions and judgments of things contentedneſs requireth, that

1. We ſhould believe our condition whatever it be to be determined by God, and that all events befalling us, do proceed from him; at leaſt that he permitteth and ordereth them, according to his judgment and pleaſure: that ἐκ τοῦ θεοῦ πᾶς καὶ γλαῦξ κωδυρέται, all (as the *Prophet* ſingeth, *both good* Soph. Aj. Lor. *and evil proceedeth out of the mouth of the moſt High*; that *affliction* (as *Job* Lam. 3. 38. ſaid) *cometh not forth of the duſt, neither doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*; Amos 3. 6. 1 Kings 12. as a thing ariſing ſpontaneouſly, or ſowed by the hand of ſome creature, 15, 24. but rather deſcendeth from him, who ſaith, *I form the light, and create darkneſs*; Eſ. 45. 7. *I make peace, and create evil*; *I the Lord do all theſe things.*

We are apt, when any thing falleth out unpleaſant to us, to exclaim againſt fortune, and to accuſe our ſtars; or to inveigh againſt the ſecond cauſes which immediately offend us, aſcribing all to their influence; which proceeding in us doth argue in us a *Heatheniſh* ignorance and infidelity, or at leaſt much inconſiderateneſs, and impotency of mind; that our judgment is blinded and clouded, or perverted and ſeduced by ill paſſions; for that in truth there is not in the world any occurrence meerly fortuitous, or fatal (all being guided and weilded by the powerful hand of the All-wiſe, and Almighty God) there is no creature which in its agency doth not depend upon God, as the inſtrument of his will, or ſubordinate thereto; wherefore upon every event we ſhould, raiſing our minds above all other cauſes, diſcern and acknowledge God's hand; as *David* did, when *Shimei* curſed him; *Let him* (ſaid the good King) *curſe* 2 Sam. 16. 10. *becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David*; as *Job* did when he was rifled of his goods, *The Lord* (ſaid he) *gave, and the Lord hath taken a-* Job 1. 21. *way*;

Atque Deos atque aſtra vocat crudelia mater.

way; as our Saviour did, when in regard to the sore hardships he was de-
Joh. 18. 11. signed to undergo, he said, *The Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink.*

2. Hence we should always judge every thing which happeneth to be throughly good and fit, worthy (all things considered) to be appointed, or permitted by that Governour of things; not entertaining any harsh thoughts of God, as if he were not enough wise, just, or benign in ordering us to be afflicted or crossed; but taking all occurrences to be well consistent with all God's holy Perfections and Attributes.

Παρεγχωρήσωμεν οὖν παρακαλῶ τῷ σοφῷ τὸ παντὸς κυβερνήτῃ καὶ τεχνίτῃ μὴ τὰ οἰκονομούμενα ὁποῖα ποτ' ἂν ᾖ κἂν δυσερή, κἂν λυπηρὰ φαίνηται. Theod. Ep. 136.

Placeat homini quicquid Deo placuit, Sen. Ep. 75.

Στέργειν δὲ χρὴ τὰ θεῖα καὶ ἀρρήτῳ σοφίας πρυτανεύοντα, καὶ ταῦτα πάντως νομίζειν συμφέροντα. Theod. Ep. 15.

Οἶδε δὲ ὡς συμφέρον τὸ συμφέρον, καὶ ὡς ἀγαθὸς τοῦτο ἡμῖν χαρίσεται. Id. Ep. 18.

We are apt to conceit, that the World is ill ordered, when we do not thrive and prosper therein; that every thing is irregular, which squareth not to the models of our fancies; that things had gone much better, if our designs had found success; but these are vain and perverse conceits; for that certainly is most good, which seemeth good to God; his will is a perfect standard of right, and convenience, his eye never aimeth wrong,
Psal. 25. 10. 145. 17. his hand never faileth to hit the mark of what is best; *All his paths are mercy and truth*; *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*: So did King *Hezekiah* rightly judge, when upon denunciation of a sad
2 Kings 20. 19. doom to his countrey and posterity, he replied to the Prophet, *Good is the word of the Lord, which thou hast spoken*; so even the *Pagan* Sage discerned, when he thus rebuked a male-content; *You slave, do you forsooth desire any thing, but what is best? and is not that onely best, which seemeth best to God?*

Ἀνδράποδον ἄλλο γὰρ θέλεις, ἢ τὸ ἄμεινον; ἄλλο δὲ τί ἄμεινον, ἢ τὸ θεῷ δοκοῦν; Arr. II. 7.

3. We should even be satisfied in our mind that according to God's purpose all events do tend and conduce to our particular welfare; being not onely good to us as members of the world, and in order to more general ends, but serving towards our private benefit and advantage. We may be ready perhaps to confess, that whatever happeneth may be indeed just and fit in some distant, and occult respects, but hardly can we be induced to allow, that what we feel offensive to our sense or fancy, is really good for us, or was meant for our benefit; we cannot easily discern any thing of love or favour in such matters: Those sort of *Aphorisms*, in Holy
Job 5. 17. Jam. 1. 12. Rev. 3. 19. Prov. 3. 12. Scripture, *Happy is the man whom God correcteth*; *As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten*; sound strangely, and are huge *Paradoxes* to us; such is our blindness of mind, and dulness of apprehension: but God knoweth with so exact a skilfulness to manage things, that every particular occurrence shall be advantageous to the person, whom it toucheth; and accordingly to each one he dispenseth that which is most suitable to him; whence, as frequently it is necessary for our good that we should be crossed (for that indeed otherwise we should often much harm, sometimes we should quite undo our selves) so it alwayes, when God so ordereth it, is to be deemed most profitable and wholesome for us: we are therefore in reason obliged to take the saddest accidents, and sharpest afflictions, coming upon us by providence, to be no other than fatherly corrections, or friendly rebukes, designed to render us good and happy; as arguments therefore and instances of especial good-will toward us; conceiving under every dispensation that we do as it were hear God speaking to us, as he
Jer. 29. 11. did to those in the *Prophet*: *I know the thoughts, that I think toward you, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.*

4. Hence we are to believe, that our present condition (whatever it be

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to carnal, or worldly ſenſe) is in right judgment, all things conſidered, the beſt; moſt proper, moſt deſirable for us; better than we, if it were at our diſcretion and choice ſhould put our ſelves into: for that God (*the Saviour of all men*, who *deſireth that no man ſhould periſh*; who *is good to all, and whoſe tender mercies are over all his works*; who exceedingly tendereth the welfare of his children and ſubjects) doth ever (here in this life, the time of merit and trial) with a moſt wiſe good-will deſign our beſt good; and by the moſt proper methods (ſuch as do beſt ſuit our circumſtances and capacities) doth aim to draw us unto happineſs; and accordingly doth aſſign a ſtation for us moſt befitting in order to that great end; we therefore ſhould think our ſelves well-placed, becauſe we are where God doth ſet us; that we have enough, becauſe we have what God allotteth us.

1 Tim. 2. 4. Ezek. 33. 11. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Pſal. 145. 9.

There are other more particular judgments, which contentedneſs involveth, or which are required toward it; ſuch as theſe; that nothing originally is due to us, but all cometh purely from divine favour and bounty; that all adverſities are juſtly, and deſervedly inflicted on us, as the due wages, or natural fruits of our ſins; that our happineſs dependeth not on any preſent enjoyments or poſſeſſions, but may well ſubſiſt without them; that a competency (or ſo much as ſufficeth to maintain our life without intolerable pain) ought to ſatisfie our deſires; but theſe, and the like judgments will come opportunely to be conſidered as motives to the practice of the duty.

(2.) From ſuch acts of our mind or intellective parts concerning things incident to us, ſhould proceed the following diſpoſitions of will and affection.

1. We ſhould entertain all occurrences, how grievous ſoever to us, with entire ſubmiſſion, and reſignation of our will to the will of God; wholly acquieſcing in his good pleaſure; ſaying in our hearts after our *Lord*, *Let not my will, but thine be done*; with good *Eli*, *It is the Lord, let him do what ſeemeth him good*; with *David*, *Behold here I am, let him do to me as ſeemeth good to him*; even with *Socrates*, *If ſo it pleaſeth God, ſo let it be*; with *Epictetus*, *I always chiefly will that, which cometh to paſs*; *for I account that better which God willeth than what I will my ſelf*; *I will adhere as a miniſter and follower to him*, *I purſue*, *I affect*, *I ſimply will with him*: looking upon them as ſent from God we ſhould heartily bid them welcome, we ſhould kindly embrace them, we ſhould uſe them with all fair reſpect: ἀσπάζεσθαι τὰ συμβαίνοντα (to *hug*, or kindly to *embrace things incident*) φιλεῖν τὰ ἐπογεμώμενα (*to love things diſpenſed by providence*) are precepts, which even as dictated by natural reaſon *Philoſophers* do much inculcate.

Luk. 22. 42. 1 Sam. 3. 18. 2 Sam. 15. 26.

Εἰ ταύτῃ θεοῖς φίλον ταύτῃ γενέσθω. Ἀεὶ μᾶλλον θέλω τὸ γινόμενον κρείττονα γὰρ ἡγοῦμαι ὃ ὁ θεὸς θέλει ἐγὼ ᾧ ἀκόλουθος ἐκείνῳ συνορμῶ, ὁρμῶμαι, ἅπλως συνθέλω. Arr. 3. 7.

M. Anton. 3. 4. 2. 17. 10. 11. 12. 1.

This excludeth all rebellious Inſurrection, and ſwellings of mind againſt providence, ſuch as argue that we diſlike Gods government; that were we able we ſhould ſtruggle with Gods will; that we gladly would ſhake off his yoke; all ſuch ill reſentment and repining at our lot, which maketh Gods hand grievous, and his yoke uneaſie to us: ſuch affections as the wiſe man toucheth, when he ſaith, *The fooliſhneſs of man perverteth his way, and his heart fretteth againſt the Lord.*

Prov. 19. 3.

2. We ſhould bear all things with ſteady calmneſs and compoſedneſs of mind, ſuppreſſing, or quelling thoſe tumults, thoſe ſtorms, thoſe exceſſes of paſſion, which the ſenſe of things diſguſtful is apt to excite; ſuch as are immoderate grief, fierce anger, irkſome deſpair, and the like. No adverſity ſhould ſo ruffle our minds, as to defeat and pervert the uſe of our reaſon ſo as to hinder us from perceiving, or performing what becometh us, ſo as to ingage us into any irregular, or unſeemly behaviour.

Let no man be moved by theſe afflictions; μηδένα σαίνεσθαι (*i. e.* Soprobέσθαι Chryſ.) 1 Theſſ. 3. 3.

3. We

3. We should indeed bear the worst events with an ἀδυμία, that is, with a sweet and chearful disposition of mind, so as not to be put out of humour; not to be dejected, or quite discouraged by them, not to fall into that *heaviness*, which (as the *wise Man* saith) *maketh the heart of man to stoop*; but rather finding delight and complacence in them, as considering whence they come, whither they aim and tend: such was the disposition and demeanour of the *Apostles* and *primitive* good *Christians* in the midst of their most grievous adversities and sufferings; *they rejoiced*, &c. they did *take joyfully the spoiling of their goods*, they did *account it all joy, when they fell into divers tribulations*: they were ὡς λυπούμενοι, ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, *as grieved but alwaies rejoicing*; their state was grievous, but their heart was constantly chearful. Such a constant frame of mind we should maintain, so continually prepared we should be against all contingencies, that nothing should happen amiss to us, so as deeply to affect us, or to unsettle us in our humour; that every thing from Gods hand should be acceptable; that no sadness may seize on us, at least that we do not indulge or cherish it; that in no wise we suffer any regret to quench that spiritual comfort and joy in God; which *becometh the upright* (as the *Psalmist* saith) and which we are so often enjoined perpetually to maintain, as in all cases, so particularly under afflictions and trials. We cannot indeed hardly be content, if we are not chearful; for it is hard to be altogether on the suffering and bearing hand, without any pleasure; the mind can hardly stand in a poise; so as neither to sorrow or joy: we cannot digest adversity, if we do not relish it; we shall not submit to it as his will, if we do not take it for an argument of his love: ἀδυνῶ, *I* (saith St. *Paul*) *have a liking or pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christs sake; for when I am weak then I am strong.*

Ἡ δὲ τοῦ κόσμου λύπη θάνατον κατεργάζεται. 2 Cor. 7. 10.

Prov. 12. 22. 25.

Εὐδοκῶ ἐν ἀσθενείαις, ἐν ὕβρεσιν, ἐν ἀνάγκαις, ἐν στενοχωρίαις ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ. 2 Cor. 12. 10.

εἰς πᾶσαν ὑπομονὴν καὶ μακροθυμίαν μετὰ χαρᾶς. Col. 1. 11.

Acts 5. 41.

Heb. 10. 34. Jam. 1. 2. 2 Cor. 6 10.

Psal. 33. 1. 97. 12. Phil. 4. 4. 3. 1. 2 Cor. 13. 11. 1 Pet. 4. 13.

2 Cor. 12. 10.

4. We should with faith and hope rely and wait on God for the removal, or easement of our afflictions; or however we should confide in him for grace, and strength to support them well: as our *Saviour* did, when he prayed, *Father, if thou be willing remove this Cup*; as they did in the *Prophet*, who said, *In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, we have waited on thee*; according to that rule in the *Lamentation*; *It is good that a man should both hope, and wait quietly for the Salvation of the Lord*; and those precepts in the *Psalms*; *Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for him*; *wait upon the Lord, be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart.*

Luke 22. 42. Isa. 26. 8. 33. 2. Lam. 3. 26.

Psal. 37. 7. 24. 17. Psal. 40. 1. 33. 20. 62. 1. 25. 3. 69. 6. 44. 19. 18. 8. Psal. 42. 2.

We should in any case be ready with the holy *Psalmist* thus to interrogate, and sustain our selves, *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him, for the help of his countenance.*

Remembring, and considering, that (as we are expressly taught in *Scripture*, and as all our Religion doth clearly suppose) *God knoweth to rescue the Godly out of tribulation*, (he knoweth the proper season, when it is fit to do it) that *he is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able*: *but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that we may be able to bear it*, reflecting, I say, on these certain points of Christian Truth, we should never *sorrow as those who are without hope*; we should never despair of a good riddance from our adversity, when it shall be seasonable or beneficial for us; we should always be assured of a comfortable support under it, which is usually better than deliverance from it; our minds should never sink into despondency, or disconsolateness: that this

2 Pet. 2. 3. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Matt. 6. 25. 1 Cor. 10. 13. 1 Thes. 4. 13. Isa. 40. 31. Mic. 7. 7.

is practicable in the worſt caſe, we have conſpicuous inſtances to aſſure us; it hath been the practice of moſt illuſtrious and excellent perſons, particularly of the holy *Apoſtles*; never was any condition, in outward reſpects and appearance, more forlorn and diſmal than was theirs; yet in no-wiſe bereaved them of hope, or courage; *We* (they could ſay) *are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed; we are perplexed, but not in deſpair, perſecuted, but not forſaken, caſt down, but not deſtroyed.* 2 Cor. 4. 8. 1 Cor. 4. 11.

5. We ſhould indeed not ſo much as faint, or languiſh in our minds upon any ſuch occaſion; no adverſity ſhould impair the forces of our reaſon or our ſpirit; ſhould enervate our courage, or ſlacken our induſtry; ſhould render us ſick, or weak in heart; for, *If* (ſaith the *wiſe Man*) *thou faint in the day of adverſity, thy ſtrength is ſmall*; ('tis the ſign of an infirm mind) and μὴ ἐκκακεῖν, *not to faulter* or decay, μὴ ἐκλύεσθαι, *not to be diſſolved* or disjointed *in our ſouls* (as the body is in ſcorbutick diſtempers) are rules preſcribed to us in ſuch caſes: We do then indeed need a firm and robuſt conſtitution of ſoul; we ſhould then bear up moſt reſolutely and ſtoutly: the encouragement of *Moſes* to the people, entring into battel may well be accommodated to us, in regard to our conflicts with adverſities; *Let not your hearts faint, fear not and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified becauſe of them.* Prov. 24. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 16. Rev. 2. 3. 2 Theſſ. 3. 13. Gal. 6. 9. Heb. 12. 3. —*nunc animis opus eſt, nunc pectore firmo.* Deut. 20. 3.

6. We ſhould not be weary of our condition, or have irkſome longings for alteration; but with a quiet indifferency, and willingneſs of mind lie under it, during God's pleaſure; according to the *Wiſe-man*'s advice; *My ſon deſpiſe not the chaſtening of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction*; and that of the *Apoſtle*, enforced by our *Lord*'s example; *Conſider him, that endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners againſt himſelf, leſt ye be wearied and faint in your minds.* We ſhould not think God ſlow, or his time long and tedious, as if he were forgetful of us, or backward to ſuccour us: as the *Pſalmiſt* was enclined to do, when in the day of trouble he brake forth into theſe conceits and expreſſions; *Will the Lord caſt off for ever, and will he be favourable no more; is his mercy clean gone for ever, doth his promiſe fail for evermore; Hath God forgotten to be gracious; hath he in anger ſhut up his tender mercies?* Thus he in a ſad mood was apt to think and ſpeak; but recollecting himſelf he perceived it was his errour, and confeſſed it was his fault thus to imagine, *I ſaid, it was mine infirmity*; and it will be ours likewiſe, if we entertain ſuch conceptions and reſentments: we ſhould with the ſame mind endure our preſent ſtate, as we do paſs through a hard winter, or a time of foul weather, taking it for ſeaſonable and fit, becauſe the wiſe Authour of nature hath ſo appointed and ordered it. Prov. 3. 11. Heb. 12. 3. Pſal. 77. 7, 8, 9, 10

7. We ſhould by adverſe accidents be rendred lowly in our own eyes, and ſober in our conceits of our ſelves; meek and gentle, tender and pliable in our temper and frame of ſpirit; ſenſible of our unworthineſs and meanneſs, of our natural frailty, penury and miſery, of our actual offences and miſcarriages; deeply affected in regard to the awful majeſty and power, to the perfect holineſs, and ſtrict juſtice of God: they ſhould quell our haughty ſtomach, they ſhould ſupple our ſtiff wilfulneſs, they ſhould ſoften our hard hearts, they ſhould mitigate our peeviſh humours; to effect theſe things is uſually the deſign of ſuch accidents, and it is ever the beſt fruit of them; this is that, which St. *Peter* adviſeth to, when he ſaith: *Be humbled under the mighty hand of God*; which God approveth and encourageth with a gracious promiſe, when he ſaith; —*To this man will I look, even to him that is of a poor and contrite ſpirit, and trembleth at my word*: this diſpoſition is an inſeparable adherent to contentedneſs; he 1 Pet. 5. 6. Iſa. 66. 2.

that hath not his ſpirit thus broken or mollified, will hardly be content in any ſtate; he that is haughty in conceit, and ſturdy in humour will every where find that which will croſs and diſturb him.

8. It is required that we ſhould, notwithſtanding any meanneſs, any hardneſs of our condition, be meekly and kindly affected toward others, being ſatisfied and pleaſed with their more proſperous ſtate. We ſhould not be angry with the World, becauſe we do not thrive or flouriſh in it; we ſhould not be ſullen, or peeviſh toward any man, becauſe his fortune is better than ours; we ſhould not repine or grudge at the good ſucceſs of any of our brethren, becauſe we want the like our ſelves, *we ſhould rather rejoice with thoſe that rejoice*; innocently filching ſome pleaſure from them, or borrowing ſome ſatisfaction from their enjoyments. It is *humane* thus to do, becauſe of the natural cognation and friendſhip of men; it is more eſpecially *Chriſtian*, becauſe of our ſpiritual conſanguinity; by vertue whereof we are ſo knit together, and made *members each to other*, that *if* (as St. *Paul* telleth us) *one member ſuffer, all the members ſuffer with it, and if one member be honoured, all the members ſhould rejoice with it*: We can hardly be content without thus appropriating the goods, and ſharing in the delights of others; he can never be content, who looketh *with an evil eye* upon other mens proſperity; he cannot do well himſelf, who loveth not to ſee his neighbour do well; numberleſs occaſions will happen to diſcompoſe and vex him.

Ita plerumque contingit, ut dum aliquos fratres noſtros in quantulacunque requie conſtitutos in mediis noſtris anxietatibus cogitamus, non parva ex parte recreemur, tanquam & nos ideo ipſi quietius tranquilliuſque vivamus. Aug. *Ep.* 144.

Rom. 12. 15

Rom. 12. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 26.

Adverſity impatiently born is apt to ſour our ſpirits, and render us froward toward men; eſpecially when it proceedeth from the unkindneſs, ingratitude, or treachery of friends, or of perſons obliged to us for our good Will, or for benefits done to them; but nothing ſhould render us unkindly diſpoſed toward the World, nothing ſhould extinguiſh charity in us toward any man; ſo plain reaſon teacheth us, ſo great examples enforce, *Moſes* did not loſe his affection towards his Countreymen, becauſe he was by one of them threatened away into baniſhment and vagrancy; the *Apoſtles* became not diſaffected to the World, becauſe it miſuſed and perſecuted them; our Lord did continue moſt earneſtly to deſire, and laboriouſly to endeavour the good of thoſe who moſt deſpitefully uſed him; Like theirs, in all caſes, ſhould our diſpoſition be; we ſhould ever obſerve the *Pſalmiſt*'s advice; *Ceaſe from anger, forſake wrath, fret not thy ſelf in any wiſe to do evil.* Again.

Pſal. 37. 8.

9. Contentedneſs doth imply a freedom from all ſolicitude and anxiety of mind, in reference to proviſion for our needs, and conveniences of life; according to thoſe rules and precepts of *caſting our burthen and care upon the Lord*, of *being careful for nothing, but commending our affairs to God's ordering*; according to that moſt comfortable Precept of our *Lord*, *Take no care, ſaying what ſhall we eat, or what ſhall we drink, or how ſhall we be cloathed; for your heavenly Father knoweth, that ye want all theſe things*: If we do not thus, it is hardly poſſible that we ſhould be content; if we do not depend upon Providence, we cannot ſcape being often diſtracted with care, and perplexed with fear; we cannot chearfully hope for any thing we need, nor be quietly ſecure of any thing we poſſeſs.

1 Pet. 5. 7. Pſal. 37. 5. 55. 23. Phil. 4. 6. Matt. 6. 31.

10. It requireth alſo that we ſhould curb our deſires, and confine them in the narroweſt bounds we can; ſo as not to affect more in quantity, or better in quality, than our nature and ſtate do require: if we muſt have ſuperfluities, if we can onely reliſh dainties, we ſhall never be pleaſed: for as nature hath limits, and is content with little; as there is no ſtate in this

Ἡδίστα πολυτελείας ἀπολαύσειν εἰ ἤκιστα ταύτης δεόμενοι. Epic. *ad* Menœc. *Ventre nihil novi frugalius.* Juv. *Sat.* 5.

this World, the exigencies whereof may not be answered with a competence; so curiosity is an infinite, and insatiable thing: *He that loveth pleasure shall be a poor man; he that loveth wine and oil shall not be rich*; that is, he which is curious and nice in his desires, will never have enough: The rule, which (according to St. *Paul*) should regulate our desires is this; *Having food and raiment, let us with them be satisfied*: if this will satisfy us, we may easily obtain satisfaction; a moderate industry with God's blessing, will procure so much; God hath promised to bestow it; if this will not suffice, there is no sure way of getting or keeping more; As God is no-wise obliged to provide us superfluities, or concerned to relieve our extravagant longings; so we may fear that Providence will be ready to cross us in our cares and endeavors tending to those purposes; so that we shall be disappointed in the procurement, or disturbed in the fruition of such needless things: However he that is most scant in his desires, is likely to be most content in his mind: *He* (as *Socrates* said) *is nearest the Gods* (who needs nothing) *that needeth fewest things*.

Prov. 21. 17.

Αἱ κατὰ φύσιν ὀρέξεις δύνανται ῥᾳδίως πληροῦσθαι. Cl. Alex. *Paed.* 2. 1.

1 Tim. 6. 8.

Si ad naturam vives nunquam eris pauper; si ad opinionem, nunquam dives. Epic. Sen. *Ep.* 16.

Ὁ ἐλαχίστων δεόμενος ἐγγυτάτω θεῶν. Socr. *in* Xenoph. *Apomn.* 3.

In fine, contentedness doth import, that whatever our condition is, our minds and affections should be modelled, and squared just according to it; so that our inclinations be compliant, our desires be congruous thereto, so that easily we can comport with the inconveniences, can relish the comforts, can improve the advantages sticking thereto; otherwise like an ill-made Garment, it will sit unhandsome upon us, and be troublesome to us. It is not usually our condition it self, but the unsutableness thereof to our disposition and desires (which soureth all its sweets, and rendreth its advantages fruitless) that createth discontent; for (although it be very mean) others bear the same chearfully; many would be glad thereof; if therefore we will be content, we must bend our inclinations, and adapt our desires to a correspondence with our state.

If we are rich, we should get a large and bountiful heart, otherwise our Wealth will hang loose about us; the care and trouble in keeping it, the suspicion and fear of losing it, the desire of amplifying it, the unwillingness to spend or use it, will bereave us of all true satisfaction therein, and render it no less unsavoury to us, than unprofitable to others.

If we are poor, we should have a frugal, provident, industrious mind, sparing in desires, free from curiosity, willing to take pains, able to digest hardships; otherwise the straitness of our condition will pinch and gall us.

Are we high in dignity or reputation? we then need a mind well ballasted with sober thoughts, otherwise the Wind of Vanity will drive us into absurd behaviours, thence will dash us upon disappointments, and consequently will plunge us into vexation and discontent.

Are we mean and low? we need a meek and lowly, a calm and steady spirit: not affecting little respects, or resenting the want of them; apt to pass over or to bear quietly petty affronts and neglects; not apt to be moved by Words signifying contempt or disdain; else (being fretted with such things, which in this ill-natur'd and hard-hearted World we may be sure often to meet with) we shall be uneasie in our minds, and impatiently wish a change of our state.

These, and the like dispositions and affections of soul this duty containeth, or requireth: from hence should arise a correspondent external deneanour, and such actions as these which follow:

1. We should restrain our Tongues from all unseemly and unsavoury expressions, implying dissatisfaction in God's proceedings, or displeasure

at his Providence; arguing desperation or distrust in God; such as were
Psal 78. 19. Numb. 21. 5. those of the discontented and impatient *Israelites*; *They* (saith the *Psalmist*) *spake against God; they said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness? behold he smote the rock that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?* Such as they used, of
Isa. 3. 21. Rev. 19. 9, 11, 21. whom the *Prophet* saith——*When they shall be hungry, they will fret themselves, and curse their King and their God*; as those in the *Apocalypse*, who being afflicted with deserved judgments, *did blaspheme the name of God, which had power over those plagues——blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and sores.* Into such profane enormities of language is discontent apt to break forth, questioning the power of God, or his willingness to succour us; venting wrath and displeasure toward him; charging him foolishly with injustice, or with unkindness, or with negligence, or with impotency; the abstaining from which behaviour, under the sense of his bitter calamities, is a great commendation of *Job*; *In all this* ('tis said) *Job sinned not, neither charged God foolishly.*

Job 1. 22. Οὐκ ἔβλαψεν ἀφρονήσας τῷ Θεῷ. Ἀλλ' ἔχε σιγῇ μέδον, ὅπῃ τρέφων ᾖ θεῖος. Hom. Od. τ'.

2. We should indeed forbear any the least complaint or murmuring, in regard to the dispensations of Providence; or upon dissatisfaction in the state allotted us: St. *Jude* saith,
Jude 15, 16. that God in the last day *will come, to execute judgment, and to convince men of all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him*; *these* (subjoyneth he) are γογγυσταὶ, μεμψίμοιροι, *murmurers, that complain of their lot*: which signifieth the heinousness and extreme dangerousness of
Lam. 3. 39. this practice. *Wherefore doth the living man complain?* is the *Prophet's* question, implying it to be an unreasonable and blameable practice Wherefore the advice of *David* is good; to suppress all complaint, to be still and
Psal. 46. 10. 4. 4. 37. 7. silent in such cases: *Be still* (saith he) *and know that I am God*, and *Be silent to the Lord*; the which Precepts his practice may seem well to interpret and back; *I was*, saith he, *dumb, I opened not my mouth, because it was thy doing*: and accordingly *Job*, *Behold* (said he, after having considered all the reasons he could imagine of God's proceedings) *I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* And
Psal. 39. 9. ——σιωπῇ πάσχειν ἄλγεα πολλὰ βίας ὑπὸ δεσποτικῆς ἀνδρῶν. Od. ν.

Job 40. 4.

Isa. 53. 7. thus our *Saviour*, when *he was oppressed and afflicted, opened not his mouth.*

Δόξα τῷ Θεῷ πάντων ἕνεκεν. Οὐ γὰρ παύσομαι τοῦτο ἁπλῶς ἀεὶ ὅλῃ πᾶσι μοιρῆς συμβαίνειν. Chrys. ad Olymp. Ep. 11.

Yea it is our duty, in these cases, to spend our breath in declaring our satisfaction in God's dealing with us: acknowledging his wisdom, justice and goodness therein; blessing and praising him for all that hath befallen
Psal. 119. 75. us; each of us confessing after *David*; *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me*; imitating *Job*, who upon the loss of all his goods did say no more than this; *The Lord*
Job 1. 21. *gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.*

4. We should abstain from all irregular, unlawful and unworthy courses toward the removal or remedy of our needs, or crosses, chusing rather to abide quietly under their pressure, than by any unwarrantable means to relieve, or relax our selves; rather bearing patiently, than violently
Jer. 5. 5. like those in the *Prophet, breaking our yoke, and bursting our bands. Take*
Job 36. 21. *heed, regard not iniquity; for this hast thou chosen rather than affliction.* We should rather continue poor, than by couzenage, or rapine, endeavour to raise our fortune; we should rather lye under disgrace and contempt than by sinful or sordid compliances strive to acquire the respect and favour of men; we should rather willingly rest in the lowest condition, than de-

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as thoſe, who by diſturbing the World, by fomenting diſorders and factions, by ſupplanting their neighbours Welfare, by venting ſlanders and diſtractions, do labour to amplify their eſtate: We ſhould rather endure any inconvenience or diſtreſs, than have recourſe to ways of evading them, diſallowed by God; doing as the *Jews* did, who in their ſtraits, againſt the declared pleaſure of God, *ſet their faces toward* Ægypt, *ſtrengthened themſelves in the ſtrength of* Pharaoh, *truſted in the ſtaff of that broken reed.* In neglect or diffidence toward God, to embrace ſuch aids, is (as God in the *Prophet* declareth) a very blameable and miſchievous folly: *Ephraim* (ſaith he) *is like a ſilly dove without heart; they call to* Ægypt, *they go to* Aſſyria——*Wo unto them, for they have fled from me; deſtruction unto them, becauſe they have tranſgreſſed againſt me.* We may conſider how St. *Paul* reproveth the *Corinthians* for ſeeking a redreſs of wrong, ſcandalous and diſhonourable to the Church, *Now therefore it is utterly a fault among you, that ye go to law one with another; Why do ye not rather take wrong; why do ye not rather ſuffer your ſelves to be defrauded?* even to right your ſelves in a way, whereby any diſhonour may come to God, or damage to his Church is not to be approved; and better it is in the *Apoſtle*'s judgment, to bear any injury or damage our ſelves, *Better it is* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *if the will of God be ſo, that we ſuffer for well-doing, than to do ill.* And, *Let them, who ſuffer according to the will of God, commit the keeping of their Souls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creatour*; is another wholeſom advice of that great *Apoſtle*.

Jer. 42. 15. 2. 18. 13. Iſa. 30. 2. 35. 36 6. 31. 1. Ezek. 17. 15. Hoſ. 7. 11, 13.

1 Cor. 6. 7.

1 Pet. 3. 17. 4. 19.

5. We ſhould, notwithſtanding any adverſity, proceed in our affairs (ſuch as God requireth, or reaſon putteth us upon) with alacrity, courage and induſtry; performing however, ſo far as our circumſtances do permit, what is good and fit for us: No diſappointment or croſs, no ſtraits or grievances of condition ſhould render us liſtleſs, or lazy, but rather it ſhould quicken and inflame our activity; this being a good way to divert us from the ſenſe of our misfortunes, and to comfort us under their preſſure; as alſo the readieſt way to remove or to abate them, τὸ παρὸν εὖ θέσθαι, *to order the preſent well*, whatever it be; to make the beſt of a bad matter, to march forward whither reaſon calls (how difficultly ſoever, or ſlowly it be) in a rough or dirty way; not to yeild to difficulties, but reſolutely to encounter them, to ſtruggle luſtily with them, to endeavour with all our might to ſurmount them; are acts worthy of a manly reaſon and courage; to direct ill accidents to good ends, and improve them to honeſt uſes, is the work of a noble vertue. If a bad game be dealt us, we ſhould not preſently throw up, but play it out ſo well as we can; ſo perhaps we may ſave ſomewhat, we ſhall at leaſt be buſie till a better come. *Put thy truſt in the Lord, and be doing good*, is the *Pſalmiſt*'s advice in ſuch a caſe; and it is a practice neceſſary to the procuring and maintaining content: If we be not otherwiſe well employed, we ſhall be apt, in our thoughts, to melancholize, and dote upon our miſchances, the ſenſe of them will faſten upon our ſpirits, and gnaw our hearts.

Κεφάλαιον τὸ παρὸν εὖ διοικῆσαι. Ant. 4. 26. 5. 2.

Τὸ παρὸν ἀπροϋπόπτως φέρειν καὶ διοικεῖν τὰ ἐξ ἀνάγκης. Id. 12. 1.

Tu ne cede malis, ſed contrà audentior ito.

Pſal. 37. 3.

6. We ſhould behave our ſelves fairly and kindly toward the inſtruments and abetters of our adverſity; toward thoſe who brought us into it, and thoſe who detain us under it, by keeping off relief, and thoſe who forbear to afford the ſuccour we might expect; forbearing to expreſs any wrath or diſpleaſure, to exerciſe any revenge or enmity toward them; but rather, even upon that ſcore, bearing good will, and expreſſing kindneſs toward them; not onely as to our brethren, whom, according to the general

general Law of Charity, we are bound to love, but as to the ſervants of God in this particular caſe, and the inſtruments of his pleaſure toward us; conſidering, that by maligning or moleſting them, we do expreſs ill reſentments of God's dealing with us, and in effect, through their ſides do wound his Providence; thus did the good *King* behave himſelf toward *Shimei*, when he was bitterly reproached and curſed by him; not ſuffering (upon this accompt, becauſe he was God's inſtrument of afflicting himſelf) that any harm ſhould be done unto him; thus the holy *Apoſtles* *being reviled did bleſs, being defamed did intreat*; thus our Lord demeaned himſelf toward his ſpiteful adverſaries; who, *when he was reviled, did not revile again; when he ſuffered, he did not threaten, but committed it to him that judgeth righteouſly.* In all theſe caſes we ſhould at leaſt obſerve the rules and advices of the *wiſe Man*; *Say not, I will do ſo to him as he hath done to me, I will render to the man according to his work; Say thou not, I will recompence evil; but wait on the Lord, and he ſhall ſave thee.*

2 Sam. 16. 7.
1 Cor. 4. 12.
1 Pet. 2. 23. 3. 9.
Prov. 24. 29. 20. 22.

Diſcontent uſually conſiſteth not ſo much in diſpleaſure for the things we ſuffer, as at the perſons who bring them on us, or who do not help to rid us from them; it is their preſumed injury or diſcourteſie which we do fret at; ſuch paſſions therefore toward men being diſcarded, our evils preſently will become ſupportable, and content eaſily will enſue. As men in any ſickneſs or pain, if their friends are about them (affording comfort or aſſiſtance) do not ſeem to feel any thing, and forbear complaining; ſo if the World about us doth pleaſe us, if we bear no diſaffection or grudge toward any perſon in view, our adverſity will appear leſs grievous, it will indeed commonly be ſcarce ſenſible to us.

In theſe and ſuch like acts, the duty and vertue of contentedneſs doth eſpecially reſide; or it is employed and exerciſed by them: And ſo much may ſuffice for the explication of its nature; I come now to conſider the way of attaining it, intimated by St. *Paul* here, when he ſaith, *I have learned.*

SERMON VI.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned &c.

THESE Words ſignify how contentedneſs may be attained, ſo how it is produced: It is not an endowment innate to us; i doth not arrive by chance into us; it is not to be purchaſed b any price; it ſpringeth not up of its ſelf, nor ariſeth from th quality of any ſtate: but it is a product of diſcipline; *I have learned.*

It is a queſtion debated in *Plato*, εἰ διδακτὸν ἡ ἀρετή, *whether Vertue be to be learned*, St. *Paul* plainly reſolveth it in this caſe by his own experience and teſtimony. What *Seneca* ſaith in general of vertue (*Nature giveth not Vertue; it is an art to become good*) is moſt true of this vertue; it is an art, with which we are not born, no more than with any other art or ſcience; the which, as other arts, cannot be acquired without ſtudious application of mind, and induſtrious exerciſe: No art indeed requireth more hard ſtudy and pain toward the acquiry of it, there being ſo many difficulties, ſo many obſtacles in the way thereto: We have no great capacity, no towardly diſpoſition to learn it; We muſt, in doing it, deny our carnal ſenſe, we muſt ſettle our wild fancy, and ſuppreſs fond conceits; we muſt bend our ſtiff and ſtubborn inclinations; we muſt repreſs and reſtrain wanton deſires; we muſt allay and ſtill tumultuous paſſions; we muſt croſs our humour, and curb our temper; which to do is a hard chapter to learn: Much conſideration, much practice, much contention and diligence are required thereto.

Non dat natura virtutem ars eſt bonum fieri. Sen. *Ep.* 89.
Virtus etiamſi quoſdam impetus ex natura ſumit, tamen perficienda doctrina eſt. Quintil. 12. 2.

Hence it is an art which we may obſerve few do much ſtudy; and of the ſtudents therein few are great proficients; ſo that *Qui fit, Mecænas?* *Horace*'s queſtion, *How comes it to paſs, that no body liveth content with the lot aſſigned by God?* wanted not ſufficient ground.

However it is not like the *Quadrature of the circle*, or the *Philoſophers Stone*, an art impoſſible to be learned, and which will baffle all ſtudy: there are examples which ſhew it to be obtainable; there are rules and precepts, by obſerving which we may arrive to it.

And it is certainly a moſt excellent piece of learning; moſt deſerving our earneſt ſtudy: no other ſcience will yeild ſo great ſatisfaction, or good uſe; all other ſciences, in compariſon thereto, are dry and fruitleſs curioſities; for were we Maſters of all other knowledge, yet wanted the skill of being content, we ſhould not be wiſe or happy; happineſs and diſcontent are ἀσύμφυτα (*things incompatible.*)

But how then may this skill be learned? I anſwer, chiefly (divine grace concurring) by theſe three ways. 1. By underſtanding the rules and precepts, wherein the practice thereof conſiſteth. 2. By diligent exerciſe, or application of thoſe rules to practice; whereby the habit will be produced. 3. By ſeriouſly conſidering, and impreſſing upon our minds thoſe rational inducements (ſuggeſted by the nature and reaſon of things) which are apt to perſwade the practice thereof. The *firſt* way I have already endeavored to declare; the *ſecond* wholly dependeth upon the will and endeavor of the learner; the *third* I ſhall now inſiſt upon, propounding ſome rational conſiderations, apt (by God's help) to perſwade contentedneſs, and ſerving to cure the malady of diſcontent. They may be drawn from ſeveral heads; from God, from our ſelves, from our particular condition or ſtate; from the World or general ſtate of men here; from the particular ſtate of other men in compariſon to ours; from the nature and conſequences of the duty it ſelf: Every thing about us well examined and pondered, will miniſter ſomewhat inducing and aſſiſting thereto.

I. In regard to God we may conſider, that equity doth exact, and gratitude requireth, and all reaſon dictateth, that we ſhould be content; or that in being diſcontented we behave our ſelves very unbeſeemingly and unworthily, are very unjuſt, very ingrateful, and very fooliſh toward him. 1 Sim. 3. 18.

1. Equity doth exact this duty of us, and in performing it we act juſtly toward God, both admitting his due right, and acknowledging his good exerciſe

Matt. 20. 15. exercise thereof; That saying in the *Gospel*, *Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own?* is a most evident maxime of equity; it is therefore the natural right, and prerogative of God (as the Creator and Preserver, and consequently the absolute Lord, Owner and Governour of all things) to assign his station, and allot his portion to every person, as he judgeth good and convenient; it is most just that inviolably he should enjoy this right; He being also infinitely wise and good, it is likewise most just to acknowledge that he doth perfectly well manage this right; Now by contentful submission to God's disposal of things, we do worthily express our due regard to both these, avowing his right, and approving his exercise thereof; but by discontent and regret at what happeneth, we do in effect injure God in both those respects, disavowing his right, and impeaching his management. We do thereby so renounce his right, as (so far as conceit and wish do reach) to invade it, and usurp it to our selves: signifying, that in our opinion things ought not to be ordered according to his judgment and pleasure, but after our fancy and humour; we claim to our selves the priviledge of controlling his estate, and dispensing his goods, so as to be our own carvers, and to assume to our selves so much as we think good; we imply, that, if we were able, we would extort the power out of his hands, and manage it our selves, modelling the World according to our conceits and desires.

Multos inveni æquos adversus homines, adversus Deos nemi-nem: Sen. *Ep.* 93. We do also (since we cannot but perceive the other attempt of dispossessing God to be frivolous and fruitless) in effect charge God with misdemeanour, with iniquity or infirmity in his distribution and disposal of things; intimating, that in our opinion he doth not order them so justly, or so wisely as might be (not so well as we in our Wisdom and Justice should order them) for did we conceive them managed for the best, we could not but judge it most unreasonable to be aggrieved, or to complain: so heinously insolent, and unjust are we in being discontent. In earnest, Which is most equal, that God should have his Will, or we? For shame we shall say, God: Why then do we not contentedly let him have it?

'Tis indeed, if we consider it, the highest piece of injustice that we can be guilty of; exceeding that which we commit in any other sort of disobedience. For as in any State seditious Mutining is the greatest crime, as most directly violating the Majesty, and subverting the authority of the Prince; so in the World, none may be supposed more to offend and wrong its Sovereign Governour, than such malecontents, who dislike and blame his proceedings: Even a *Heathen* could teach us, that it is our duty to *subject our mind to him that administreth all things, as good Citizens to the Law of the Commonwealth*; if we do not we are rebellious and seditious, which is the highest pitch of injustice toward our most gracious Sovereign.

Τῷ αὐτῷ γνώμῃ κατατάσσειν τῷ διοικοῦντι τὰ ὅλα καθάπερ οἱ ἀγαθοὶ πολῖται τῷ νόμῳ τῆς πόλεως. Arr. 1. 12.

Again, there can be no greater injury, or affront offered to God, than 1 John 5. 10. to *give him the lie*, by questioning his veracity or fidelity; this discontent plainly doth involve: for God hath expressly declared himself ready upon Matt. 6. 25, 36. Heb. 13. 5. all occasions to do us good; he hath promised to *care for us*, and *never to forsake us*, or leave us destitute; which Word of his if we did not distrust and take him to be unfaithful, we could not be discontent: As no man is displeased with his condition, or suspicious of want, who knoweth that he hath abundant supply of all that he can need in a sure place; that he hath a person most able, most willing, most faithful engaged to succour him; so did we believe God to be true, who hath promised to help us, we could not be discontented for fear of any want.

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We muſt at leaſt in ſo doing, ſuſpect God to be deficient in goodneſs toward us, or unwilling to help us, or we muſt apprehend him impotent, and unable to perform what he would, and what he hath promiſed, for us (like thoſe Infidels, who ſaid, *Can God furniſh a table in the wilderneſs?* Pſal. 78. 19, 20 *Can he give bread alſo, can he provide fleſh for his people?*) which conceits of God are alſo very unworthy, and injurious to him.

2. Gratitude requireth of us this duty: for we having no right, or title to any thing; all that we have coming from God's pure bounty; he having upon us all (whatever our condition comparatively is, or may ſeem to us) freely conferred many great benefits, common to all men among us (our being, life, reaſon, capacity of eternal happineſs, manifold ſpiritual bleſſings, incomparably precious and excellent) we in all reaſon ſhould be thankful for theſe, without craving more, or complaining for the want of other things. Whereas alſo all events (how croſs ſoever to our ſenſual conceits, or appetites) are by God deſigned, and diſpenſed for our good, gratitude requireth, that we ſhould thank God for them, and not murmur againſt them.

Iniquus eſt qui muneris ſui arbitrium danti non relinquit, avidus qui non lucrō loco habet quod accipit, ſed damni quod reddidit, &c. Sen. *ad* Polyb. 29.

Surely if inſtead of rendring God thanks for all the excellent gifts which he moſt liberally (without any previous obligation to us, or deſert of ours) hath beſtowed on us, and continueth to beſtow, we fret, and quarrel, that he doth not in ſmaller matters ſeem to cocker us, we are extreamly ingrateful, and diſingenuous toward him: If any great Perſon here ſhould freely beſtow on us gifts of huge value (high preferment, or much Wealth) but with good reaſon, as we might preſume, ſhould withhold from us ſome trifle, that we fancy or dote upon, ſhould we not be very unworthy, if we ſhould take it ill and be angry with him for that cauſe? The caſe is plainly the ſame; God hath in the frankeſt manner beſtowed on us innumerable and ineſtimable goods, in compariſon whereto any comfort or convenience of our ſtate here is very trivial and deſpicable; Are we not therefore very ingrateful, if we heinouſly reſent the want of any ſuch things; if upon any ſuch accompt we diſguſt his Providence? Do we not deal, beyond all expreſſion, unworthily with God, in ſo much undervaluing the goods which he hath given us, or doth offer us, and hath put in our reach? He hath made us capable of the greateſt goods imaginable, and faithfully upon eaſie terms proffereth them to us; he even tendereth himſelf (himſelf, the immenſe and all-comprehending good, the fountain of all joy and bliſs) to be fully enjoyed by us; his Wiſdom he offereth to inſtruct and guide us, his power to protect and guard us, his fulneſs to ſupply us, his goodneſs to comfort us; he offereth his love and favour to us, in having which we virtually, and in effect have all things; becoming thereby, in the higheſt degree, rich and honourable and happy; And is it not then outragious unworthineſs to prize any other thing (any petty accommodation of this tranſitory life, any pitiful toy here) ſo much, as to be diſpleaſed for the want thereof; as if all his were not enough to ſatisfie our needs, or ſatiate our deſires; as if notwithſtanding all theſe immenſe effuſions (yea as it were profuſions) of bounty upon us, we could be indigent or unhappy? *Shall we* (to uſe that holy and moſt ingenuous conſideration of *Job*) *receive ſo much good from* Job 2. 10. *the bountiful hand of God, and ſhall we not contentedly receive, or bear ſo ſmall evils from him?* Evils indeed in name, and to groſs ſenſe, but not ſo in reality, not ſo in effect, at leaſt not ſo in God's deſign; but rather things very convenient and profitable for us; which is another aggravation of our ingratitude;

Εὐχαριστῶ σοι πάτερ ὃ ποιητὴς ἁπάντων θεῶν ἀνθρώπων—ὅτι ἀκόντας ἡμᾶς δι' πιθείς, &c. ſaid *Philagrius* in a grievous diſeaſe. *Naz.* Ep. 66.

Ἐπειδὴν τὸ μὴ πάσχειν οὐκ ἔχω πῶς μὲ τοῦ πάσχειν παρεκτραχύνῃ τὸ φέρειν, καὶ τὸ ἀνεκτὸν. Naz. de se. Ep. 63.

Are we not also very ingrateful in misapprehending, and disliking that, which God doeth out of very gracious intentions toward us; in loathing his fatherly and friendly dispensations; the fatherly chastisements and friendly disciplines, which he unwillingly is forced (is I say forced by his own great love, and by our pressing needs) to inflict or impose upon us? Surely our ill opinion of or *despising* (as the *wise-Man* calleth it) these unpleasant blessings is no small fault; Neither will our not discerning (out of affected dulness, and stupid pravity not discerning) the wisdom of God's methods, and the wholesomeness of the means he useth to better us, excuse us from foul ingratitude.

Prov. 3. 11.

Εὐχαριστεῖς τοῖς θεοῖς τὰ ὠφελοῦντα διδόναι ὡς τοῖς θεοῖς καλλιστα εἰδόσι δοῦναι δεῖ. Xenoph. de Socr.

Charior est illis homo quam sibi.

3. Again, upon many accompts, reason farther dictateth in respect to God, that we should be content: because it is most reasonable to acquiesce in God's choice of our state, he being infinitely more wise than we, and infinitely better understanding what is good for us than we can do: because he is well affected to us, and loveth us more than we do our selves; because he hath a just right, and irresistible power to dispose of us, the which (whatever we can do; however we resent it) he will effectually make use of, whence it is extremely foolish to be discontent: foolish it is to be dissatisfied with the results of his Wisdom, adhering to our vain apprehensions, foolish to distrust his goodness in compliance with our fond self-love; foolish to contest his unquestionable right and uncontroulable power, having nothing but meer impotency to oppose against them; no less than downright madness it is to fret and fume at that which we can no wise help, to bark at that which lodgeth in heaven so far high above us, to solicite deaf necessity with our ineffectual Wailings; for if we think, that our displeasure will affect God, that our complaints will incline him to alter our condition, or comply with our wishes, we do conceit vainly, and without any ground:

Οὐ γὰρ πῃ περίξεις πέλεται κραναοῖο γάλοιο. *I.* ω

sooner may we, by our imagination, stop the Tides of the Sea, or turn the Streams of Rivers backward; sooner, by our cries, may we stay the Sun and change all the courses of the Stars, than by our passionate resentment or moanful clamours we can check the current of affairs, or alter that state of things, which is by God's high decree established: discontented behaviour will rather fasten our condition, or remove it into a worse place; as it highly doth offend God, and encreaseth our guilt, so it moveth God to continue, and to augment our evils. Thus lifting up our eyes to heaven and considering the reference our disposition and demeanour hath to God will induce us to bear our case contentedly.

Σὺ δ' εἰκ' ἀνάγκῃ καὶ θεοῖσι μὴ μάχου. Eurip.

Lam. 3. 39.

II. Again, Reflecting upon our selves, we may observe much reason to be content with our state; in whatever capacity we look upon our selves, it in reason becometh us, we in duty are obliged to be so.

As men and creatures we naturally are indigent and impotent; we have no just claim to any thing, nor any possession maintainable by our power; all that we have, or can have, cometh from most pure courtesy and bounty; wherefore how little soever is allowed us, we have no wrong done us, nor can we justly complain thereat: Such beggars as we are must not pretend to be chusers; if any thing be given us we may be glad, we should be thankful. It is for those who have a right and a power to maintain it, to resent and expostulate, if their due be withheld; but for us that never had any thing, which we could call our own; that have no power to get or keep any thing; for us that came into the World naked and defenceless, that live here in continual, absolute and arbitrary dependance for all our livelihood and subsistence, to contest with him that maintaineth us, or to complain of his dealing, is ridiculously absurd and vain.

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Upon a moral accompt we have less reason to challenge ought, or to complain of any thing; for we deserve nothing but evil: If we rightly esteem and value our selves, any thing will seem good enough for us, any condition will appear better than we deserve: duly examining the imperfections and infirmities of our nature, the disorder and depravedness of our hearts, the demeanours and enormities of our lives, we cannot but apprehend, that we are even unworthy of the *crumbs which fall from our masters table*; we cannot but acknowledge with the good *Patriarch*, that we are *less than the least of God's mercies*. Considering our natural unworthiness, we shall see that we deserve not so much as those common benefits which all men enjoy, and without which we cannot subsist; so that in regard to them we shall be ready to acknowledge with the *Psalmist*, *Lord what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the Son of man, that thou makest accompt of him?* Trying our hearts and examining our ways, we shall soon discover it to be abundant mercy, that we are not utterly deprived of all good things, stript of all comforts, yea dispossessed of our very being and life it self; that we are obliged to acknowledge with those in the *Lamentations*, *It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.* Were we far better than we are, yet it would not become us to contest with him, to whose disposal and judgment we are subject; as *Job* teacheth us: *Behold* (saith he) *God taketh away, who can hinder him, who will say unto him, what doest thou? If he will not withdraw his anger, the proud * helpers do stoop under him; how much less shall I answer him, and chuse out my words to reason with him; whom though I were righteous, I would not answer, but I would make supplication to my judge*; (Job 9. 32.) but for us, men so unrighteous and guilty, to debate with, to question the proceedings of our Judge, it is much more unseemly.

Matt. 15. 17. 27.
Gen. 32. 10.
Psal. 144. 3.
Job 7. 17. 27.
Lam. 3. 22.
Job 9. 12, &c.
* Kim.

Nothing can be more absurd, than for men so deeply indebted, than for sinners so very obnoxious to Wrath, to be aggrieved in any state: Shall we, who are conscious to our selves of so many great sins against our God; who by wilful transgressions, or slothful neglects, have so much affronted and offended him; who have so little requited his love, and so much abused his patience; who have born so little fruit, and rendred him so little service, shall we be angry that our humour is not pleased in all things? Shall we effect to swim in plenty, to wallow in pleasure, to bask our selves in ease; to be fed with dainties, to be gaily clothed, to flourish in a brave and splendid condition, to be worshipped and honoured, who deserve not the meanest competence, or lowest respect, to whom it is a great favour that we are permitted to subsist, whom strict justice would often have cast into utter misery and disconsolateness? It is not surely for such persons to be dissatisfied with any thing in this World, but to bless God's exceeding mercy, that they abide there on this side of the bottomless pit; 'tis their part, with most submissive patience, to bear whatever is inflicted on them, humbly saying with him in the *Prophet*, *I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.* Seeing, whatever our crosses or sufferings be, we cannot but confess to God with those in *Ezra*, *Thou hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve*; being gainers upon the matter, having so much of our debt remitted in effect, being in comparison to what was due to us very tolerably, yea very favourably dealt with, Why should we be dissatisfied? If in such cases men should deal so favourably with us, we should be much pleased, and ready to thank them; Why then should we take it ill of God, when he even in his hardest proceedings against us, expresseth so much indulgence and mercy?

Mic. 7. 9.
Ezr. 9. 13.

If we must be displeased, and lust to complain, we have reason much rather to accuse our selves, than to exclaim at Providence, to bewail our sins, than to deplore our fortune: for our evils are not indeed so much the voluntary Works of God, who *doth not afflict willingly, or grieve the children of men*, as the natural products of our sin, which we do wilfully commit: It is (as the *Prophet* speaketh) *our sins* that *withhold good things from us*; and bring evil things upon us: *Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted.* We make adversity necessary, or expedient for us, then we cry out upon it: We labour in Planting, but cannot brook *the fruit of our doings*; we, like prodigals, fling away our estate in wanton profusions, then complain of want; we affect and chuse the causes, but loath, and cannot abide the certain consequences; so fond in our conceits, so perverse are we in our affections: *Wherefore doth the living man complain, for the punishment of his sins?* so well might the *Prophet* demand and expostulate.

Iam 2. 33. Αὐθαίρετα πάμπαν. Jer. 5. 25. Psal. 107. 17. Jer. 17. 10. 21 14. 32. 19. 6. 19. Lam. 3. 39. גבר

We may farther, looking on our selves, consider our selves as servants to God, or rather as slaves, absolutely subject to his disposal; And shall any servant, shall a mere slave presume to chuse his place, or determine his rank in the family? Shall he appoint to himself what office he will discharge, what garb he shall go in, what diet he must have, what he will do, and how he shall be accommodated? Is it not fit that all these things should be left to our Master's discretion and pleasure? it is most reasonable that we should throughly acquiesce in his determination: even a *Pagan* Philosopher could teach us, that this is reasonable; who thus piously directeth his Speech to God: *For the rest use me to what thou pleasest. I do consent unto thee, and am indifferent. I refuse nothing which seemeth good to thee; lead me whither thou wilt; put on me what garment thou pleasest: Wilt thou have me to be a governour or a private man, to stay at home or to be banished away, to be poor or to be rich? I will, in respect to all these things, apologize for thee with men*; thus did *Epictetus* say, and such speech well becometh our relation to God: Servants should be content with their Masters appointments and allowances; they should not onely themselves forbear to find fault with, but be ready to maintain his proceedings against any, who shall presume to reprehend or blame them. Especially such servants as we are, who, *after we have done all things commanded us, must acknowledge that we are unprofitable servants*; such as can bring no considerable benefit to our Lord, or any-wise advance his state; such as therefore cannot challenge any Wages from him, more than he out of mere favour is pleased to allow: Could we, by our labours, enrich God, or raise him in dignity, or procure delight to him, it might seem congruous that he should answerably reward us; but as he getteth nothing by us, so we cannot require any thing from him: our best services do indeed rather need pardon, than deserve any reward: No man hath lived so well, that he can pretend any thing from God, that he is not indeed much behindhand in his accompts with God, having received from God far more of benefit than he can return to him in service: No man, without extream presumption and arrogance, can offer to prescribe, in what measure, or what manner God should reward him.

Χρῶ μοι λοιπὸν εἰς ὃ ἂν θέλῃς· Ὁμογνωμονῶ σοι, ἴσης εἰμί. Οὐδὲν παραιτοῦμαι πρὸ σοῦ δοκοῦν σοι. Ὅπου θέλεις ἄγε με· ὃ ἂν θέλεις ἔνδυσαι τοῦτο. Ἄρχειν με θέλεις, ἰδιωτεύειν μένειν φεύγειν, πένεσθαι, πλουτεῖν; ἐγώ σοι ὑπὲρ τούτων πάντων τούτων πρὸς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀπολογήσομαι. Arr. 2. 16.

Luk. 17. 10.

Again, if we consider our selves as the children of God, either by birth or nature, or by adoption and grace, How can we be discontent for any thing? Have we not thence great reason to hope, or rather to be confident, that we shall never want any good thing (necessary or conve-

nient

nient for us) that no great evil shall ever oppress us? For is not God hence by paternal disposition inclined, is he not in a manner, by paternal duty, engaged, in all needful occasions, to supply and succour us? Can we (without great profaneness, and no less folly) surmise, that he, which is so immensly good, will be a bad (an unkind, or a neglectful) Father to us? No, as there is no other Father in goodness comparable to him, so none, in real effects of benignity, can come near him; so our Lord assureth us: *If ye* (saith he) *being evil, know how to give good things to your children; How much more will your heavenly Father give good things to his children that ask him?* Matt. 7. 11.

If we consider our selves as Christians, we have still more reason to practise this duty: As such, we are not onely possessed of goods abundantly sufficient to satisfie our desires; we have hopes able to raise our minds above the sense of all present things; we have entertainments that ever may divert our minds, and fill our hearts with comfort; but we have also an assurance of competent supplies of temporal goods; for, *Godliness is profitable to all things, having the promise both of the present life, and of that which is to come*: and, *If we seek first the Kingdom of heaven, and its righteousness, all these things shall be added unto us.* It is indeed strangely unhandsome for a Christian ever to droop, or to be disconsolate; for a friend of God, and an heir of heaven to think he wants any thing, or fear that he shall ever want; for him, whose treasure and heart are above, to be so concerned with any thing here, as deeply to resent it. 1 Tim. 4. 8. Matt. 6. 33.

Again, if we reflect upon our selves as rational men, How for shame can we be discontent? Do we not therein much disparage that excellent perfection of our nature? Is it not the proper work of reason to prevent things hurtful or offensive to us, when that may be done; to remove them, if they are removeable; if neither of these can be compassed, to allay and mitigate them; so that we may be able well to support them? Is it not its principal use to drive away those fond conceits, and to quell those troublesome passions, which create, or foment disquiet, and displeasure to us? If it cannot do this, What doth it signifie? To what purpose have we it? Is not our condition really worse than that of brute beasts, if reason serveth only to discry the causes of trouble, but cannot enable to bear it? All the reasons we have produced, and all that we shall produce against discontent, will, if we are reasonable men, and reason availeth any thing, have this effect upon us.

Wherefore considering our selves, our capacities, our relations, our actions, it is most reasonable to be content with our condition, and with whatever doth befal us.

SERM.

SERMON VII.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatever State, &c.

III. FArther, if we consider, our condition (be it what it will, how poor, how mean, how despicable and forlorn soever) we can have from it no reasonable ground of discontent.

1. Our condition in this World cannot (if rightly estimated, and well managed) be extremely bad, or sorrowful; nothing here can occur insupportable, or very grievous in it self; we cannot, if we please, want any thing considerable, and the defect whereof may not be supplied, or supported by far better enjoyments. If we have high opinions of some things, as very excellent, or very needful for us, it's no wonder if we do want them, that our condition is unpleasant to us; if we take other things for huge evils, then, if they be incumbent on us, we can hardly scape being displeased; but if we thoroughly look through such things, and scan them exactly, valuing them, not according to fallacious impressions of sense, or illusive dreamings of fancy, but according to sound dictates of reason, we may find, that neither absence of the former, nor the presence of the latter doth make our condition much worse, or render our case deplorable.

Tert. *de Pat.* 7.

We are, for instance, poor: that condition rightly weighed, is not so very sad: for what is poverty? what but the absence of a few superfluous things, which please wanton fancy rather than answer need; without which nature is easily satisfied, and which if we do not affect, we cannot want? what is it but to wear coarse clothes, to feed on plain and simple fare, to work and take some pains, to sit or go in a lower place, to have no heaps of cash, or hoards of grain, to keep no retinue, to have few friends, and not one flatterer? and what great harm in this? It is a state, which hath its no small conveniences and comforts, its happy fruits and consequences; which freeth us from many cares and distractions, from many troubles and crosses, from many encumbrances, many dangers, many temptations, many sore distempers of body and soul, many grievous mischiefs, to which Wealth is exposed; which maintaineth health, industry and sobriety; disposeth us to feed heartily, to move nimbly, to sleep sweetly; which preserveth us from luxury, from satiety; from sloth and unwieldiness. It yeildeth disposition of mind, freedom and leisure to attend the study of truth, the acquist of vertue. It is a state, which many

Τὰ δ' ἀργυρώματ' ὄζειν ἢ τε πορφύρα Εἰς τὰς τραγῳδίας χρήσιμ' ἢ εἰς τὸ βίον. Socrat.

Vid. Plut. *in* Arist.

Si vis vacare animo, aut pauper sis oportet, aut pauperi similis.

Multis ad Philosophandum obstitere divitiæ; paupertas expedita est, secura est. Sen. *Ep.* 17.

Sæpius pauper, & fidelius ridet. Sen. *Ep.* 80.

many have born with great chearfulneſs; many (very wiſe men) have voluntarily embraced; which is allotted by divine Wiſdom to moſt men; and which the beſt men often do endure; to which God hath declared an eſpecial regard, which the mouth of truth hath proclaimed happy; which the Son of God hath dignified by his choice, and ſanctified by his partaking deeply thereof; and can ſuch a condition be very loathſome; can it reaſonably diſpleaſe us? Pſal. 10. 14. 35. 10. 68. 10. 69. 33. 72. 4. 13. 140. 12. 146. 7. 147. 2. Luk. 6. 20. Jam. 2. 5. Iſa. 66. 2.

Again, thou art ſuppoſe fallen into diſgrace, or from honour and credit art depreſſed into a ſtate of contempt and infamy? this alſo rightly prized is no ſuch wretchedneſs; for what doth this import? what, but a change of opinion in giddy men, which thou doſt not feel, which thou art not concerned in, if thou pleaſeſt; which thou never hadſt reaſon much to regard, or at all to rely upon? what is thy loſs therein? it is the breaking of a bubble, the ſinking of a Wave, the changing of a Wind, the cracking of a thing moſt brittle, the ſlipping away of a thing moſt fugacious and ſlippery; What is honour and fame, but thought, and what more flitting, what ſooner gone away than a thought? and why art thou diſpleaſed at the loſs of a thing ſo very ſlender and ſlimme? if thou didſt know its nature, thou canſt not be diſappointed; if thou didſt not, it was worth thy while to be thus informed by experience, that thou maieſt not any more regard it. Is the contempt, thou haſt incurred, from thy fault? bear the conſequence thereof patiently, and do thy beſt by removing the cauſe to reverſe the effect: is it undeſerved and cauſeleſs? be ſatisfied in thy innocence, and be glad that thou art above the folly and injuſtice of thoſe, who contemn thee. Let thy affections rather be employed in pity of theirs, than in diſpleaſure for thy own caſe. Did (let me ask thee again) the good opinion of men pleaſe thee? that pleaſure was fond and vain, and it is well thou art rid of it? did it not much affect thee, why then doſt thou much grieve at the loſs thereof? Is not alſo thy fortune in this kind the ſame with that of the beſt men? have not thoſe who have deſerved moſt honour, been expoſed to moſt contempt? *But now* (*Job* could ſay) *they that are younger than I have me in deriſion,* Job 30. 1, 10. —— *they abhor me, they flee far from me, and ſpare not to ſpit in my face.* And, *I am,* (could that great and good *King* ſay) *a worm, and no man; a* Pſal. 22. 6, 7. *reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people; All they that ſee me, laugh me to ſcorn; they ſhoot out the lip, they ſhake the head,* —and, we are *defamed,* we are *reviled, we are made as the filth of the world, and the off-ſcouring of all* 1 Cor. 4. 12, *things unto this day,* could the holy *Apoſtles* ſay; and *He is deſpiſed and re-* 13. *iected of men, —he was deſpiſed and we eſteemed him not,* was ſaid of our Iſa. 53. 3. Lord himſelf; and can this condition then in juſt eſteem be ſo very pitiful or grievous?

But thou art perhaps troubled becauſe thou art wrongfully cenſured, odiouſly traduced and defamed, abuſed by ſlander, or by detraction; which aſperſeth thee with things whereof thou art no-wiſe guilty, or repreſenteth thee in a character unworthy of thee: Be it ſo; what then; why doth this ſo much affect thee?

Exempl. Jeremiæ. Chryſoſt. *ad* Olymp. *16.*

Gratias ago Deo meo, quod dignus ſum quem mundus oderit. Hier. *Ep.* 39. (*ad* Aſellam.)

Is not every man ſubject to theſe things? are not the greateſt men, are not the wiſeſt men, are not the beſt men liable to the ſame? yea chiefly liable, excellency being the ſpecial mark of envy and obloquy? can any good men eſcape free of them among ſo many bad men, whoſe doings as goodneſs doth reproach, ſo it provoketh their malignity? Canſt thou imagine to paſs thy days in ſo unjuſt and ſpiteful a World without incurring ſuch bad uſage; can ſo many vain, ſo many bold, ſo many lawleſs, tongues

Ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν οὐ δίκαιον, ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ ἀδίκημαι. Theod. *Ep.* 80.

tongues be tied up, or kept within compaſs of truth, or equity? Wilt thou ſuffer it to be in the power of any man at his pleaſure ſo eaſily to diſcompoſe and vex thee? becauſe he will be bad, ſhalt thou be miſerable? why doſt thou not rather pleaſe thy ſelf in the conſcience of thy endeavouring to deſerve and do well; in thy innocence, and clearneſs from the blame which they impoſe on thee; in thy having given no cauſe of ſuch offence and outrage? why doſt thou not rather pity their unworthineſs and unhappineſs, who ſtoop to ſo mean and baſe practices, than fret at them, as bad to thee? they do themſelves far more miſchief, than they can do thee.

And why doſt thou not conſider, that indeed thou art guilty of many faults, and full of real imperfections, ſo that no man can eaſily derogate from thee more than thou deſerveſt: he may indeed tax thee unjuſtly, he may miſs in the particulars of his charge, he may diſcover groundleſs contempt, and ill-will toward thee; but thou knoweſt thy ſelf to be a grievous ſinner, and it is juſt that thou ſhouldſt be reproached, (God, for thy humiliation, or thy correction, may have ordered him, as *David* ſaid he might have ordered *Shimei, to curſe* thee) thou haſt therefore more need to be humble in reflection on thy ſelf, than to ſwell with diſdain in regard to his injury.

Thou ſhouldſt improve this dealing, and make it wholeſome to thee, by taking occaſion thence to correct thy real faults, and endeavouring to become truly more worthy; that ſo thy conſcience may be a firm bulwark againſt all detraction and obloquy: In fine, ſatisfie thy ſelf by *committing thy ſoul with patience in well-doing* unto thy Judge, who aſſuredly will do thee right, will protect thy reputation, and clear thy innocence: his judgment is onely worth regarding, be little concerned with any other.

Theodor. *Ep.* 83.

Again, Being diſappointed and croſſed in the ſucceſs of their projects, or undertakings, is wont to put men, as they conceive, into a woful caſe: but why ſo? why (let me ask thee, who art diſcontented upon this ſcore) didſt thou build much expectation upon uncertainties? didſt thou not foreſee a poſſibility, that thy deſign might miſcarry, and if ſo, why art thou not prepared to receive vvhat happeneth? vvas it not an adventure, vvhy then art thou troubled with thy chance? Is he not a ſilly gameſter, that will fret and fume at a bad caſt, or at the loſs of a game? didſt thou refer the buſineſs to God's diſpoſal and arbitrement? if not, thou deſervedſt to be croſſed, and rather confeſs thy fault, than complain of thy fortune; if thou didſt ſo, then be conſiſtent with thy ſelf, and acquieſce in his determination: In fine, what is thy loſs, is't of thy care and pain? would it have been much better, that thou hadſt been careleſs or idle? but haſt thou not in lieu of them got ſome Wiſdom and Experience? haſt thou not (if thy attempt was reaſonable and worthy) exerciſed thy Wit, thy courage, thy induſtry? haſt thou not (by thy defeat) got an opportunity to expreſs equanimity and patience? if thou ſo improveſt thy diſappointment, thou art a gainer by thy loſs, thou *doſt more than conquer* by thy defeat: however ſince the gain, the credit, the preferment thou didſt aim at, and haſt miſſed, are things in themſelves of no great value, and ſuch as thou maieſt well live without, as other good men have done, thou canſt not have much reaſon to be diſpleaſed upon this accompt, or to reckon thy condition diſaſtrous.

But friends, will ſome ſay, have been unkind, have been ungrateful, have been fickle and falſe, have neglected, have deſerted, have betrayed me; *It was not an enemy, that reproached me, then I could have born it*, &c. this is indeed commonly moſt grievous; yet being ſcanned will not render

Pſal. 55. 7.

a man's

nan's condition so lamentable: for, such misbehaviour of friends is re their calamity than ours: the loss of bad friends is no damage, but advantage; 'tis but the loss of a mischief, and a trouble: the fewer come to have of such, the more time we save, the less trouble we et with, the greater security we enjoy. The kindness we have shew- the obligations we have put on such, are not quite lost, they will ng the rewards due to humanity and fidelity; it will yeild satisfaction us, that however we have been kind and faithful to them. The fide- of remaining true friends may satisfie us; however if all other friend- p should fail, there is one remains, worth millions of other friends, o can never prove unfaithful, or inconstant, who never will be un- ndful of us, or deficient in kindness toward us.

Jam sibi pœnas dedit qui peccavit. Sen. *de Ir.* 2. 30.

The death of friends doth it may be oppress thee with sorrow. But canst thou lose thy best friend; canst thou lose the presence, the nversation, the protection, the advice, the succour of d? is he not immortal, is he not immutable, is he t inseparable from thee? canst thou be destitute of ends, whilst he stands by thee? Is it not an affront, an nous indignity to him, to behave thy self, as if thy ppiness, thy welfare, thy comfort had dependance on y other but him? is it not a great fault to be unwilling to part with any ng, when he calleth for it?

Vid. Sen. *Ep.* 63.

Οὐ γὰρ ἀπέθανεν ὁ πάντα ἄριστα ἐκείνῳ ἀνὴρ χρὴ τὴν τοῦ Κυρίου φωνὴν, ἀλλὰ καθεύδει ὑπνον τὸν συνήθη μακρότερον. Theod. *Ep.* 68.

Ἀποδημίαν τοίνυν παρεκάλεσε μακρὰν τὴν τελευτήν. *&c.* Theod. *Ep.* 16.

Vid. Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 202.

Neither is it a loss of thy friend, but a separation for a small time; he onely parted from thee as taking a little journey, or ing for a small time to repose; within a while we ll be sure to meet again, and joyfully to congratu- e, if we are fit, in a better place, and more happy te; *præmisimus, non amisimus*; we have sent him thi- r before, not quite lost him from us.

Cur doles si periisse non credis? cur impatienter feras subductum interim quem credis reversurum? profectio est quam putas mortem. Tert. *de Pat.* 9. Sen. *Ep.* 63.

Thy friend, if he be a good man (and in such friend- ps onely we can have true satisfaction) is himself in bad condition, and doth not want thee; thou canst t therefore reasonably grieve for him; and to grieve ely for thy self is perverse selfishness and fondness.

Impatientia in ejusmodi & spei nostræ male ominatur, & fidem prævaricatur, &c. Tert. *ibid.*

Πῶς τὸ τὰ ἀγάπης ἀγαθὸν, ἑαυτῷ τὰ ἥδιω διδόντα τῷ πλησίον ἀνιέμειν τὰ φιλτατα; Naz. *Or.* 19.

But thou hast lost a great comfort of thy life, and advantage to thy af- rs here? is it truly so? is it indeed an irreparable loss, even secluding e consideration of God, whose friendship repaireth all possible loss? hat is it, I pray, that was pleasant, convenient, or useful to thee in y friend, which may not in good measure be supplied here? was it a nse of hearty good-will, was it a sweet freedom of conversation, was ound advice or kind assistance in thy affairs? and mayst thou not find ose left, which are alike able, and willing to minister those benefits? ay not the same means, which knit him to thee, conciliate others also to thy friends? he did not alone surely possess all the good nature, all e fidelity, all the Wisdom in the World, nor hath carried them all a- ay with him? other friends therefore thou mayst find to supply his om: all good men will be ready, if thou art good, to be thy friends, ey will heartily love thee; they will be ready to chear thee with their eet and wholesome society, to yield thee their best counsel and help up- any occasion: Is it not therefore a fond and unaccountable affection to kind of personality, rather than want of a real convenience that distur- th thee?

Vid. Sen. *Ep.* 63.

In fine, the same reasons, which in any other loss may comfort us, ould do it also in this: neither a friend nor any other good thing we

can enjoy is under any ſecurity of not ſoon loſing it; our welfare is not annexed to one man no more than to any other inferiour thing; this is the condition of all good things here to be tranſient and ſeparable from us; and accordingly we ſhould be affected toward them.

Fragile fractum eſt, mortale mortuum eſt.

But farther, it perhaps diſpleaſeth us, that the courſe of the World doeth not go right, or according to our mind; that Juſtice is not well diſpenſed, that vertue is under hatches, that worth is not conſidered, that Induſtry is not rewarded, that innocence and modeſty are trampled upon; that favour, partiality, corruption, flattery, craft, impudence do carry all before them; devouring all the encouragement due to honeſt induſtry: This may be obſerved, but why ſhould it diſpleaſe? art thou guilty of contributing to this? then mend, if not, then bear; eſpecially ſeeing thou canſt not help it; for ſo it hath always been, and ever will be in the World, that things never have gone there as the wiſeſt judge, or the beſt men deſire: there have never been good men enough to ſway the World, nor will the few good men that are, be ſo active in promoting publick good, as bad are in driving on their private deſigns; doth not this courſe of things neceſſarily ſpring from the nature of men, which therefore we ſhould no more be vexed at, than for that a Serpent hath poiſon, or that a Waſp hath a ſting? we cannot wonder at it, why then ſhould we be ſtrangely affected by it? could any man ever have been pleaſed, if this were a ſufficient cauſe of diſpleaſure? However the World goes, we may yet make a tolerable ſhift, God is engaged competently to provide for us; that ſhould ſatisfie us. God obſerveth theſe things no leſs than we, and he can eaſily hinder them, yet he thinketh good to ſuffer them: and ſhall not we do ſo likewiſe? there is in fine appointed a judgment hereafter, when all theſe things ſhall be redreſſed and ſet ſtreight; when juſtice and vertue ſhall triumph, when integrity and induſtry ſhall find their due recompence, 'tis but a moment to that time, and till then we may reſt ſatisfied.

Thus if we do ſurvey and rightly ſtate things, which cauſe diſcontent and ſeem to render our condition hard and ſad, we ſhall find, that not from the things, but from our ſelves all the miſchief proceeds: We by our imagination give to the lighteſt things a Weight, and ſwell the ſmalleſt things into a vaſt bulk; we fancy them very frightful and doleful, then we tremble and grieve at them. Mere names (the names of poverty, of diſgrace, of defeat) do ſcare us, without conſulting reaſon and conſidering how little terrible the things are themſelves. We follow ſilly prejudices, judging that highly good, which the vulgar admire that very evil, which the weakeſt ſort of men are wont to complain of: hence ſo commonly doth our caſe ſeem grievous. But in truth there is no condition ſo bad, but if we manage it well and wiſely, if we bend our mind to comply with it, if we moderate our paſſions about the accidents thereof, if we vigilantly embrace and enjoy the advantages thereof, may not be eaſily ſupportable, yea prove very comfortable to us; it is our fond conceits, our froward humours, our perverſe behaviours, which do create the trouble, which ſeemeth adherent to any condition, and embitter every ſtate; which from any ſlight occaſion doth create vexation, and turneth every event into diſaſter.

2. As there is no condition here perfectly and purely good (not defi-

—uſque adeo nulla eſt, ſincera voluptas,
Solicitique aliquid lætis intervenit——
Ovid

ent in ſome conveniences, not blended with ſome troubles) ſo there is none ſo throughly bad, that it hath not ſomewhat convenient and comfortable therein; ſelde-

or never all good things do forsake a man at once, or all mischiefs together assail him; somewhat usually abideth, which well improved, or wisely enjoyed, may satisfie a man, yea, render his estate comparable to theirs, who to vulgar eyes appear to be in the best condition: there is in every condition somewhat of good compensating for its evils, and reducing it to a balance with other more plausible states. We are, suppose again, in poverty, (that instance I propound usually, as the most ordinary ground of discontent) but have we therewith good health? then most rich men may envy us, and reasonably we should not exchange our state with many crazy Princes: have we therewith our liberty? that is an inestimable good which often-times the greatest men have wanted, and would have purchased with heaps of gold: have we therein a quiet mind, and a free use of our time? It is that, which wisest men have prized above any Wealth, and which the chief men of the World would be glad to taste of: have we a clear reputation? we have then the best good that any Wealth can yeild, we have more than many can obtain in the most splendid fortune: have we any friends sticking to us? that is more than the richest persons can assure themselves of, to whom it is near impossible to distinguish the friends of their persons from the flatterers of their fortune; it is a privilege and solace, which Princes are hardly capable to arrive at: have we a bare competency, sufficient to maintain our life? we thereby keep our appetites in better compass, and our faculties in greater vigour; we thence better relish all things; we in consequence thereof avoid the burthens, the diseases, the vices of sloth and luxury: have we farther (as if we are not very bad, we shall in this case assuredly have, humanity disposing all men thereto) the compassion of men; is not this somewhat better, than that envy, that ill-will, that obloquy, which usually do attend Wealth and Prosperity? why then, if our poor estate hath so manifold conveniencies, do we so much distast it? why do we so dwell and pore on the small inconveniencies we feel under it, over-looking or slighting the benefits we may enjoy thereby? This indeed ordinarily is our folly and infirmity; that the want of any little thing, which we fancy or affect, doth hinder us, from satisfaction in all other things; *One dead fly* causeth all our *ointment to stink*; the possession of a Kingdom will not keep us from being *heavy and displeased* (as *Ahab* was) if we cannot acquire a small vineyard near us; on that one thing our head runs continually, our heart is wholly set, we can think on, we can taste nothing else; the want of that notwithstanding all our affluence doth pinch us, our dainties thence doth prove insipid, our splendours appear dim, every thing but that is a toy unto us: So capriciously, and unaccomptably prone are we to discontent.

Assuescendum conditioni suæ; & quam minimum de illa querendum, & quicquid habet circa se commodi apprehendendum est: nihil tam acerbum est, ex quo non æquus animus solatium inveniat. Sen. *de Tranq. an. cap.* 10.

Prov. 27. 7.

Eccles. 10. 1.

1 Kings 21. 1.

3. Is our condition (let me ask again) so extreamly bad, that it cannot be much worse? Are we sunk to the bottom of all calamity? No surely; God's Providence will not suffer, the state of things here can never admit that to be: here are succours always ready against extremities; our own Wit and Industry, the help of relations or friends, the natural pity and charity of our neighbours will preserve us from them; especially persons in any measure innocent can never come near them; there will therefore never fail some good matter of content in what remains; a few good things, well improved, may greatly solace us; but however, let us imagine our case to be the worst that can be; that a confluence of all temporal mischiefs and wants hath arrived, that we are utterly bereaved of all the comforts this World afforded; that we are stripped of all our

Wealth, quite sunk in our reputation, deserted of every friend, deprived of our health and our liberty; that all the losses, all the disgraces, all the pains which poor *Job* sustained, or far more and greater than those, have together seised on us; yet we cannot have sufficient reason to be discontent; for that nevertheless we have goods left to us in our hands, or within our reach, far surpassing all those goods we have lost, much outweighing the evils we do undergo: When the World hath done its worst, we remain Masters of things incomparably better than it, and all it containeth; the possession whereof may, and (if we be wise) will abundantly satisfie us. We are men still, and have our reason left behind, which alone, in worth, exceedeth all the treasures of the World; in well using which, and thereby ordering all things for the best, we become more worthy, and more happy than the most fortunate fool on earth; we may therein find more true satisfaction, than any Wealth, or any Glory here can minister: We may have a good Conscience left, (the sense of having lived well heretofore, or at least a serious resolution to live well hereafter) and that is a *continual feast*, yielding a far more solid and savoury pleasure, than the most ample revenue can afford: We may have hope in God (the authour and donour of all good things) and thereby far greater assurance of our convenient subsistence and welfare, than all present possessions can bestow; we have reserved a free access to the Throne of Grace, and thereby a sure means (grounded on God's infallible word and promise) of obtaining whatever is good for us; we have a firm right to innumerable spiritual blessings and priviledges, each of them justly valuable beyond whole Worlds of pelf; we can, in a word (we can if we please) enjoy God's favour, which immensly transcendeth all other enjoyments, which vastly more than countervaileth the absence of all other things; of this, by applying our selves to the love and service of God, we are infallibly capable; of this no worldly force or fortune can dispoil us; we having this, our condition cannot be poor, contemptible or pitiful; 'tis indeed thereby most rich, glorious and happy: For how can he be poor that hath the Lord of all things always ready to supply him; who hath *God* (as the *Psalmist* is wont to speak) to be *his portion for ever*? How can he be despicable, that hath the honour to have the Sovereign Majesty of the World for his especial friend? How can he be miserable who enjoyeth the fountain of all happiness, who hath *the light of God's countenance* to cheer him, who hath the consolations of God's holy Spirit to refresh and revive him? What can he want, who, beside his present interest in all the needful effects of God's bountiful love, is an Heir of Heaven and everlasting bliss? Seeing therefore it is in our power to be religious, seeing we may, if we will (God's Grace concurring, which preventeth us to seek, which never is withheld from those who seek it) be good Christians; seeing nothing can hinder us from fearing God, or can *separate us from his love*, neither can any thing render our condition bad or unhappy, really distressed or needy: *O fear the Lord* (saith the *Psalmist*) *for there is no want to them that seek him*: *The young Lions* (or the rich, as the LXX. render it) *do lack and suffer hunger*; *but they that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing*; and, *Whoso keepeth the commandment, shall feel no evil thing*, saith the *Wiseman*; and, *The hand of our God is upon all them that seek him*, saith the *Prophet*; and, *Who is he that shall harm you*; (or do ill to you, or make you worse) *if ye be followers of that which is good?* saith St. *Peter*; and, *We know* (saith St. *Paul*) *that to them who love God all things cooperate for good*; and, *Godliness* (saith he again) *with contentedness is great gain*; that is, supposing we have the goods which piety ministreth,

Job, who ἐκένωσεν ἀυτὸν (τῇ διαβόλῳ) βελοσήκλῳ ἐπισυν κατακεδυόμενον ἐν ἀυτῷ, &c. Chrys. *ad* Olymp. 2.

Prov. 15. 15.

Psal. 73. 26. 16. 5. 119. 57. 142. 5.

Rom. 8. 39.

Psal. 34. 9. Πλέσιοι ἐπτώχευσαν. LXX. Eccles. 8. 5. Ezra 8. 22. 1 Pet. 3. 13. Ὁ κακώσων.

Rom. 8. 28.

1 Tim. 6. 6.

ſtreth, although we have nothing more, we are, if we can be content, very well to paſs; it is abundantly ſufficient for us.

Why then, I pray, are we diſcontent? What do we groan or grieve for? what is it that we do want? is it the uſe of reaſon, is it vertue, is it God's favour? then indeed we have good cauſe to be diſpleaſed; for the want of thoſe things is indeed lamentable; but if we do want them, it is onely our ſelves that we ſhould complain of; for we may have them if we will, and who can help it if we will not? Who, if we ſhall wilfully deprive our ſelves of them, will be concerned to mind our complaints? But is it onely a lump of traſh, or a puff of honour, or a flaſh of pleaſure, that we do need? Is it that we cannot ſo delicately glut our bellies, or ſo finely cloath our backs, or ſo throughly ſooth our fancies, as we could wiſh, that we ſo pitifully moan? Is it being reſtrained in ſome reſpects from the ſwinge of our humour, is it that we are not ſo much regarded, or are ſlighted by ſome perſons, is it that we are croſſed in ſome deſign, that ſo diſcompoſeth and diſcourageth us? then are we ſottiſhly fond and childiſh in our conceits, and our affections: for proper it is to children, when as they want no ſolid or ſubſtantial goods, to wail for worthleſs toies and trinkets; 'tis for children, when they have not their will in petty and impertinent matters, to cry and lament; children are much affected with every Word, or little ſhew that croſſeth them: If we were (as St. *Paul* chargeth us to be) *perfect men*, if we had manly judgments, and manly affections toward things, we ſhould not ſo regard or value any of theſe temporal and tranſitory things, either good or evil, as by the want of one ſort, or by the preſence of the other, to be much diſturbed; we ſhould, with St. *Paul*, ſtyle any preſent evil τὸ ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως, *a lightneſs of affliction*: We ſhould with him reckon, *that the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the glories which ſhall be revealed to us*: We ſhould with St. *Peter greatly rejoyce*, *though for a ſeaſon we are in heavineſs, through manifold trials*, or afflictions: We ſhould eſteem any condition here very tolerable, yea very good. 1 Cor. 14. 20. 2 Cor. 4. 17. Rom. 8. 18. 1 Pet. 1. 6.

4. In truth (if we will not mince the matter, and can bear a truth ſounding like a Paradox) uſually our condition is then better, when it ſeemeth worſe; then we have moſt cauſe to be glad when we are apteſt to grieve; then we ſhould be thankful, when we do complain; that it appeareth otherwiſe to us, it is becauſe in our taxations of things we do ordinarily judge (or rather not judge, but fancy, not hearing or regarding any dictate of reaſon) like beaſts; prizing things merely according to preſent ſenſe, or ſhew, not examining their intrinſick natures, or looking forward into their proper fruits and conſequences.

Adverſity (or a ſtate, wherein we are not furniſhed with all accommodations grateful to ſenſe or fancy; or wherein ſomewhat doth cleave to us offenſive to thoſe inferiour powers of ſoul) is the thing which we chiefly loath and abominate; whereas, in true judgment, nothing commonly is more neceſſary, more wholſome, more uſeful and beneficial to us; nothing is more needful, or conducible to the health of our ſoul, and to our real happineſs, than it: It is the School of Wiſdom, wherein our minds are diſciplined and improved in the knowledge of the beſt things, whence it is termed παιδεία, that is, inſtructive chaſtiſement; * ſo *David* found *It is*, ſaid he, *good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn thy ſtatutes*; and, our *Lord* himſelf, ἔμαθεν ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθε, *He learned obedience from what he ſuffered*. It is the *Academy* wherein vertue is acquired and exerciſed;

——*multoque in rebus acerbis*
Acrius advertunt animos ad religionem. Lucret. 3. p. 64.

Καὶ γὰρ τύφον θεισπάζει τῷ ῥᾳδυμίαν ἐκκόπτει πᾶσαν ἡ θλῖψις, καὶ φεύγει τὸν μὲν ἀλείφει καὶ κάλυπτει δὲ τὸν δριμύτερον φερόμενον τῷ ὀπίσω, καὶ πολλῶν εἰσάγει τῷ φιλοσοφίαν, &c. Chry. *in* 2 Cor. *Orat.* 26.

* Pſal. 119. 71. 1 Cor. 11. 32. Κεννόμωροι τὸν κύριν παιδευόμεθα. Heb. 5. 8.

Miraris tu, si Deus, ille bonorum amantissimus qui illos quam optimos esse atque excellentissimos vult, fortunam illis cum qua exerceantur affignat? Sen. de Prov. 2.

exercised; so God meant it to his people; *The Lord thy God* (saith *Moses*) *led thee this forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble thee, and prove thee.* So the *Wiseman* saith, that *by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better*; and, *that stripes do cleanse the inward parts of the belly.* And, *It yieldeth* (saith the *Apostle*) *the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby.*

Deut. 8. 2.

Eccles. 7. 3. Prov. 20. 30. Heb. 12. 11. Jam. 1. 3. Rom. 5. 3.

Job 23. 10. (Psal. 66. 10.) Eccles. 2. 5. Sap. 3. 5. (Isa. 1. 25. 48. 10. Mal. 3. 23. Dan. 11. 35.)

* Hence πειρασμὸς (trial) is the usual word signifying it. 1 Pet. 1. 6, &c.

It is the furnace of the Soul wherein it is tryed, cleansed and refined from the dross of vain conceits, of perverse humours, of vitious distempers: *When* (saith *Job*) *he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold*: and, *Gold* (saith the *Wise-man*) *is tried in the fire, and acceptable men in the furnace of* * *adversity.*

It is the method whereby God reclaimeth sturdy sinners to goodness, engageth them to seek and serve himself; so of the *Israelites*, the *Prophet* saith, *Lord in trouble have they visited thee, they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them*; so *Manasses*, *when he was in affliction he besought the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his Fathers*; so *Nebuchadnezzar*, after being driven from his Kingdom, *his understanding returned unto him, and he blessed the most high, and praised and honoured him that liveth for ever.* So *David* himself, *Before*, said he, *I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word.*

Isa. 26. 16. 29. 19. Hos. 5. 15. Psal. 78. 34. 107. 4. &c. 84. 16. 2 Chron. 2. 3, 12. Dan. 3. 34. Psal. 119. 67.

It is that whereby God doth prepare men, and doth entitle them to the blessed rewards hereafter: *Our light affliction* (saith * St. *Paul*) *which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*; and, *Ye* (saith St. *Peter*) *greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations, that the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, may be found unto praise, and honour, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ.* Such is the nature, such the use, such the fruits of adversity.

Ἡ γὰρ πόνων ὑπόταστις μισθῶν ὑπόστασις ὅτι καὶ ἔφεισμα ἀσφαλὲς ἐκ τοῦ μὴ ἐλάττονας ἐκπεσεῖν καὶ γὰ πύθον καταστέλλει καὶ ῥαδυμίαν ἀποτρέφει καὶ φρονιμωτέρους ποιεῖ καὶ διαβεβαίους ἐργάζεται, &c. Chryst. tom. 6. Or. 9.

* 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Heb. 10. 36. ὑπομονῆς ἔχετε χρείαν, &c.

1 Pet. 1. 6. 4. 14.

Nihil infelicius eo, cui nihil unquam evenit adversi, non licuit enim illi se experiri. Sen. de Provid. 3.

Non fert ullum illum illesa felicitas. Ibid.

It is indeed scarce possible, that without tasting it somewhat deeply, any man should become in good measure either wise or good. He must be very ignorant of himself (of his own temper and inclinations of the strength and forces of his reason) who hath not met with some rubs and crosses to try himself and them with: the greater part of things he must little understand, who hath not experienced the worst part: he cannot skill to weild and govern his passions, who never had them stirred up, and tossed about by cross accidents: he can be no good Pilot in matters of humane life, who hath not for some time sailed in a rough Sea, in foul Weather, among sands and shelves: he could have no good opportunity of employing throughly, or improving his Wit, his courage, his industry, who hath had no straits to extricate himself from, no difficulties to surmount, no hardships to sustain: The vertues of humility, of patience, of contentedness necessarily must be unknown to him, to whom no disgraces, no wants, no sore pains have arrived, by which enduring which, those vertues are learnt, and planted in the Soul: Scarce can he become very charitable, or compassionate to others, who never himself hath felt the smart of affliction, or inconveniences of any distress

Quæ latet, inque bonis cessat non cognita rebus,
Apparet virtus, arguiturque malis.
Ovid. Trist. 4. 3.

Non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco. Æn. 2.

for ever, as the *Apostle* teacheth us, our Saviour himself was obliged *to suffer tribulation*, that he thence might become *merciful*, and *disposed to succour the afflicted*. (No wonder, if he *that liveth in* continual *prosperity*, be a *Nabal*, churlish and discourteous, insensible of other mens grievances:) And how can he express much piety or love to God, who is not (in submission to God's Will, and for his sake) put to suffer any thing grievous, or want any thing desirable? When can he employ any great faith or hope in God, who never hath any visible need of succour, or relief from him, who hath other present aids to confide in? Hovv can he purely delight in God, and place his sole felicity in him? Hovv can he throughly relish spiritual things, vvhose affections are taken up by an affluence of other goods, whose appetites are glutted with enjoyment of other delights? What but deprivation of these things can lay open the vanity, the deceitfulness and slipperiness of them? What but crosses and disappointments here can withdraw our minds from a fond admiration, and eager affection towards this World? What but the want of these joys and satisfactions, can drive us to seek our felicity otherwhere? when *the deccit of riches* possesseth us, How can we judge right of things? when cares about them distract us, How can we think about any thing that is good? when their snares entangle us, and their clogs encumber us, How can we be free and expedite in doing good? when abundance fatneth our hearts, and ease softneth our spirits, and success puffeth up our minds; when pride, sensuality, stupidity and sloth (the most inseparable adherents to large and prosperous Estates) do continually insinuate themselves into us, What Wisdom, what Vertue are we like to have?

Heb. 2. 17, 18. 4. 15, 16. 1 Sam. 25. 6. 3.

Cum molestiæ in hujus vitæ fragilitate crebrescunt, æternam requiem nos desiderare compellunt. Mundus quippe iste periculosior est blandus, quam molestus, & magis cavendus quum se illicit diligi, quam cum admonet, cogitque contemni. Aug. *Ep.* 144.

Ardua nam res est opibus non tradere mores. Mart.

Munera ista fortunæ putatis? insidiæ sunt. Sen. *Ep.* 8.

Viscata beneficia. Ib.

Matt. 13. 22. 1 Tim. 6. 9. Luc. 10. 41. Deut. 32. 15. Prov. 1. 32. 30. 9. Hos. 13. 6. Psal. 30. 6. Jer. 22. 21. Amos 6. 1, &c.

Seeing then adversity is so wholesom and useful, the remedy of so great mischiefs, the cause of so great benefits to us, Why should we be displeased therewith? to be displeased with it, is to be displeased with that which is most needful, or most convenient for us, to be displeased with the health and welfare of our Souls; that we are rescued from errours and vices, with all their black trains of miseries and wickedness; to be displeased that we are not detained under the reign of folly and mischief, that we are not inevitably made fools and beasts. To be disgusted with providence for affliction or poverty, is no other than as if we should be angry with our Physician for administring a purge, or for prescribing abstinence to us; as if we should fret at our Chirurgeon for searching our Wounds, or applying needful corrosives; as if we should complain of the hand which draweth us from a precipice, or *pulleth us out of the fire*. *Many benefits* (saith *Seneca*) *have a sad and rough countenance, as to burn and cut in order to healing* Such a benefit of God is adversity to us; and as such with a gladsome and thankful mind should we receive it.

Gratulari & gaudere nos decet dignatione divinæ castigationis— O servum illum beatum, cujus emendationi Dominus instat; cui dignatur irasci, quem admonendi dissimulatione non decipit. Tert. *de Pat.* 11.

Ὁ ἁμαρτάνων κἂν μὴ κολάζηται, πάντων ἐστὶν ἀθλιώτερος, &c. Chrys. ὠνδς.

Ἡ νοσούντων ἰατρεία, ἢ ὑμαινόντων γυμνασία. Simpl.

Κρειττὸν δὴ μετεώρως ἀχαλινώτως νόσου φιλόσοφος. Naz. *Ep.* 66.

Jude 23.

Beneficia multa tristem & asperam frontem habent, quemadmodum urere, & secare, ut sanes. Sen. *de Benef.* 5. 20.

If with a diligent observation we consult experience, we shall find, that as many have great cause to bewail, that they have been rich, that they have been blinded and corrupted with prosperity, that they have *received their consolation here*; so many have great reason to be glad, that they have been poor, that they have been

Horrorem operis fructus excusat. Tert. *Scorp.* 5.

Luke 6. 24. Jam. 5. 1. Amos 6. 1, &c.

Let our condition be what it will, we are the same. It doth not change us in our intrinsick worth, or state. It is but a garment about us, or as weather.

dis-

——Ego utrum
Nave ferar magna an parva, ferar
unus & idem. Hor. *Epist.* 2. 3.

disappointed, that they have tasted the bitter cup; it having instructed and corrected them; it having rendred them sober and considerate; industrious and frugal, mindful of God, and devout toward him: And what we may rejoice in, when past, Why should we not bear contentedly when present? Why should not the expectation of such good fruits satisfie us?

Why should not such a condition, being so plainly better in it self, seem also better unto us? We cannot, if we are reasonable, but approve it in our judgment; Why then are we not fully reconciled unto it in our affection?

SERMON VIII.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatever State, &c.

5. BUT farther; Let our state be, as to quality, what it will, good or bad, joyful or unpleasant, we may yet consider, that it cannot be desperate, it may not be lasting; for there is not any necessary connexion between the present and the future; wherefore, as the present being momentany and transient, can little trouble us, so the future being unknown, and uncertain, should not dismay us. As no man reasonably can be elevated with confidence in a good state, presuming on its duration, (*Boast not thy self of to morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*;) so no man should be dejected for a bad one, in suspicion that it will abide long; seeing neither (considering the frequent vicissitudes that occur, and the flux nature of all things here) is each of them in it self, stable; and the continuance of each absolutely dependeth on God's arbitrary disposal; and as God often doth overturn prosperity, to humane judgment most firmly grounded, so he most easily can redress the appearance to most forelorn adversity; and he, being especially *the helper of the helpless*, doth frequently perform it: As *he poureth contempt upon Princes, and weakeneth the strength of the mighty*; so *he raiseth the poor out of the dust, and lifteth the needy out of the dunghil: He casteth down the mighty from their seat, and exalteth the humble and meek: He sendeth the rich empty away, and filleth the hungry with good things. He maketh sore, and bindeth up, he woundeth, and his hands make whole.*

Prov. 27. 1.

Multa intervenient quibus vicinum periculum vel prope admotum aut subsistat aut desinat, aut in alienum caput transeat. Sen.

Psal. 72. 12. 107. 9. 10. 4. 106. 9. Job 12. 21. Psal. 107. 40. Isa. 25. 5. Job 5. 11. Isa. 2. 11. Psal. 18. 27.

Psal. 113. 7. 107. 41.

Job 5. 18. 1 Sam. 2. 7.

Considering therefore the reason of things, and the nature of God, if our state be at present bad or sorrowful, we have more reason to hope for its amendment than to fear its continuance. If indeed things wen

Τοῖς γοῦν ἔχουσι τὸ σωφρονεῖν λογισμῷ κεχρημένοις οὐδὲν ἧττον ἀνθρωπίνων ἀδυκήτων, οὐδὲν τῶν παρόντων φαυλότερον ἢ βέλτιον, &c. Theod. *Ep.* 14.

or

on in a fatal track, meerly according to a blind and heedless chance, or a stiff and unalterable necessity; if there were no remedy from God's providence, or support by his grace to be expected (although even then there would be no reason to grieve or complain; grief would be unreasonable because unprofitable, complaint would be vain, because fortune and fate are deaf) yet our infirmity might somewhat excuse that idle proceeding; but since *not a Sparrow falleth to the ground, not a hair of our head perisheth*; nothing at all passeth otherwise, than by the voluntary disposition of a most wise and gracious God; since he doth always strictly view, and is very sensible of our griefs; yea, doth in a manner sympathize with them (according to those pathetical expressions in the Prophets; *His bowels sound, and are troubled, his heart is turned within him*; *In all their afflictions he was afflicted.*) Since he farther hath by promise obliged himself to *care for us*, to support, and succour us; we have all reason to hope, yea firmly to believe (if at least we can find in our hearts to hope and to believe) that we shall, as soon as it is good and expedient for us, find relief and ease; we shall have that ἐυκαιρον βοήθειαν, that *seasonable succour*, of which the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh.

Sperat adversis, metuit secundis, Alteram sortem bene præparatum pectus. Hor. *Carm.* 2. 10.

Mat. 10. 29, 30. Luke 21. 18.

Hos. 11. 8. Jer. 31. 20. Isa. 63. 9, 15. Luc. 12. 29, 31. Heb. 13. 5. Matt. 6. 33. Phil. 4. 6. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Psal. 55. 23. 37. 5. Heb. 4. 6.

Hope lieth at the bottom of the worst condition that can be; *The poor* (saith *Job*'s friend) *hath hope*; and the rich can have no more; the future being equally close to both; the one can have no greater assurance to keep what he hath, than the other hath to get what he needeth; yea clearly the poor hath the advantage in the case; for God hath more declared, that he will relieve the poor man's want, than that he will preserve the rich man's store: If then we have in every condition a hope present to us, Why do we *grieve as those who have no hope*? having ever ready the best anchor that can be to rest upon (for in this rolling Sea of humane affairs, there is no firmer anchor than hope) Why do we let our minds be tossed with discontentful solicitudes and fears? Why do we not rather (as the *Apostle* injoineth) *rejoice in hope*, than grieve out of despair? Why do we not as the *Prophet* adviseth, *hope and wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord*? the effect of so reposing our selves for the future on God's Providence would be perfect content, and peace, according to that of the *Prophet*, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed in thee, because he trusteth in thee*: And that of the *wise Man*, *A patient man will bear for a time, and afterwards joy shall spring up unto him.*

Job 5. 16. 1 Thess. 4. 13. Heb. 6. 19. Rom. 12. 12. Lam. 3. 26. Isa. 26. 3. Eccl. 1. 23.

The truth is, and it seemeth very observable, in order to our purpose, that most discontent ariseth not from the sense of incumbent evil, but from suspicion, or fear of somewhat to come: Although God at present dispenseth a competency of food and rayment, although we are in a tolerable condition, and feel no extremity of want or pain, yet not descrying the way of a future provision for us, answerable to our desires, we do trouble our selves; which demeanour implyeth great ignorance and infidelity; We think God obliged in kindness, not only to bestow upon us what is needful in its season, but to furnish us with stores, and allow us securities; we must have somewhat in hand, or we cannot trust him for the future; this is that which our Saviour cautioneth against, as the root of discontent and sign of diffidence; *Take no thought for the morrow, for the morrow shall take thought for the things of it self, sufficient to the day is the evil thereof*: An advice no less pious, than manifestly full of Reason and Wisdom: For what a palpable folly is it to anticipate that evil which

Πολλῆς μικροψυχίας ἐστὶν ὑπὲρ ἃ ὑστερον συμβησομένων ἢ μηδ' ὅλως συμβησομένων τὰ ἀσύμφορα ἤδη κλαίειν καὶ κόπτεσθαι. Chrys. *ad Stagir.* 2.

Matt. 6. 34.

Calamitosus est animus futuri anxius, & ante miseriam miser.

Ne sis miser ante tempus; cum illa quæ imminentia expavisti, fortasse nunquam ventura sint, certe nondum venerint, &c. Sen. *Ep.* 13.

Quod juvat dolori suo occurrere? satis cito dolebis cum venerit. Ibid.

Quoties incerta erunt maria, tibi save. Ib.

we would avoid; then, when we earnestly desire to put off sorrow, to pull it toward us; to feel that mischief which possibly shall never be; to give it a being in our fancy, which it may never have in nature? Could we follow this advice, never resenting evils before they come, never prejudging about future events against God's Providence, and our own quiet; constantly depending on the divine care for us; not taking false alarms, and trembling at things, which shall never come near us; not being disturbed with panick fears, no discontent could ever seize upon us; for the present is ever supportable; our mind cannot be overwhelmed by the pangs of a transitory moment.

If we need farther encouragement for application of this remedy, we have manifold experiments to assure its vertue: as there are innumerable Promises, that none who hope in God shall be disappointed, so there are many illustrious examples of those, whom God hath in remarkable manner, and wonderful measure relieved from wants and distresses, raising them out of deepest poverty, contempt and worldly wretchedness, into most eminent degrees of Wealth and Prosperity: *Look* (saith the *Hebrew* Sage) *into the ancient generations, and see; Who hath trusted in the Lord, and hath been ashamed? Or who hath abiden in his fear, and hath been forsaken? Or who hath invoked him, and he did over-look? (or despise him?)* If we look into those generations, we may there find *Joseph* out of slavery, and out of prison, advanced to be the chief Governour of a most flourishing Kingdom; *Moses* from an exile, and a vagrant, made the Redeemer and Commander of a populous Nation: *Job* out of extream poverty and disgrace, restored to be in Wealth and honour *twice* greater than *the greatest men of the East*: *Daniel* out of captivity and persecution, become President of the greatest Monarchy on earth: *David* raised out of great meanness to highest dignity, restored out of extream straits into a most prosperous state; according to those Words of admiration and acknowledgment; *O what great troubles and adversities hast thou shewed me, and yet didst thou turn and refresh me, yea and broughtest me from the deep of the earth again: Thou hast brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every side*: Thus hath God eminently done with divers, thus we may be assured that he will do competently with us, if with the like faith and patience, we do, as they did, rely and wait upon him.

Lam. 3. 25. Isa. 30. 18. 40. 31. 49. 23. Psal. 25. 3. 37. 9. 9. 10. 2 Chron. 28. 9. Ezra 8. 22. Amos 5. 4. 2 Chron. 15. 2. Eccl. 2. 10.

Job 42. 10. 1. 3.

Psal. 71. 18. 69. 29. 18. 36.

6. But farther, imagine or suppose, that our condition (so irksome to us at present) will certainly hold on to the utmost; yet consider also, that it soon will cease, and change of it self; since we are mortal, our evils cannot be perpetual, we cannot long be infested with them.

As it may debase, and embitter all the prosperity in the World, to consider, that it is very fading and short-lived, that its splendour is but a blaze, its pleasure but a flash, its joy but as the *crackling of thorns*; so it should abate and sweeten any adversity, to remember, that it is passing away, and suddenly will be gone. Put, I say, the worst case that can be, that it were certainly determined, and we did as certainly know it that those things which cause our displeasure, should continue through our whole life; yet since our life it self will soon be spun out, and with it all our worldly evils will vanish, Why are we troubled? What is said of our selves must in consequence be truly applied to them; *They flee like a shadow, and continue not*; they are *winds passing and coming not again*; they are *vapours appearing for a little time, and then vanishing away*; they *wither like grass, and fade away as a leaf*; they may dye before us, they cannot out liv(

Eccl. 7. 6. (Psal. 27. 13.) *I had fainted, if I had not believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.*

1 Chron. 29. 15. Psal. 78. 39. Jam. 4. 14. Psal. 90. 5. Isa. 64. 6. 40. 6.

live us; our life is but a *hand breadth*; And can then our evils have any vaſt bulk? *Our age is as nothing*; And can any croſſes therein be then any great matter? How can any thing ſo very ſhort be very intolerable? It is but ὀλίγον ἀρτι λυπηθέντες, being (as St. *Peter* ſpeaketh) *a little while yet aggrieved*; it is but μικρὸν ὅσον ὄσον, *a ſmall quantity whatever it be of time*, as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* ſaith, that *we need patience*, it is but τὸ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως, *an affliction for a preſent moment*; and therefore as St. *Paul* intimateth, *light* and inconſiderable that we are to undergo. We have but a very narrow ſtrait of time to paſs over, but we ſhall land on the firm, and vaſt continent of eternity; when we ſhall be freed from all the troubleſome agitations, from all the perilous ſtorms, from all the nauſeous qualms of this navigation; death (which may be very near, which cannot be far off) is a ſure haven from all the tempeſts of life, a ſafe refuge from all the perſecutions of the World, an infallible medicine of all the diſeaſes of our mind, and of our ſtate: it will inlarge us from all reſtraints, it will diſcharge all our debts, it will eaſe us from all our toils, it will ſtifle all our cares, it will vail all our diſgraces: it will ſtill all our complaints, and bury all our diſquiets; it will wipe all tears from our eyes, and baniſh all ſorrow from our hearts: it perfectly will level all conditions, ſetting the high and low, the rich and poor, the wiſe and ignorant all together upon even ground; ſmothering all the pomp and glories, ſwallowing all the Wealth and Treaſures of the World.

Pſal. 39. 5. *Omnia brevia tolerabilia eſſe debent, etiamſi magna.* Cic. Iæl. 1 Pet. 1. 6. Heb. 10. 26, 27. 2 Cor. 4. 17.

Ἴσος χθὲς ἅπασι, πένησι τε καὶ βασιλεῦσι.
Πάντες ἴσοι νέκυες. Phocyl.

It is therefore but holding out a while, and all our moleſtation, of its own accord, will expire: time certainly will cure us; but it is better that we ſhould owe that benefit to reaſon, and let it preſently comfort us: It is better by rational conſideration, to work content in our ſelves, uſing the brevity and frailty of our life as an argument to ſuſtain us in our adverſity, than onely to find the end thereof as a natural and neceſſary means of evaſion from it.

Κρεῖσσον——
Ὁ μέλλεις παῦ χεῦνω χαιρίζεσθαι, σῶσον χαιρίζεσθαι τῷ λόγῳ. Plut. *ad* Apoll.

Serious reflection upon our mortality, is indeed, upon many accompts a powerful antidote againſt diſcontent; being apt to extirpate the moſt radical cauſes thereof.

Is it becauſe we much admire theſe worldly things, that we ſo much grieve for the want of them? this will quell that admiration; For how can we admire them if we conſider, how in regard to us they are ſo very tranſitory, and evanid? How can we deem them much worth the having, when we can for ſo little time enjoy them, muſt ſo very ſoon quite part from them?

How can we dote on the World, ſeeing *The World* (as St. *John* ſaith) *paſſeth away, and the deſire thereof?* 1 Joh. 2. 27. 1 Cor. 7. 31.

How can we value any Worldly glory, ſince *All the glory of men is* (as St. *Peter* telleth us) *as the flower of the graſs*; ſince, (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith) *Man in honour abideth not, but is like the beaſts that periſh?* Eccl. 1. 3, &c. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Pſal. 49. 12. 82. 6.

How can we *ſet our heart* on riches conſidering that *Riches are not for ever*, nor *can* (as the *wiſe Man* ſaith) *deliver from death*; that as St. *James* admoniſheth, *The rich man fadeth in his ways*; that it may be ſaid to any rich man, as it was to him in the *Goſpel*; *Thou fool, this night thy life ſhall be required of thee, and what thou haſt prepared to whom ſhall it fall?* Prov. 27. 24. 11. 4. Jam. 1. 11. Heb. 11. 25.

How can we fanſie pleaſure, ſeeing it is but σκίσκαμμα καὶ σκίλαυσις, a very *temporary fruition*; ſeeing however we do *eat*, or *drink*, or *play*, it followeth, the *morrow we ſhall dye.* 1 Cor. 15. 32.

How can we even admire any ſecular Wiſdom, and Knowledge, ſeeing

Pſal. 46. 4. ing that it is (as the *Pſalmiſt* telleth us) true of every man, that—— *his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts periſh*; particularly it is ſeen that *wiſe Men dye*, no otherwiſe then as *the fooliſh, and brutiſh perſon periſheth*; that, as *Solomon* with regret obſerved, *There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wiſdom in the grave whither we are going.*

Pſal. 49. 10. Eccleſ. 9. 10. 2. 14.

Do we admire the condition of thoſe, who, upon the ſtage, do appear in the ſtate of Kings, do act the part of wealthy men, do talk gravely and wiſely like Judges or Philoſophers for an hour or two? If we do not admire thoſe ſhadows and mockeries of ſtate, Why do we admire any appearances upon this Theatre of the World, which are ſcarce a whit leſs deceitful, or more durable than they?

Is it an envious or diſdainful regret at the advantages of others before us (of others perhaps that are unworthy and unfit, or that are, as we conceit, no more worthy and capable than our ſelves) that gnaweth our heart; is it, that ſuch perſons are more wealthy, more honourable, in greater favour or repute than we, that vexeth us? the conſideration how little time thoſe ſlender preeminences will laſt, may (if better remedies want due efficacy) ſerve toward rooting out that diſeaſe; the *Pſalmiſt* doth ſeveral times preſcribe it; *Fret not thy ſelf* (ſaith he) *againſt evil doers, neither be thou envious againſt the workers of iniquity, for they ſhall ſoon be cut down like the graſs, and wither as the green herb*; and, again, *Be not afraid when one is made rich, and when the glory of his houſe is encreaſed; for when he dyeth he ſhall carry nothing away, his glory ſhall not deſcend after him*: and he being fallen into this ſcurvy diſtemper, did follow his own preſcription, *I was*, ſaith he, *envious at the fooliſh, when I ſaw the proſperity of the wicked—until I went into the ſanctuary of God, then underſtood I their end; ſurely thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery places—— How are they brought into deſolation as in a moment?* So likewiſe doth *Solomon* preſcribe: *Let not* (ſaith he) *thine heart envy ſinners*; Why not? *becauſe ſurely there is an end, and thine expectation ſhall not be cut off*: there will be a cloſe of his undeſerved proſperity, and a good ſucceſs to thy well-grounded hope: So whatever doth breed diſcontent, the reflection upon our mortal and frail ſtate will be apt to remove it.

Pſal. 37. 1, 2. Pſal. 49. 17. Pſal. 73. 3, 17. Prov. 23. 17, 18.

It was that which comforted *Job*, and fortified his patience under ſo grievous preſſures; *All the days of my appointed time* (ſaid he) *I will wait till my change come*: He would not be weary while he lived of his afflictions, *becauſe the days of man are few, and full of trouble*: If they are *full of trouble*, and that be a ſadning conſideration; yet they are *few*, and that maketh amends, that is comfortable.

Job 14. 14, 1. Gen. 47. 9.

7. I add, that it is ſomewhat conſolatory to conſider, that the worſe our condition is here, the better we may hope our future ſtate will be: the more trouble and ſorrow we endure, the leſs of worldly ſatisfaction we enjoy here, the leſs puniſhment we have to fear, the more comfort we may hope to find hereafter; for as it is a woful thing to have received *our portion*, to have enjoyed *our conſolation in this life*, ſo 'tis a happy thing to have undergone our pain here. A Purgatory under-ground is probably a fable; but a Purgatory upon earth hath good foundations. God is wont ſo to order it, that all men, that eſpecially good men, ſhall undergo it for, *What Son is there whom the Father doth not chaſten? All that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus, muſt ſuffer perſecution.*

Heb. 12. 7. 2 Tim. 3. 12.

8. A like conſolation it is to conſider, that Wealth and Proſperity are great Talents, for the improvement of which we muſt render a ſtrict accompt, ſo that *to whom much is given, from him much ſhall be required*

ſo

ſo that they are in effect a burthen; from which poverty includes an exemption; for the leſs we have, the leſs we have to do, the leſs we are reſponſible for; our burthen is ſmaller, our accompt will be more eaſie.

9. I ſhall in reference to our condition, and the nature of thoſe things which cauſe our diſcontent, but propoſe one conſideration more, or ask one queſtion: What is it that we do want, or wait for? Is it any good we want, which by our care and induſtry we can procure; Is it any evil that afflicteth us, which by the like means we can evade? If it be ſo, Why then do we not vigorouſly apply our ſelves to the buſineſs; why do we not inſtead of idle vexation, and ineffectual complaints, uſe the means offered for our relief? Do we like and love trouble? let us then be content to bear it; let us hug it and keep it cloſe; if not, let us employ the forces afforded us by nature, and by occaſion, to repel and remove it.

Τῶν μὴ δυνατῶν ἐφίεσθαι ἀνδρὸς ἀφρονος καὶ ἠλίθιον. ξένα, θεοῖς μαχόμενον καὶ ὡς μόνον ὄντα τοῖς δόγμασιν τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ. Epict. 3. 24.

——Περάω φέρε μηδ' ἀγανάκτει, Ἐᾶσε τὸ πρέπει, καὶ ὅσον δύνῃ. Aur. Carm.

But if we grieve and moan, becauſe we cannot obtain ſome good above our reach, or not decline ſome unavoidable evil, what do we thereby but palpably expreſs our folly, and wilfully heighten our Woe; adding voluntary diſpleaſure to the heap of neceſſary want or pain; impreſſing more deeply on our ſelves the ſenſe of them? in ſuch a caſe patience is inſtead of a remedy, which though it do not throughly cure the malady, yet it ſomewhat alleviateth it, preventing many bad ſymptomes, and aſſwaging the paroxyſms thereof. What boots it to winſe and kick againſt fortune? to do ſo will inflame us, and make us foam, but will not relieve or eaſe us: if we cannot get out of the net, or the cage, to flutter and flounce will do nothing but batter and bruiſe us.

——*Levius fit patientia Quicquid corrigere eſt neſas.* Hor.

Animus æquus optimum eſt cuiuſque condimentum. Plaut. *Rud.*

Ἐπὶ ζημίᾳ χρημάτων καὶ θανάτῳ, καὶ ἀῤῥωστίᾳ καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς τοῖς συμπίπτουσιν ἡμῖν δεινοῖς ἀλγοῦντες καὶ ἀθυμοῦντες ἐ μόνον οὐδὲν ὠφελούμεθα παραμυθίαν ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐπιτείνομεν τὰ λυπᾶ. Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. 3.

Οἱ δὲ τῷ πάθει ἀναλωθέντες οὐδὲν μᾶλλον κερδαίνουσι ὀλοφυρόμενοι, ἀνιαρῶς δὲ ἔχουσιν, καὶ παροξυνόμενοι πλὴν ὀλίγων ἡμῶν Theod. *Ep.* 15.

But farther, to allay our diſcontents, let us conſider the World, and general ſtate of Men here.

1. Look *firſt* upon the World, as it is commonly managed and ordered by Men: Thou perhaps art diſpleaſed, that thou doſt not proſper and thrive therein, that thou doſt not ſhare in the goods of it; that its accommodations and preferments are all ſnapt from thee; that thy pretences are not ſatisfied, and thy deſigns fail; this thou doſt take to be ſomewhat hard, and unequal; and therefore art grieved. But if thou art wiſe, thou ſhouldſt not wonder; if thou art good, thou ſhouldſt not be vexed hereat: for thou haſt not, perhaps, any capacity for this World; thy temper and diſpoſition are not framed to ſuit with its way; thy principles and rules do claſh with it, thy reſolutions and deſigns do not well comport with proſperity here; thou canſt not, or wilt not uſe the means needful to compaſs worldly ends: Thou perhaps haſt a meek, quiet, modeſt, ſincere, ſteady diſpoſition; thou canſt not be pragmatical, and boiſterous, eager and fierce, importunately troubleſome, intolerably confident, unaccomptably verſatile and various: Thou haſt certain pedantick notions about right and wrong, certain Romantick fancies about another World (unlike to this) which thou doſt ſtiffly adhere to, and which have an influence upon thy actions: Thou haſt a ſqueamiſh conſcience, which cannot reliſh this, cannot digeſt that advantageous courſe of proceeding; a ſeru-

ſcrupulous humour, that hampereth thee, and curbeth thee from attempting many things which would ſerve thy purpoſe; thou haſt a ſpice of ſilly generoſity, which maketh divers profitable ways of acting (ſuch as forging and feigning, ſupplanting others by detraction and calumny, ſoothing and flattering people) to be below thee, and unworthy of thee; Thou thinkeſt thy ſelf obliged, and art peremptorily reſolved to obſerve ſtrict rules of juſtice, of humanity, of charity, to ſpeak as thou meaneſt, to do as thou wouldſt be done to, to wrong no man any-wiſe, to conſider and tender the caſe of other men as thine own: Thy deſigns are honeſt and moderate, conducible to (or at leaſt conſiſtent with) the publick good, injurious, or hurtful to no man; Thou carrieſt on thy deſigns by fair ways, by a modeſt care, and harmleſs diligence; nor canſt be drawn to uſe any other, how ſeemingly needful ſoever, which do ſavour of fraud, violence, any ſort of wrong or baſeneſs: Thou haſt an honeſt pride and haughtineſs of mind, which will not let thee condeſcend to uſe thoſe ſly tricks, crooked ways and ſhifts, which commonly are the compendious and moſt effectual ways of accompliſhing deſigns here: Thou art, in fine (like *Helvidius Priſcus*) in thy dealings and proceedings, *pervicax recti*, wilfully and *peeviſhly honeſt*: Such an one perhaps art thou, and ſuch is thy way; And canſt thou hope to be any body, or get any thing here? Shall ſuch a ſuperſtitious fop, ſuch a conſcientious ſimpleton, ſuch a baſhful ſneaksby, ſo phantaſtick a philoſopher pretend to any thing here? No, thou art here *piſcis in arido*, quite out of thy element; this World is not for *thee* to thrive in.

Τὸ τῦ ἤθους γελωῶν τε καὶ ἀτεχνον καὶ σοφὸς τὸ εἶναι σοφὰς πάντας ἀνεπιτήδειον. Naz. *Ep.* 63.

This World is for Worldlings to poſſeſs and enjoy: *It was* (ſay the *Rabbins*) *made for the preſumptuous*; and although God did not altogether deſign it for them, yet men have almoſt made it ſo: They are beſt qualified to thrive in it, who can luſtily buſtle and ſcramble; who can fiercely ſwagger and huff; who can fawn; who can wind and wriggle like a Serpent; who can finely cog and gloze; who can neatly ſhuffle and juggle; who can ſhrewdly over-reach and undermine others; thoſe ſlippery wily artiſts, who can veere any whither with any Wind; thoſe men of impregnable confidence, who can inſiſt upon any pretences; who can be indefatigably and irreſiſtibly urgent, nor will be repulſed or baffled by any means; thoſe who have a temper ſo laxe and ſupple, that they can bend it to any compliance advantageous to them; who have a ſpirit ſo limber, that they can ſtretch it any whither; who have face enough, and conſcience little enough to do any thing; who have no certain principles, but ſuch as will ſort with their intereſts: no rules but ſuch *Lesbian* and leaden ones, that eaſily may be accommodated to their purpoſes: whoſe deſigns all tend to their own private advantage, without any regard to the publick, or to the good of others; who can uſe any means conducible to ſuch deſigns, bogling at nothing, which ſerveth their purpoſe; nor caring what they ſay, be it true or falſe; what they do, be it right or wrong, ſo it ſeem profitable: this is called wiſdom, prudence, dexterity, ability, knowledge of men, and of the world, and I know not what beſide; in the *Scripture* the *wiſdom of the world*, and *of the fleſh*, *craft*, *guile*, *deceit*, πανοῦργία, &c. For ſuch Perſons it is to flouriſh in this World; *Behold, theſe* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *are the ungodly, who proſper in the world; and who encreaſe in riches; They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men; Their eyes ſtand out with fatneſs, they have*

Quod facillimum fallu eſt, pravus, & callidus bonos & modeſtos antiebat. Tac. *Hiſt.* 1.

Ἐφιάλτης σεμνὸν ὀνειδίσαν]α & νεανικὸν τὴν πανοῦργίαν, τὸ δὲ ἕτερον, ἔφ, ἅπερ ἐγὼ λέγω; ὅτι δίκαιός εἰμι. Æl. 13. 39.

Pſal. 73. 12. 5, 7.

have more than heart could wish: They it is who love the World, who seek it, who study and labour for it; Who spend all their time, and employ all their care about it; And is it not fit they should have it? Is it not a pity they should miss it? Is it not natural, that they *who sow to the flesh, should reap from the flesh?* Should not they who use the proper means obtain the end? Should not they arrive at the place, who proceed in the direct road thither? 1 Joh. 2. 16.

But for thee, who canst not find in thy heart to use the means, why dost thou hope to compass the end; or grieve for not attaining it? Why dost thou blend and jumble such inconsistences together, as the eager desires of this, and the hopes of another World? It becometh not such a gallant to whine and pule. If thou wilt be brave, be brave indeed; singly and throughly; be not a double-hearted mongrel; think not of satisfying thy mind, and driving on other interests together; of enjoying the conceit of being an honest man, with the design of being a rich or great man; of arriving to the happiness of the other World, and attaining prosperity in this? Wouldst thou enjoy both these? What conscience is there in that? Leave rather this World unto those, who are more fit for it, who seem better to deserve it, who venture so much, and take such pains for it; do not go to rob them of this slender reward; but with content see them to enjoy the fruits of their labour and hazard: Be thou satisfied with the consequences of thy vertuous resolutions and proceedings; if it be worth thy while to live innocently, modestly and conscientiously, do it, and be satisfied; spoil not thine expectations by repining at the want of those things, which thy circumstances render incompatible with them: Follow effectually the holy *Patriarchs* and *Apostles*, who, without regret, forsook all, and chearfully went thither, whither conscience and duty called them; if thou art not willing to do so, Why dost thou pretend to the same principles, or hope for the like rewards? But leaving the consideration of the World as man hath made it; Consider that this World is not in its nature or design, a place of perfect ease and convenience, of pure delight and satisfaction: What is this World but a region of tumult and trouble; a Theatre of vanity and disasters; the Kingdom of care, of fear, of grief and pain; of satiety, of disappointment, of regret and repentance? VVe came not hither to do our VVill, or enjoy our pleasure; we are not born to make Laws for our selves, or to pick our condition here: No, this world is a place of banishment from our first Countrey, and the original felicity we were designed to; this life is a state of travel toward another *better Country* and seat of rest: and well it is, in such cases, (well it is, I say, for us as Exiles and Travellers) if we can find any tolerable accommodation, if we can make any hard shift; It should not be strange unto us, if in this our peregrination we do meet with rough passages, foul ways, hard lodging, scant or course fare; if we complain of such things, we do not surely consider where we are, whence we came, whither we are going; we forget that we are the Sons of *Adam*, the Heirs of sin and sorrow, who have forfeited our rest and joy upon Earth; we consider not, how unavoidable the effects are of that fatal condemnation and curse, which followed our first transgression; we mind not that the perfection and purity of the blessings we have lost is not to be found on this side the celestial Paradise. This world is purposely made somewhat unpleasant to us, lest we should over-much delight in it, be unwilling to part with

1 Cor. 10. 13.

Πειρατήριον ὅλον ὁ βίος τῆς ἀνθρώπου ζωῆς. Job 7. 1. Chrys. *ad Stag.* 2. (p. 106.)

Οὐ γὰρ νομοθετοῦντες ἤλθομεν εἰς τὸν βίον, &c. Plut. *ad* Apollon.

Διὰ τοῦτο καὶ ὁ θεὸς ὅπου πόνον φύσει καὶ μοχθηρὰν ἡδονὴν καὶ βίον κατασκάλλειν, ἵνα ἐκεῖθεν ἐντεῦθεν συναθρόμενοι θαλλούσης ἐπιθυμίας τῆς μελλόντων καθέξωμεν, &c. Chrys. *ad Hg.* 5.

with it, wish to set up our rest here, and say, *Bonum est esse hic*; *It is good for us to be here.*

This life is a state of probation and exercise, like to that (which prefigured and represented it) of God's People in the Wilderness, wherein *God leadeth us* through many difficulties and hazards, in many wants and hardships, to *humble and prove us*, in order to the fitting us for another more happy state.

Deut. 8. 23.

Λοιζεῖς χρὴ, ὅτι ὁ μὲν ἧσσ' ἐπώλων, χ' ἧσσ' εφάνων κρείσσ' ὁ μέλλων ὅστις ἐσ-σὸν· ἧσσ' ὃ παλαισμάτων χ' ἧσσ' ἱδρώτων παρών. Chrys. *ad Stagir.* 2.

Πειρασμὸς ὑμᾶς οὐκ εἴληφεν εἰ μὴ ἀνθρώπινος. 1 Cor. 10. 3.

Eccluſ. 40. 1. Ἀσχολία ἔκτισται παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, &c.

Job 5. 7.

Vid. Max. Tyr. *diſſ.* 25. *p.* 244.

It was the doom of man to eat his bread in sorrow all the days of his life. *Gen.* 3. 17.

Eccl. 1. 14. *All is vanity and vexation of spirit.*

Apoc. 21. 4.

Ὁ βίος ἀληθῶς ἐστὶ βίος, ἀλλὰ ξυμφορά. Βίος γὰρ ὄνομ' ἔχει, πόνος δ' ἔργῳ πέλει. Eurip.

Quid est diu vivere, nisi diu torqueri? Aug.

Nō temptation therefore (or affliction) *can seize upon us, but such as is humane*; that is, such as is natural and proper to men, 'tis the consideration, which St. *Paul* useth to comfort and support us in troubles; and a plainly good one it is, for seeing *Man* (as *Eliphas* saith) *is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward*; that nothing is more natural to any thing, than trouble is to us; if we are displeased therewith, we are in effect displeased that we are men; it implyeth that we gladly would put off our nature, and cease to be our selves; we grieve that we are come to live in this World, and as well might we be vexed that we are not Angels; or that we are not yet in Heaven, which is the only place exempt from inconveniences and troubles, where alone *there is no sorrow, no clamour, no pain.*

It hath always been, and it will ever be an universal complaint and lamentation, that the life of man and trouble are individual companions, continually, and closely sticking one to the other; that life and misery are but several names of the same thing; that our state here is nothing else, but a combination of various evils (made up of cares, of labours, of dangers, of disappointments, of discords, of disquiets, of diseases, of manifold pains and sorrows) that all ages, from wailing infancy to querulous decrepitness, and all conditions, from the careful Sceptre to the painful spade, are fraught with many great inconveniences peculiar to each of them; that all the face of the Earth is overspread with mischiefs as with a general and perpetual deluge; that nothing perfectly sound, nothing safe, nothing stable, nothing serene is here to be found; this with one sad voice all mankind resoundeth; this our *Poets* are ever moanfully singing, this our *Philosophers* do gravely inculcate; this the experience of all times loudly proclaimeth: For what are all Histories but continual registers of the evils incident to men; what do they all describe, but wars and slaughters, mutinies and seditions, tumults and confusions, devastations and ruines? What do they tell us, but of men furiously striving together, circumventing, spoiling, destroying one another? What do we daily hear reported, but cruel broils, bloody battles, and tragical events; great numbers of men slain, wounded, hurried into captivity; Cities sacked and rased, Countries harassed and depopulated; Kingdoms and Commonwealths overturned? What do we see before us but men carking, toiling, bickering; some worn out with labour, some pining away for want, some groaning under pain? And amidst so many common miseries and misfortunes, in so generally confused and dismal a state of things, is it not ridiculously absurd for us, doth it not argue in us a prodigious fondness of self-love, heinously to resent, or impatiently to bemoan our particular, and private crosses? May not reasonably that expostulation

Πλείη μὲν γὴ γαῖα κακῶν, πλείη δὲ θάλασσα. Heliod.

Ferre quam sortem patiuntur omnes
Nemo recuset. Sen. *Troad.*

Ideò mihi videtur rerum naturæ, quod gravissimum fecit, commune fecisse, ut crudelitatem fati consolaretur æqualitas. Sen. *ad* Polyb. 21.

lation of *Jeremy* to *Baruch* reach us? *The Lord saith thus, Behold, that which I have built, I will break down; and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land; And seekest thou great things for thy self? seek them not; for behold I will bring evil on all flesh.* Jer. 45. 4, 5.

4. Again, if we more closely and particularly survey the states of other men (of our brethren every-where, of our neighbours all about us) and compare our case with theirs, our condition hardly can appear to us so bad, but that we have many consorts and associates therein; many as ill, many far worse bestead than our selves. How many of our Brethren in the World may we observe conflicting with extream penury and distress; how many undergoing continual hard drudgeries to maintain their lives; how many sorely pinched with hunger and cold; how many tortured with grievous sickness; how many oppressed with debt; how many shut up under close restraint; how many detained in horrible slavery; how many by the wasting rage of War rifled of their goods, driven from their homes, dispossessed of all comfortable subsistence? How many, in fine, passing their lives in all the inconveniences of rude, beggarly, sordid and savage barbarism? And who of us have, in any measure, tasted of these, or of the like calamities? Yet are these Sufferers, all of them, the same in nature, with us; many of them, (as reason, as humility, as charity do oblige us to believe) deserve as well, divers of them much better than our selves: What reason then can we have to conceive our case so hard, or to complain thereof? Were we the only persons exposed to trouble, or the single marks of adverse fortune; could we truly say with the *Prophet*; *Behold, if there be any sorrow like my sorrow*: We might seem a little unhappy; but since we have so much good company in our conceived Woe; since it is so ordinary a thing to be poor, and distressed; since *our case is* (as the *Poet* speaketh) *not rare, but commonly known, trite, and drawn out from the heap of lots, offered to men by fortune*: Since pitiful objects do thus environ and enclose us; 'tis plainly reasonable, humane and just, that we should without murmuring take, and bear our lot: For what priviledge have we to alledge, that we rather than others should be untouched by the grievances, to which mankind is obnoxious? Whence may we pretend to be the special favorites, mignons, privado's and darlings of fortune? Why may not God as well deal with us, as he doth with other men; what grounds have we to challenge, or to expect, that he should be partial toward us; why should we imagine, that he must continually do miracles in our behalf, causing all those evils, which fall upon our neighbours all about to skip over us, bedewing us, like *Gideon's fleece*, with plenty and joy, while all the earth beside is dry; causing us, like the *three children*, to walk in this wide furnace, unscorched and unsinged by the flames encompassing us? Are we not men framed of the same mould; are we not sinners guilty of like offences, with the meanest Peasant, the poorest beggar, the most wretched slave (if so, then a parity of Fortune with any men doth become us, and may be due to us; then it is a perverse and unjust frowardness to be displeased with our lot) we may, if we please, pity the common state of men, but we cannot reasonably complain of our own; doing so plainly doth argue, that we do unmeasurably overprize, and overlove our selves. When once a *great King* did excessively, and obstinately grieve for the death of his Wife, whom he tenderly loved, a *Philosopher* observing it, told him, "That he was ready to comfort him by restoring her to life, supposing Lam. 1. 12.

——*Nec rara videmus*
Quæ patoris; casus multis hic cognitus & jam
Tritus, & è medio fortunæ ductus acervo. Juv. *Sat.* 13. v. 8.

Te nunc delicias extra communia censes
Ponendum, &c. Juv. *Sat.* 13. v. 140.

Jud. 6. 37.

Dan. 3. 25.

" onely, that he would ſupply what was needful toward the performing " it; " The *King* ſaid he was ready to furniſh him with any thing; the *Philoſopher* anſwer'd, " That he was provided with all things neceſſary, " except one thing; what that was the *King* demanded; he replied, *That if he would upon his Wives Tomb inſcribe the names of three perſons, who never mourned, ſhe preſently would revive*: the *King*, after inquiry, told the *Philoſopher*, That he could not find one ſuch man, *Why then, O abſurdeſt of all men* (ſaid the *Philoſopher* ſmiling) *art thou not aſhamed to moan as if thou hadſt alone fallen into ſo grievous a caſe; when as thou canſt not find one perſon, that ever was free from ſuch domeſtick affliction?* So might the naming one perſon, exempted from inconveniences, like to thoſe we undergo, be ſafely propoſed to us as a certain cure of ours; but if we find the condition impoſſible, then is the generality of the caſe a ſufficient ground of content to us; then may we, as the wiſe *Poet* adviſeth, *ſolace our own evils by the evils of others*, ſo frequent and obvious to us.

Ἔτι ὦ πάντων ἀτοπώτατε θέλω εἰς ἀνάδειξιν, ὡς μόνῳ σοὶ ἀλγεινῷ τοσούτῳ συμπτώματι, ὃ μηδὲ ἕνα πώποτε γεγονότων ἀμοιρον οἰκείας πάθους ἴδῃς εὑρεῖν. Jul. *Ep.* 38.

Παρηγορεῖ τὰ κακὰ δ' ἑτέρων κακῶν. Menand.

Nulli ad aliena reſpicienti ſua placent. Sen. *de Ira.* 3. 31.

5. We are indeed very apt to look upward toward thoſe few, who, in ſuppoſed advantages of life (in wealth, dignity, or reputation) do ſeem to tranſcend, or to precede us, grudging and repining at their fortune; but ſeldom do we caſt down our eyes on thoſe innumerably many good people, who lie beneath us in all manner of accommodations, pitying their mean, or hard condition; like Racers we look forward, and purſue thoſe who go before us, but reflect not backward, or conſider thoſe who come behind us: two or three outſhining us in ſome ſlender piece of proſperity, doth raiſe diſſatisfaction in us; while the doleful ſtate of millions doth little affect us with any regard or compaſſion: hence ſo general diſcontent ſpringeth, hence ſo few are ſatisfied with their condition: and epidemical eye-ſore moleſting every man; for there is no man, of whatſoever condition, who is not in ſome deſirable things outſtripped by others; none is ſo high in fortune, but another in Wit or Wiſdom, in Health, or ſtrength, or beauty, in reputation or eſteem of men may ſeem to excel him; he therefore looking with an *evil* or envious *eye* on ſuch perſons, and with ſenſeleſs diſregard paſſing over the reſt of men, doth eaſily thereby loſe his eaſe and ſatisfaction from his own Eſtate: Whereas if we would conſider the caſe of moſt men, we ſhould ſee abundant reaſon to be ſatisfied with our own; if we would a little feel the calamities of our neighbours, we ſhould little reſent our own croſſes; a kindly commiſeration of others more grievous diſaſters would drown the ſenſe of our leſſer diſappointments.

——Neque ſe majori pauperiorum Turbæ comparet, hunc atque hunc ſuperare laboret: Ut cum carceribus, &c. Hor. *Sat.* 1.

Inde fit ut nemo, qui ſe vixiſſe beatum Dicat; &c. Hor. *Sat.* 1.

Si vis gratus eſſe adverſus Deos, & adverſus vitam tuam, cogita quàm multos anteceſſeris. Sen. *Ep.* 15.

Nunquam erit felix, quem torquebit felicior. Sen. *de Ira.* 3. 31. *Vid. Ib.*

If with any competent heedfulneſs we view perſons and things before us, we ſhall eaſily diſcern, that what abſolutely ſeemeth great and weighty, is indeed comparatively very ſmall and light: that things are not ſo unequally diſpenſed, but that we have our full ſhare in good, and no more than our part in evil; * that *Socrates* had reaſon to ſuppoſe, that, *if we ſhould bring into one common ſtock all our miſhaps, ſo that each ſhould receive his portion of them, gladly the moſt would take up their own, and go their ways*; that conſequently it is both iniquity and folly in us to complain of our lot.

Εἰ συνεφέγκαιμι εἰς τὸ κοινὸν τὰς ἀτυχίας, ὥστε διελέσθαι τὸ ἴσον ἕκαστον, ἀσμένως ἂν τὰς πλείους τὰς αὑτῶν λαβόντας ἀπελθεῖν. Plut. *Apoll.*

* That at worſt we are *Extremi primorum, extremis uſque priores.* Hor. *Epiſt.* 2. 2.

6. If

6. If even we would take care diligently to compare our ſtate with the ſtate of thoſe, whom we are apt moſt to admire and envy, it would afford matter of conſolation, and content unto us. What is the ſtate of the greateſt perſons (of the Worlds *Princes* and *Grandees*) what but a ſtate encompaſſed with ſnares, and temptations numberleſs; which without extreme caution, and conſtancy, force of reaſon, and command of all appetites, and paſſions cannot, be avoided; and ſeldom are? What but a ſtate of pompous trouble, and gay ſervility, of living in continual noiſe and ſtir, environed with crouds and throngs, of being ſubject to the urgency of buſineſs, and the tediouſneſs of ceremony; of being abuſed by perfidious ſervants, and mocked by vile flatterers; of being expoſed to common cenſure and obloquy, to miſrepreſentation, miſconſtruction and ſlander; having the eyes of all men intent upon their actions, and as many ſevere judges as watchful ſpectatours of them; of being accomptable for many mens faults, and bearing the blame of all miſcarriages about them; of being reſponſible in conſcience, for the miſcarriages and miſhaps which come from the influence of our counſels, our examples, *&c.* of being peſter'd and purſu'd with pretences, with ſuits, with complaints, the neceſſary reſult whereof is to diſpleaſe or provoke very many, to oblige or ſatisfie very few, of being frequently ingaged in reſentments of ingratitude, of treachery, of neglects, of defects in duty, and breaches of truſt toward them; of being conſtrained to comply with the humours and opinion of men; of anxious care to keep, and jealous fear of loſing all; of danger and being objected to the traiterous attempts of bold male-contents, of fierce zealots and wild fanaticks; of wanting the moſt ſolid and ſavoury comforts of life, true friendſhip, free converſation, certain leaſure, privacy and retiredneſs, for enjoying themſelves, their time, their thoughts as they think good; of ſatiety and being cloyed with all ſorts of enjoyments: In fine, of being paid with falſe coin for all their cares and pains, receiving for them ſcarce any thing more, but empty ſhews of reſpect, and hollow acclamations of praiſe; (whence the *Pſalmiſt* might well ſay, *Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree a lye*; a lye, for that their ſtate cheateth us, appearing ſo ſpecious, yet being really ſo inconvenient and troubleſome.) Such is the ſtate of the greateſt men; ſuch as hath made wiſe Princes weary of themſelves, ready to acknowledge, that if men knew the weight of a Crown, none would take it up, apt to think with Pope *Adrian*, who made this *Epitaph* for himſelf; *Here lyeth* Adrian *the* Sixth, *who thought nothing in his life to have befallen him more unhappy, than that he ruled*: Such, in fine, their ſtate, as upon due conſideration we ſhould, were it offered to our choice, never embrace; ſuch indeed, as in ſober judgment, we cannot prefer before the moſt narrow and inferiour fortune: How then can we reaſonably be diſpleaſed with our condition, when we may even pity *Emperours* and *Kings*, when, in reality, we are as well, perhaps are much better than they.

Magna ſervitus eſt magna fortuna, &c. Sen. *ad* Polyb. 26.

Perſonata felicitas. Sen. *Ep.* 80. Pſal. 62. 9.

——*adulandi certamen eſt, & unum omnium amicorum officium, una contentio quis blandiſſime fallat.* Sen. *de Benef.* 6. 30.

Vid. optime diſſerentem. Vid. & de Clem. 1. 19. *Et ad* Polyb. 26.

Antigonus. *Neſcitis amici, quid mali ſit imperare, &c.* Saturninus *apud* Vopiſcum.

Hic ſitus eſt Adrian. VI. *qui nihil ſibi in vita infelicius duxit, quam quod imperavit.* Lud. Guicciard. P. Jovius *in vit.*

Nihil difficilius quam bene imperare. Dioclef. *apud* Vopiſc. *in* Aureliano.

7. Farther, it may induce and ingage us to be content, to conſider what commonly hath been the lot of good men in the World: We ſhall, if we ſurvey the Hiſtories of all times, find the beſt men to have ſuſtained moſt grie-

Conſider what calamities great, powerful glorious men have endured; *Cræſ. Polycr. Pomp. &c.* Sen. *de Ira.* 3. 25.

Οἱ περὶ Ἑλλάδων ἄειστοι πενία διέζων πάντα τὸν βίον. (Aristides, Phocion, Epaminondas, Pelopidas.) *Æl.* xi. 9. 11. 43.

vous crosses and troubles; scarce is there in holy Scripture recorded any person eminent and illustrious for goodness, who have not tasted deeply of wants and distresses *Abraham, the Father of the faithful,* and especial *friend of God,* was called out of his Country, and from his Kindred, to wander in a strange land, and lodge in Tents, without any fixed habitation. *Jacob* spent a great part of his life in slavish toil, and in his old age was in reflection upon his life moved to say, *that the days of his pilgrimage had been few and evil.* *Joseph* was maligned and persecuted by his Brethren, sold away for a slave, slandered for a most heinous crime, thrust into a grievous prison, where *his feet were hurt with fetters, and his soul came into iron.* *Moses* was forced to fly away for his life, to become a vagabond in a foreign place, to feed sheep for his livelihood; to spend afterwards the best of his life in contesting with an obstinately perverse Prince, and in leading a mistrustful, refractory, mutinous people, for forty years time, through a vast and wild desart. *Job,* what a stupendious heap of mischiefs did together fall, and lie heavy upon him? (*Thou writest bitter things against me,* he might well say.) *David,* How often was he plunged in saddest extremity, and reduced to the hardest shifts; being *hunted like a partridge in the wilderness* by an envious Master, forced to counterfeit madness for his security among barbarous infidels; dispossessed of his kingdom, and persecuted by his own most favoured son; deserted by his servants, reproached and scorned by his subjects? *Elias* was driven long to sculk for his life, and to shift for his livelihood in the Wilderness. *Jeremy* was treated as an Impostour and a Traitour, and cast into a miry Dungeon; finding matter from his sufferings for his doleful lamentations, and having thence occasion to exclaim, *I am the man that have seen affliction by the rod of his wrath,* &c. *Which of the Prophets were not persecuted,* and misused? as St. *Stephen* asked. The *Apostles* were pinched with all kinds of want, harassed with all sorts of toil, exposed to all manner of hazards, persecuted with all variety of contumelies, and pains that can be imagined: Above all, our Lord himself beyond expression was *a man of sorrow, and acquainted with grief,* surpassing all men in suffering as he did excel them in dignity, and in vertue; extream poverty, *having not so much as where to lay his head,* was his portion; to undergo continual labour and travel, without any mixture of carnal ease or pleasure, was his state; in return for the highest good will, and choicest benefits to receive most cruel hatred, and grievous injuries, to be loaded with the bittrest reproaches, the foulest slanders, the sorest pains which most spiteful malice could invent, or fiercest rage inflict, this was his lot: *Am I poor,* so may one say, was he to extremity; Am I slighted of the World? so was he notoriously; Am I disappointed, and crossed in my designs? so was he continually, all his most painful endeavours having small effect; Am I deserted or betrayed of Friends? so was he by those who were most intimate, and most obliged to him; Am I reviled, slandered, misused? Was not he so beyond all comparison most outrageously.

Have all these, and many more, of *whom the world was not worthy,* undergone all sorts of inconvenience, being *destitute, afflicted, tormented;*

Lamachus, *Socrates, Ephialtes.*
Abel, Noe, &c. Chrys. *Tom.* 6 *p.* 107.

Gen. 47. 9.
Psal. 105. 18.

Σίδηρον διῆλθεν ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ.

Socrates, Cato, Regulus, Phocion, &c. *Magnum exemplum nisi mala fortuna non invenit.*

Vid. Chrys. *Tom.* 5. *Or.* 27. *p.* 168. & *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 10. *p.* 107.

Job 13. 27.
1 Sam. 26. 20.

Νῦν ἡ πάλαι ἐξ ἧς γεγόνασιν ἀσφαλοῦς ἅπαντες οἱ τῷ θεῷ φίλοι πᾶσι συγγνώμης ἡ ὀπιμόχθως ἡ μυείαν γήμοντι δεινῶν ἐκλιπῶσαν εἶφ. Chrys. *in Mart. Ægypt. T.* 5. 522.

Ἐν τοῖς πειρασμοῖς ὠφθην οἱ δίκαιοι, τὰς ἀλύσεις ἅπαντας ἔστως ἠγαγόν ὁ θεὸς διὰ θλίψεως. Chrys. *in* 2 Cor. *Or.* 27.

Lam. 3. 1.
Acts 7. 52.
1 Cor. 4. & 7.

Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 93.
Isa. 53. 3.

Matt. 8. 20.

Ἐκ γὰρ τῆς πρώτου φύντων ἀνθρώπων μέχρι τῆς παρούσης καιρῆς τὰς τῶν ὅλων ἐσπουδακότας σέβειν θεὸν ὄζην ἀρρένων παρὰ τῆς συμβιβεκότων ἀνθρώπων ἡδονημόνους ἡ τρυφείοις ἄγαν πεπεπωκότας ἀνιαρῆς. Theod. *Ep.* 132.

Heb. 11. 38.

And

And shall we then disdain, or be sorry to be found in such company? *Having such a cloud of martyrs, Let us run with patience the race that is set before us.* Is it not an Honour, should it not be a comfort to us, that we do, in condition, resemble them? If God hath thus dealt with those, who of all men have been dearest to him, shall we take it ill at his hands, that he, in any manner, dealeth so with us? Can we pretend, can we hope, can we even wish to be used better, than Gods first-born, and our Lord himself hath been? If we do, are we not monstruously fond and arrogant? especially considering, that it is not onely an ordinary fortune, but the peculiar character of Gods chosen, and children, to be often crossed, checked, and corrected; Even *Pagans* have observed it, and avowed there is great reason for it; *God* (saith *Seneca*) *hath a fatherly mind toward good men; and strongly loveth them——therefore after the manner of severe parents, he educateth them hardly*, &c. The *Apostle* doth in expres terms assure us thereof; for, *whom* (saith he) *the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons——but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all* (that is, all good men, and genuine Sons of God) *are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.* Would we be illegitimated, or expunged from the number of God's true children; would we be divested of his special regard and good-will? if not, Why do we not gladly embrace, and willingly sustain adversity, which is by himself declared so peculiar a badge of his children, so constant a mark of his favour? if *all* good *men* do (as the *Apostle* asserteth) *partake thereof*; shall we, by displeasure at it, shew, that we desire to be assuredly none of that party, that we affect to be discarded from that holy and happy society? *Verily, verily I say unto you, that ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice.* It is peculiarly the lot of Christians, as such, in conformity to their afflicted Saviour; they are herein *predestinated to be conformable to his image*; *to this they are appointed.* (*Let no man*, saith St. *Paul*, *be moved by these afflictions, for ye know, that we are appointed thereunto:*) to this they are called (*if when we do well*, saith St. *Peter*, *and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God*; *for even hereunto were ye called*) this is propounded to them as a condition to be undertaken, and undergone by them as such; they are by profession *crucigeri*, bearers of the cross; (*If any one will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me*; *Every one that will live godly in Christ Jesus, must suffer persecution*) by this are they admitted into the state of Christians; (*by many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of heaven*) this doth qualify them for enjoying the glorious rewards, which their religion propoundeth; (*We are coheirs with Christ*; so that, *if we suffer together, we shall also together be glorified with him*; *If we endure, we shall also reign with him*;) * And shall we then pretend to be Christians, shall we claim any benefit from thence, if we are unwilling to submit to the Law, to attend the call, to comply with the terms thereof? Will we enjoy its priviledges, can we hope for its rewards, if we will not contentedly undergo what it requireth? Shall we arrive to the end it propoundeth, without going in the way it prescribeth, the way which our Lord himself doth lead us in, and himself hath trod before us?

Heb. 12. 1.

Sen. *de Provid.* c. 2.

Heb. 12. 6, 7, 8.

Eccluſ 2. 1. Τέκνον ἐὰ προσέρχῃ δουλεύειν κυρίῳ ἑτοίμασον τὴν ψυχήν σου εἰς πειρασμόν.

John 16. 20.

Rom. 8. 29.

1 Thess. 3. 3. Phil. 3. 10.

1 Pet. 2. 20, 21.

Mat. 16. 24. 10. 38. 2 Tim. 2. 12. John 16. 33. Ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ θλῖψιν ἔξετε.

Quotam partem angustiarum perpessus sum qui cruci milito. Hier. *ad* Asellam, *Ep.* 99.

Acts 14. 22.

Vid. Greg. Naz. *Ep.* 201. (*ad* Theclam.)

2 Tim. 2. 12.

(Phil. 3. 10.)

* It is a priviledge of Christians, in favour bestowed on them; ὑμῖν ἐχαρίσθη Phil. 1. 29. *Our glory* Eph. 3. 13.

Ὑπομονῆς ἔχετε χρείαν. Heb. 10. 36. Faith and Patience are consorts. Heb. 6. 12. Apoc. 13. 10.

In

In fine, seeing adversity is, as hath been declared, a thing so natural to all men, so common to most men, so incident to great men, so proper to good men, so peculiar to Christians, we have great reason to observe the *Apostles* advice; *Beloved, wonder not concerning the fiery trial, which is to try you, as if some strange thing happened to you*; we should not wonder at it as a strange, or uncouth thing, that we are engaged in any trouble or inconvenience here; we are consequently not to be affected with it as a thing very grievous.

1 Pet. 4. 12.

SERMON IX.

Of Contentment.

PHIL. 4. 11.

I have learned in whatever State, &c.

1 Tim. 6. 6. Ἔστι δὲ πορισμὸς ἡ εὐσέβεια μετ' αὐταρκείας.

MOreover considering the nature of this duty it self, may be a great inducement and aid to the practice of it.

1. It is it self a sovereign remedy, for all poverty and all sufferance; removing them, or allaying all the mischief they can do us. It is well and truly said by St. *Austine*, *Interest non qualia, sed qualis quis patiatur*; *It is no matter what, but how disposed a man suffereth*: The chief mischief any adversity can do us is to render us discontent, in that consisteth all the sting, and all the venom thereof; which thereby being voided, adversity can signify nothing prejudicial, or noxious to us; all distraction, all distemper, all disturbance from it is by the antidote of contentedness prevented or corrected. He that hath his desires moderated to a temper suitable with his condition, that hath his passions composed and settled agreeably to his circumstances, what can make any grievous impression on him, or render him any-wise miserable? He that taketh himself to have enough, what doth he need? he that is well-pleased to be as he is, how can he be better? What can the largest Wealth, or highest prosperity in the World yeild more, or better than satisfaction of mind? He that hath this most essential ingredient of felicity, is he not thence in effect most fortunate? is not at least his condition as good as that of the most prosperous.

Aug. *de Civ. Dei.* 1. 8.

Cui cum paupertate bene convenit, dives est. Sen. *Ep.* 2.

Nemo aliorum sensu miser est, sed suo; & ideo non possunt cujusquam falso judicio esse miseri, qui sunt vere conscientia sua beati. Nulli beatiores sunt, quam qui hoc sunt quod volunt. Salv. *de Gubern. Dei*, 1.

Οὐ γὰρ τὸ ποιῆσαί τι χρηστὸν μόνον, ἀλλὰ τὸ παθεῖν τι κακὸν πολλὰς ἔχει τὰς ἀμοιβὰς καὶ μεγάλα παρέπεσθαι, &c. Chrys. *ad* Olymp. *Ep.* 3. *Vid. p.* 73.

2. As good do I say? yea is it not plainly much better, than can arise merely from any secular prosperity for satisfaction springing from rational consideration and vertuous disposition of mind is indeed far more precious, more noble and worthy, more solid and durable, more sweet and

and delectable, than that which any poſſeſſion, or fruition of worldly goods can afford: The τὸ ἄφθαρτον τῆς πραΰθ. καὶ ἡσυχίου πνεύμ. Θ, *incorruptibility* (at St. *Peter* ſpeaketh) *of a meek and quiet ſpirit is before God of great price*; *before God*, that is, according to the moſt upright and certain judgment it is the moſt precious and valuable thing in the World; *There is* (the *Philoſopher* could ſay) *no ſpectacle more worthy of God* (or grateful to him) *than a good man gallantly combating with ill fortune.* Not to be diſcompoſed or diſtempered in mind, not to fret or whine, when all things flow proſperouſly and according to our mind, is no great praiſe, no ſign of wiſdom, or argument of goodneſs; it cannot be reckoned an effect of ſound judgment, or vertuous affection, but a natural conſequent of ſuch a ſtate: But when there are evident occaſions, and urgent temptations to diſpleaſure, when preſent ſenſe and fancy do prompt and provoke to murmuring, then to be ſatisfied in our mind, then to keep our paſſions in order, then to maintain good humour, then to reſtrain our tongue from complaint, and to govern our demeanour ſweetly, this is indeed honourable and handſome; to ſee a worthy man ſuſtain croſſes, wants, diſgraces with equanimity and chearfulneſs is a moſt goodly ſight: ſuch a perſon to a judicious mind appeareth in a far more honourable and invidious ſtate, than any proſperous man: his vertue ſhining in the dark is far more bright and fair: *this* (as St. *Peter* ſaith, in a like caſe) *is thank-worthy, if a man for conſcience toward God ſuffereth grief*; if, in our caſe (we may ſay after him) a man out of conſciencious deference to God's Will, doth contentedly undergo adverſity, this God is ready to take for an obligation on himſelf, and will be diſpoſed in a manner to *thank him* (or to reward him) for it: This indeed amounteth to a demonſtration that ſuch a perſon is truly wiſe and really good: ſo is the ſatisfaction of a contented poor man more worthy: And it is no leſs more ſweet and comfortable, than that of any rich man, pleaſing himſelf in his enjoyments; contentedneſs ſatisfieth the mind of the one, abundance doth only ſatiate the appetites of the other; the former is immaterial and ſprightly, the complacence of a man; the latter is groſs and dull, like the ſenſuality of a beaſt; the delight of that ſinketh deep into the heart, the pleaſure of this doth only float in the outward ſenſes, or in the fancy; one is a poſitive comfort, the other but a negative indolency in regard to the mind: The poor good man's joy is wholly his own, and home-born, a lovely child of reaſon and vertue; the full rich man's pleaſure cometh from without, and is thruſt into him by impulſes of ſenſible objects.

Οὐδὲν δ' ἐν ἀληθείᾳ τοσοῦτον ἀξιοθέατον ἐστὶν ἀνδρὸς ἀγαθοῦ μετὰ δικαιοσύνης ἐν ἀδικίᾳ λόγου ἴσον· ἢ γὰρ βασιλὴς ἢ ἀγαθὸς ἢ στεφάνων ἢ κορωνὶς αὕτη μάλιστ' ἐστὶ τιμία. Chryſ. *ad* Olymp. *Ep.* 16. *Vid. Epiſt.* 6. *& ad* Olymp. *Epiſt.* 3 (*p.* 75.) *de* Joſepho. 1 Pet. 3. 4.

Ecce par Deo dignum vir bonus cum mala fortuna compoſitus. Sen. *de Provid.*

1 Pet. 2. 19.

Honeſta res eſt læta paupertas. Epic.

Οὐδὲ γὰρ ὁ ἁπλῶς τι πένητα μόνον ἀδικεῖ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὁ ἀδίκως τι πένητα, καὶ φύσεως ἡμερίους, καὶ δικαιοσύνῃ πρὸς συγχωρήσαντι θεῷ ἐκ ἑλκύσαν τὸ ἁπλοῦν τῆς ἁπλότητος ἔχειν. Chryſ. *ἀνδρ.* 5'.

Hence is the ſatisfaction of contented adverſity far more conſtant, ſolid and durable, than that of proſperity; it being the product of immutable reaſon abideth in the mind, and cannot eaſily be driven thence by any corporeal impreſſions, which immediately cannot touch the mind; whereas the other, iſſuing from ſenſe, is ſubject to all the changes, inducible from the reſtleſs commotions of outward cauſes affecting and altering ſenſe: whence the ſatisfaction proceeding from reaſon and vertue, the longer it ſtayeth the firmer and ſweeter it groweth, turning into habit, and working nature to an agreement with it; whereas uſually the joys of wealth and proſperity do ſoon degenerate into faſtidiouſneſs, and terminate in bitterneſs, being *honey in the mouth*, but ſoon becoming *gall in the bowels.* Nothing indeed can affect the mind with a truer pleaſure, than the very conſcience of diſcharging our duty toward God in bearing hard-

Apoc. 10. 10. Job 20. 20, 22.

ſhip,

ſhip, impoſed by his providence, willingly and well. We have therefore much reaſon not only to acquieſce in our ſtraits but to be glad of them, ſeeing they do yield us an opportunity of immediately obtaining goods, more excellent and more deſirable, than any proſperous or wealthy man can eaſily have, ſince they furniſh us with means of acquiring and exerciſing a vertue worth the moſt ample fortune; yea juſtly preferable to the beſt eſtate in the World; a vertue, which indeed doth not onely render any condition tolerable, but ſweeteth any thing, yea ſanctifieth all ſtates, and turneth all occurrences into bleſſings.

3. Even the ſenſible ſmart of adverſity is by contentedneſs ſomewhat tempered and eaſed; the ſtiller and quieter we lye under it, the leſs we feel its violence and pungency: It is tumbling and toſſing, that ſtirreth the ill humours, and driveth them to the parts moſt weak, and apt to be affected with them; the rubbing of our ſores is that which enflameth and exaſperateth them: Where the mind is calm, and the paſſions ſetled, the pain of any grievance is in compariſon leſs acute, leſs ſenſible.

4. Whence if others in our diſtreſs are uncharitable to us, refuſing the help they might, or ſhould afford toward the reſcuing us from it, or relieving us in it, we hereby may be charitable and great benefactours to our ſelves; we ſhould need no *anodyne* to be miniſtred from without, no ſuccour to come from any creature, if we would not be wanting to our ſelves, in hearkening to our own reaſon, and enjoying the conſolation which it affordeth. In not doing this, we are more uncharitable and cruel to our ſelves, than any ſpiteful enemy or treacherous friend can be; no man can ſo wrong or moleſt us, as we do our ſelves by admitting or foſtering diſcontent.

5. The contented bearing of our condition is alſo the moſt hopeful and ready means of bettering it, and of removing the preſſures we lie under.

It is partly ſo in a natural way, as diſpoſing us to embrace and employ the advantages which occur conducible thereto; for as diſcontent blindeth men ſo that they cannot deſcry the ways of eſcape from evil, it diſpiriteth and diſcourageth them from endeavouring to help themſelves, it deprives them of many ſuccours and expedients, which occaſion would afford for their relief; ſo he that being undiſturbed in his ſpirit hath his eye open and his courage up, and all his natural powers in order, will be always ready and able to do his beſt, to act vigorouſly, to ſnatch any opportunity, and employ any means toward the freeing himſelf from what appeareth grievous to him.

Upon a ſupernatural accompt content is yet more efficacious to the ſame purpoſe: For chearful ſubmiſſion to Gods Will doth pleaſe him much, doth ſtrongly move him to withdraw his afflicting hand, doth effectually induce him to advance us into a moſt comfortable ſtate: Of all vertues there is none more acceptable to God than patience. God will take it well at our hands if we do contentedly receive from his hand the worſt things: 'tis a monſtrous thing not to receive proſperity with grateful ſenſe, but it is heroical with the ſame mind to receive things unpleaſant: he that doth

Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 89. *Vid.* Chryſ. *ad* Stag. 1. & 2. (p. 106.)

ſo ζημιῶται μὲν ὡς ἄνθρωπος, στεφανῶται δ' ὡς φιλόθεος, *he ſuffereth loſs as a man, but is crowned as a lover of God.* Beſides that it is an unreaſonable thing to think of enjoying both reſt and pleaſure here, and the rewards hereafter; our conſolation here with *Dives*, and our refreſhment hereafter with *Lazarus*.

1 Pet. 5. 6. Jam. 4. 10.

Be humbled (ſaith St. *Peter*) *under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time* (ἐν καιρῷ when it is opportune and ſeaſonable) and *Be humble* (ſaith St. *James*) *before the Lord, and he will exalt you*, and

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When (saith *Job*'s friends) *men are cast down, then thou shalt say there is lifting up, and he will save the humble person.* God with favourable pity hearkeneth to the groans of them who are *humbly contrite* under his hand, and reverently *tremble at his word*; he *reviveth the spirit of the humble*; *He is nigh to the broken of heart*, and *saveth such as are of a contrite spirit*; *He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds*; He proclaimeth *blessedness to the poor in spirit*, and *to those that mourn*, because they shall find comfort and mercy; all which declarations and promises are made concerning those who bear adversity with a submiss and contented mind; and we see them effectually performed in the cases of *Ahab*, of the *Ninivites*, of *Nebuchadnezzar*, of *Manasses*, of *Hezekiah*, of *David*; of all persons mentioned in *holy Scripture*, upon whom adversities had such kindly operations. But discontent and impatience do offend God, and provoke him to continue his judgments, yea to encrease the load of them: To be sullen and stubborn is the sure way to render our Condition worse, and more intolerable: For, *who hath hardened himself against God and prospered?* The *Pharaohs* and *Sauls*, and such like persons, who rather would break than bend, who being dissatisfied with their Condition chose rather to lay hold on other imaginary succours, than to have recourse to God's mercy and help; those, who (like the refractory *Israelites*) have been *smitten in vain* as to any quiet submission or conversion unto God, what have they but plunged themselves deeper into wretchedness?

Job 22. 29. (Luke 14. 11. 18. 14.) Isa. 66. 2. 57. 15. Psal. 34. 18. 51. 17. 147. 3. Matt. 5. 3, 4. Job 9. 4. Jer. 2. 30. 5. 3. Isa. 9. 13. 5. 26. 10.

It is indeed to quell our haughty stomach, to check our froward humour, to curb our impetuous desires, to calm our disorderly passions, to suppress our fond admiration and eager affection toward these worldly things, in short to work a contented mind in us, that God ever doth inflict any hardships on us, that he crosseth us in our projects, that he detaineth us in any troublesome state; until this be atchieved, as it is not expedient that we should be eased, as relief would really be no blessing to us; so God (except in anger and judgment) will no-wise grant or dispense it; it would be a cruel mercy for him to do it: If therefore we do wish ever to be in a good case as to this World, let us learn to be contented in a bad one: Having got this disposition firmly rooted in our hearts, we are qualified for deliverance and preferment; nor will God fail in that due season to perform for us what he so often hath declared and promised; his nature disposeth him, his word hath engaged him to help and comfort us.

These are the most proper inducements unto contentedness, which considering (in the light of reason and holy *Scripture*) the nature of the thing, suggested unto my meditation: there are beside some other means advisable, (some general, some more particular) which are very conducible to the production of content, or removing discontent; which I shall touch, and then conclude.

1. A constant endeavour to live well, and to maintain a good conscience. He that doeth this can hardly be dismay'd or disturbed with any occurrence here; this will yield a man so ample and firm a satisfaction of mind, as will bear down the sense of any incumbent evils; this will beget such hope in God, and so good assurance of his favour, as will supply the want of all other things, and fully satisfie us, that we have no cause to be troubled with any thing here: He that by conscientious practice hath obtained such a hope is prepared against all assaults of fortune with an unhaunted mind and force impregnable; *He will* (as the *Psalmist* saith) *not be afraid of any evil tydings, for his heart is fixed trusting in the Lord.* Maintaining this will free us from all anxious care, transferring it upon God;

Psal. 112. 1. 119. 6.

it will breed a ſure confidence, that he will ever be ready to ſupply us with all things convenient, to protect and deliver us from all things hurtful; enſuring to us the effect of that promiſe, by the conſcience of having performed the condition thereof: *Seek ye firſt the kingdom of God and its righteouſneſs, and all theſe things ſhall be added unto you.*

Matt. 6. 33.

This was that which ſupported the *Apoſtles*, and kept them chearful under all that heavy load of diſtreſſes which lay upon them; *Our rejoicing is this* (could they ſay) *the teſtimony of our conſcience, that in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity——we have had our converſation in this world.*

1 Cor. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 3. 16. Acts 23. 1. 24. 16.

'Tis the want of this beſt pleaſure, that both rendreth the abſence of all other pleaſures grievous, and their preſence inſipid: Had we a good conſcience we could not ſeem to want comfort; as we could not truly be unhappy, ſo we could hardly be diſcontent; without it no affluence of other things can ſuffice to content us. It is an evil conſcience that giveth an edge to all other evils, and enableth them ſorely to afflict us, which otherwiſe would but ſlightly touch us; we become thence uncapable of comfort, ſeeing not only things here upon earth to croſs us, but heaven to lowre upon us; finding no viſible ſuccour, and having no hope from the power inviſible; yea having reaſon to be diſcouraged with the fear of God's diſpleaſure. As he that hath a powerful enemy near, cannot abide in peace, without anxious ſuſpicion and fear; ſo he that is at variance with the Almighty, who is ever at hand, ready to croſs and puniſh him, what quiet of mind can he enjoy? *There is no peace to the wicked.*

2. The contemplation of our future ſtate is a ſovereign medicine to work contentedneſs, and to cure diſcontent: as diſcontent eaſily doth ſeiſe upon, and cleaveth faſt to Souls, which earneſtly do pore and dote upon theſe preſent things, which have in them nothing ſatisfactory or ſtable; ſo if we can raiſe our minds firmly to believe, ſeriouſly to conſider, and worthily to prize the future ſtate and its concernments, we can hardly ever be diſcontent in regard to theſe things. Conſidering heaven and its happineſs, how low and mean, how ſordid and vile, how unworthy of our care and our affection will theſe inferiour things appear? How very unconcerned ſhall we ſee our ſelves to be in them, and how eaſily thence ſhall we be content to want them? What, ſhall any of us be then ready to ſay, doth it concern me in what rank or garb I paſs my few days here? what conſiderable intereſt can I have in this uncertain and tranſitory ſtate? what is any loſs, any diſgrace, any croſs in this World to me, who am a Citizen of Heaven, who have a capacity and hope of the immenſe riches, the incorruptible glories, the perfect and endleſs joys of eternity? This was that which ſuſtained the holy *Apoſtle* in all their diſtreſſes; *For this cauſe* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *we faint not—— whil we look not on the things which are ſeen, but on the things which are not ſeen for the things which are ſeen are temporal, but the things which are not ſeen ar eternal*; and *I reckon* (ſaith he again) *that the ſufferings of this preſent lif are not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in us.*

1 Theſſ. 4. 18. *Vid.* Naz. *Ep.* 201. (*ad* Theclam.) 2 Cor. 7. 31. 2 Cor. 4. 16. &c. 5. 7. Rom. 8. 18.

If likewiſe we do with faith and ſeriouſneſs conſider the diſmal ſtat below of thoſe, who are eternally ſecluded from all joy and bliſs, who ar irrecoverably condemned to utter darkneſs, and the extremity of horribl pain, how tolerable, how pleaſant, how very happy will the meane ſtate here appear to be? how vain a thing will it then ſeem to us to be t diſlike, or to be troubled with any worldly thing; to accompt any chanc happening to us to be ſad, or diſaſtrous? What, ſhall we ſay then each of u is this ſame loſs to the loſs of my Soul and all its comforts for ever? wha is this want to the perpetual want of heavenly bliſs? what is this ſho

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and faint pain to the cruel pangs of endless remorse, to the *weeping and gnashing of teeth in outward darkness, to everlasting burnings?*

Thus infinitely silly and petty must all concernments of this life appear to him, who is possessed with the belief and consideration of matters relating to the future state; whence discontent in regard to them can hardly find access to his mind.

3. Constant devotion is an excellent instrument and guard of content, an excellent remedy and fence against discontent.

It is such in way of impetration, procuring the removal, or alleviation of our crosses: For God hath promised that *he will give good things to those that ask him*; *The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him in truth*; *he will fulfil the desire of them that fear him*; *he also will hear their cry, and will save them. The poor man cryeth, and the Lord heareth him, and saveth him out of all his troubles*; the holy *Scripture* is full of such declarations and promises assuring us of succour from our distresses, upon our supplication to God; whence St. *Paul* thus adviseth against all solicitude: *Be careful for nothing, but in every thing by prayer, and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God*: *And* (addeth signifying the consequence of this practice) *the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.*

Matt. 7. 11. Psal. 145. 18. Jam. 4. 8. Psal. 34. 6. 107. 6. Phil. 4. 7. (Psal. 25. 16. 86. 1. 4, 17. 44. 23.)

It likewise performeth the same by procuring grace and aid from God, which may enable and dispose us to bear all evils well, which is really much better than a removal of them; for that hence they become wholsome and profitable to us, and causes of present good, and grounds of future reward; thus when St. *Paul besought God* for deliverance from his thorn in the flesh, the return to him was; *My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness*: It was a greater favour to receive an improvement of spiritual strength, occasioned by that cross, then to be quite freed from it.

2 Cor. 12. 9. 1 Cor. 10. 13.

Devotion also hath immediately of it self a special efficacy to produce content. As in any distress it is a great consolation, that we can have recourse to a good Friend, that we may discharge our cares and our resentments into his bosome; that we may demand advice from him, and, if need be, request his succour; so much more it must be a great comfort, that we can in our need approach to God, who is infinitely the most faithful, the most affectionate, the most sufficient Friend that can be; always most ready, most willing, most able to direct and to relieve us: He desires, and delights, that *in the day of our trouble we should seek him*; that *we should pour forth our hearts before him*, that we should *cast our burthens*, and *our cares upon him*, that we should upon all occasions implore his guidance and aid: And complying with his desires as we shall assuredly find a successful event of our devotions, so we shall immediately enjoy great comfort and pleasure in them.

Psal. 77. 2. 27. 8. 105. 4. 62. 8. 1 Sam. 1. 15. Psal. 55. 22. 1 Pet. 5. 7. Psal. 5. 8. 27. 11. 31. 3. 43. 3. 139. 24. 143. 10. 61. 2. Jer. 31. 9.

The *God of all consolation* doth especially by this chanel convey his comfort into our hearts; his very presence (that *presence*, in which the *Psalmist* saith *there is fulness of joy*) doth mightily warm and chear us; his Holy Spirit doth in our religious entercourse with him insinuate a lightsome serenity of mind, doth kindle sweet and kindly affections, doth scatter the gloomy clouds of sadness; practising it we shall be able to say with the *Psalmist*, *In the multitude of my thoughts within me thy comforts delight my soul.*

Psal. 16. 11. Psal. 94. 19.

Humbly addressing our selves to God, and reverently conversing with him doth compose our minds, and charm our passions, doth sweeten our

humour doth refresh and raise our spirits, and so doth immediately breed and nourish contentedness.

It also strengthneth our faith, and quickneth our hope in God, whereby Isa. 26. 3. we are enabled to support our present evils, and peace of mind doth spring up within us.

Psal. 73. 26. 69. 16. 23. 4. 71. 20. It enflameth our love unto God, in sense of his gracious illapses, thence rendring us willing to endure any want or pain for his sake, or at his appointment.

It in fine doth minister a ravishing delight, abundantly able to supply the defect of any other pleasures, and to allay the smart of any pains whatever; rendring thereby the meanest estate more acceptable and pleasant, than any prosperity without it can be. So that if we be truly devout we can hardly be discontent: It is discosting from God by a neglect of devotion, or by a negligence therein, that doth expose us to the incursions of worldly regret and sorrow.

These are general Remedies and Duties both in this and all other regards necessary, the which yet we may be induced to perform in contemplation of this happy fruit (contentedness) arising from them. Farther,

4. It serveth toward production of contentedness to reflect much upon our imperfection, unworthiness and guilt; so as thereby to work in our hearts a lively sense of them, and a hearty sorrow for them; this will divert our sadness into its right channel, this will drown our lesser grief by the influx of a greater. It is the nature of a greater apprehension or pain incumbent to extinguish in a manner, and swallow up the sense of a lesser, although in it self grievous; as he that is under a fit of the stone doth scarce feel a pang of the gout; he that is assaulted by a wolf will not regard the biting of a flea. Whereas then of all evils and mischiefs moral evils are incomparably far the greatest, in nature the most ugly and abominable, in consequence the most hurtful and horrible; seeing (in St. *Chrysostome's* language) *Excepting sin, there is nothing grievous or terrible among humane things; not poverty, not sickness, not disgrace, not that which seemeth the most extream of all evil, death it self; those being names only among such as philosophate, names of calamity, void of reality; but the real calamity this, to be at variance with God, and to do that which displeaseth him*; seeing evidently according to just estimation no evil beareth any proportion to the evil of Sin, if we have a due sense thereof, we can hardly be affected with any other accident: If we can keep our minds intent upon the heinous nature, and the lamentable consequences of Sin, all other evils cannot but seem exceedingly light and inconsiderable; we cannot but apprehend it a very silly and unhandsome thing to resent or regard them: What (shall we then judge) is poverty in comparison to the want of a good conscience? what is Sickness compared to distemper of mind, and decay of spiritual strength? what is any disappointment to the being defeated and overthrown by temptation? what any loss to the being deprived of God's love and favour? what any disgrace to the being out of esteem and respect with God? what any unfaithfulness or inconstancy of friends to having deserted or betrayed our own soul? what can any danger signify to that of eternal misery, incurred by offending God? what pressure can weigh against the load of guilt, or what pain equal that of stinging remorse? In fine, what condition can be so bad as that of a wretched Sinner? any case surely is tolerable, is desirable

Οὐδὲν δεινὸν ὡς ἀνθρώποις, ἀλλ' ἢ ἁμαρτία μόνη· ἡ πενία, ἡ νόσος, ἡ χυδεις ἐκ ἐπήρεια, ἐκ ἀτιμία, &c. Chrys. ἀνδρ. ε'. τ'. 6. *Vid. ad* Olymp. *Ep.* 13. *ad* Theod. 1.

desirable, is lovely and sweet in comparison to this: Would to God, may a man in this case reasonably say, that I were poor and forelorn as any beggar; that I were covered all over with botches and blains as any *Lazar*; that I were bound to pass my days in an hospital or a dungeon; might I be chained to an oar, might I lye upon the rack, so I were clear and innocent: Such thoughts and affections if reflecting on our sinful doings and state do suggest and impress, what place can there be for resentment of other petty crosses?

Contrition also upon this score is productive of a certain sweetness and joy apt to quash or to allay all worldly grief: as *it worketh a salutary repentance not to be repented of*, so it therewith breedeth a satisfactory comfort, which doth ever attend repentance: He that is very sensible of his guilt, cannot but consequently much value the remedy thereof, mercy; and thence earnestly be moved to seek it; then in contemplation of divine goodness, and considering God's gracious promises, will be apt to conceive faith and hope, upon his imploring mercy, and resolution to amend; thence will spring up a chearful satisfaction, so possessing the heart, as to expel or to exclude other displeasures: A holy and a worldly sadness cannot well consist together. 2 Cor. 7. 10. *Vid.* Chrys. *ad* Demet. *&* *ad* Steletch. *Tom.* 6.

5. Another good instrument of contentedness is sedulous application of our minds to honest employment. Honest studies and cares divert our minds, and drive sad thoughts from them: They chear our spirits with wholesome food and pleasant entertainments; they yield good fruits, and a success accompanied with satisfaction, which will extinguish or temper discontent: While we are studious or active, discontent cannot easily creep in, and soon will be stifled.

Idleness is the great mother and the nurse of discontent; it layeth the mind open for melancholly conceits to enter; it yieldeth harbour to them, and entertainment there; it depriveth of all the remedies and allays which business affordeth.

Reciprocally discontent also begetteth idleness, and by it groweth: They are like ice and water, arising each out of the other: We should therefore not suffer any sadness so to encroach upon us, as to hinder us from attending to our business (the honest works and studies of our calling) for it thereby will grow stronger and more hardly vincible. *Mater me genuit.*

6. A like expediment to remove discontent is good company. It not onely sometimes ministreth advices and arguments for content, but raiseth the drooping spirit, erecting it to a loving complaisance, drawing it out towards others in expressions of kindness, and yielding delight in those which we receive from others, infecting us by a kind of contagion with good humour, and instilling pleasant *Idea*'s into our fancy, agreeably diverting us from sad and irksome thoughts: Discontent affecteth retirement and solitude, as its element and food; good company partly starveth it by smothering sad thoughts, partly cureth it by exhilarating discourse. No man hardly can find displeasure, while friendly conversation entertaineth him; no man returneth from it without some refreshment and ease of mind. Ἀχαδὲς ἡ μαχαιρα ὄζω ἑταίρε.

7. Having right and lowly conceits of our selves is a most sure guardian and procurer of content: For answerable to a man's judgment of himself are his resentments of the dealing he meeteth with from God or man. He that thinks meanly as he ought of himself, will not easily be offended at any thing; any thing, will he think, is good enough for me; I deserve nothing from God, I cannot deserve much of man; if I have any competence of provision for my life, any tolerable usage, any respect, it is more

more than my due, I am bound to be thankful: But he that conceiteth highly (that is vainly) of himſelf, nothing will ſatisfie him; nothing, thinks he, is good enough for him, or anſwerable to his deſerts; no body can yield him ſufficient reſpect; any ſmall neglect diſturbeth and enrageth him; he cannot endure that any man ſhould thwart his intereſt, ſhould croſs his humour, ſhould diſſent from his opinion; Hence ſeeing the world will not eaſily be induced to conceit of him as he doth of himſelf, nor to comply with his humours and pretences, it is impoſſible that he ſhould be content.

8. It conduceth to this purpoſe to contemplate and reſent the publick ſtate of things, the intereſt of the World, of our Country, of God's Church. The ſenſe of publick calamities will drown that of private, as unworthy to be conſidered or compared with them: The ſenſe of publick proſperity will allay that of particular misfortune. How (will a wiſe and good man ſay) can I deſire to proſper and flouriſh, while the State is in danger or diſtreſs? how can I grieve, ſeeing my Country is in good condition? is it juſt, is it handſome that I ſhould be a Non-conformiſt either in the publick ſorrow or joy? Indeed

9. All Hearty Charity doth greatly alleviate diſcontent. If we bear ſuch a good will to our Neighbour as to have a ſincere compaſſion of his evils, and complacence in his good, our caſe will not much afflict us. If we can appropriate and enjoy the proſperity, the wealth, the reputation, of our Neighbour, by delighting in them, what can we want; what can diſpleaſe us? If our heart be enlarged in pity for the misfortunes of others, it cannot be contracted with grief for our own: Our ſorrow, like water, being thus diffuſed, cannot be ſo deep but it will be more fruitful; it will produce ſuch effects as will comfort and pleaſe us; It is a ſtingy ſelfiſhneſs which maketh us ſo very ſenſible of croſſes, and ſo uncapable of comfort.

10. Again, if we will attain contentment, we muſt take heed of ſetting our affection upon any worldly thing whatever, ſo as very highly to prize it, very paſſionately to affect it, very eagerly to purſue it; ſo as to conceive our happineſs in any meaſure to hang on it, or ſtick thereto: If there be any ſuch thing, we ſhall be diſappointed in the acquiſt, or the retention of it; or we ſhall be diſſatisfied in its enjoyment.

So to adhere in affection to any thing is an adulterous diſloyalty toward our Maker and beſt Friend; from which it is expedient that we ſhould be reclaimed; whence God (in juſt anger, or in kind mercy) will be apt to croſs us in our attempts to get it, or to deprive us of its poſſeſſion; whence the diſpleaſure will follow, which always attendeth a ſeparation from things we love. But if we be ſuffered to obtain or to retain it, we ſhall ſoon find diſſatisfaction therein; being either diſguſted with ſome bitterneſs in it (ſuch as doth lurk in every ſenſible good) or being cloyed with its luſciouſneſs: it after a ſmall enjoyment will become either diſtaſtful or inſipid.

This, according to continual experience, is the nature of all things pleaſant onely to ſenſe or fancy, preſently to ſatiate: No beauty can long pleaſe the eye, no melody the ear, no delicacy the palate, no curioſity the fancy; a little time doth waſt away, a ſmall uſe doth wear out the pleaſure, which at firſt they afford: Novelty commendeth and ingratiateth them; diſtance repreſenteth them fair and lovely; the want or abſence of them rendreth them deſirable; but the preſence of them dulleth their grace, the poſſeſſion of them deadneth the appetite to them.

New objects with a gentle and grateful touch warble upon the corporeal organs, or excite the ſpirits into a pleaſant friſk of motion; but when uſ

hath levigated the organs, and made the way ſo ſmooth and eaſie that the ſpirits paſs without any ſtop, thoſe objects are no longer felt, or very faintly; ſo that the pleaſure ceaſeth.

Onely thoſe things which reaſon (religious and ſound reaſon) doth approve, do yield a laſting (undecaying, unalterable) ſatisfaction; if we ſet our affections on them, we cannot fail of content: In ſeeking them we cannot be diſappointed, for God (without any reſervation or exception) hath promiſed to beſtow them upon thoſe who ſeriouſly and diligently ſeek them: nor can we be diſpoſſeſſed of them; God will not take them away, and they lie beyond the reach of any other hand: Having them then we cannot but fully and durably be ſatisfied in the fruition of them; the longer we have them, the more we ſhall like them; the more we taſt them, the better we ſhall reliſh them: time waſteth not, but improveth the ſenſe of their unfading beauty and indefectible ſweetneſs.

11. It is of great influence toward contentedneſs with an earneſt and impartial regard to contemplate things, as they are in themſelves, deveſted of tragical appearances, in which they are wrapt by our own inconſiderate fancy, or which vulgar prejudices do throw upon them: As all things, looked upon by the corporeal eye through a miſt, do ſeem bigger then in reality they are, ſo to the eye of our mind all things (both good and evil) ſeem hugely enlarged, when viewed through the foggs of our dusky imagination, or of popular conceit. If we will eſteem that very good, which with a gay appearance dazleth our imagination, or which the common admiration and applauſe of men recommendeth, the moſt vain and worthleſs, the moſt dangerous, the moſt miſchievous things often will appear ſuch; and if we pleaſe to accompt thoſe things greatly bad which look ugly or horridly to imagination, which are defamed by the injudicious part of men; or which men commonly do loath, do fret at, do wail for, we ſhall take the beſt, moſt innocent, moſt uſeful, moſt wholeſome things for ſuch, and accordingly theſe errours of our minds will be followed by a perverſe practice, productive of diſſatisfaction and diſpleaſure to us. No man ever will be ſatisfied, who values things according to the price which fancy ſetteth on them, or according to the rate they bear in the common market; who diſtinguiſheth not between good and famous, bad and infamous; who is affected accordingly with the want of thoſe things, which men call good, with the preſence of thoſe which they term bad.

But if we judge of things as God declareth, as impartial and cautious reaſon dictateth, as experience diligently obſerved (by their fruits and conſequences) diſcovereth them to be, we ſhall have little cauſe to be affected by the want, or preſence of any ſuch thing which is wont to produce diſcontent.

12. We ſhould to this purpoſe take eſpecial care to ſearch out through our condition, and pick thence the good that is therein, making the beſt we can of it, enjoying and improving it; but what is inconvenient or offenſive therein declining it, diminiſhing it, tempering it ſo well as we may, always forbearing to aggravate it. There are in nature divers ſimples, which have in them ſome part, or ſome juice very noxious, which being ſevered and caſt away, the reſt becometh wholeſome food; neither indeed is there any thing in nature ſo venomous, but that from it by art and induſtry may be extracted ſomewhat medicinal, and of good uſe, when duly applied, ſo in moſt apparent evils lieth incloſed much good, which if we carefully ſeparate (caſting away the intermixed droſs and refuſe)

refuse) we shall find benefit, and taste comfort thence; there is nothing so throughly bad, as being well ordered, and opportunely ministred will not do us much good: So if from poverty we cast away or bear quietly that which a little pincheth the sense, or grateth on the fancy, and enjoy the undistractedness of mind, the liberty, the leisure, the health, the security from envy, obloquy, strife, which it affordeth, how satisfactory may it become to us? The like conveniencies are in disgrace, disappointment, and other such evils, which being improved may endear them to us: Even Sin it self (the worst of evils, the onely true evil) may yield great benefits to us; it may render us sober and lowly in our own eyes, devout in imploring mercy, and thankful to God for it; merciful and charitable toward others in our opinions and censures; more laborious in our good practice, and watchful over our steps: And if this deadly poison well administred yieldeth effects so exceedingly beneficial and salutary, what may other harmless (though unhandsome, and unpleasant) things do, being skilfully managed?

13. It is a most effectual means of procuring content, and curing discontent, to rowse and fortify our faith in God, by, with most serious attention, reflecting upon the arguments and experiments, which assure us concerning God's particular providence over all, over us. It is really infidelity (in whole, or in part, no faith, or a small and weak faith) which is at the root, as of all sin, so particularly of discontent: For how is it possible, did we firmly believe, and with any measure of attention consider that God taketh care of us, that he tendereth our good, that he is ready at hand to succour us, (how then, I say, is it possible) that we should fear any want, or grievously resent any thing incident? But we like St. *Peter* are ὀλιγόπιστοι, of *little faith*, therefore we cannot *walk on the sea*; but in despair sink down: Sometimes our faith is buried in oblivion or carelesness; we forget, or mind not that there is a Providence; but look on things as if they fell out casually or fatally; thence expect no redress from Heaven, so tumble into despair and disconsolateness. Sometimes because God doth not in our time and our way relieve us or gratifie us we slip into profane doubt, questioning in our hearts whether he doth indeed regard us, or whether any relief is to be expected from him; not considering, that onely God can tell when, and how it is best to proceed; that often it is not expedient our wishes should be granted; that we are not wise enough, or just enough to appoint or chuse for our selves; that it is impossible for God to gratify every man; that it would be a mad World, if God in his government thereof should satisfie all our desires.

We forget how often God hath succoured us in our needs and straits, how continually he hath provided for us; how patiently and mercifully he hath born with us, what miracles of bounty and mercy he hath performed in our behalf; we are like that distrustful and inconsiderate people, who *remembred not the hand of God, nor the day when he delivered them*; *remembred not the multitude of his mercies*; but *soon forgat his works, and waited not for his counsel*; *They forgat God their Saviour, who had done great things in Egypt, wondrous works in the land of Ham, and terrible things in the red Sea.*

Psal. 78. 42.
Psal. 106. 7, 13, 21.

From such dispositions in us our discontents do spring; and we cannot cure them, but by recollecting our selves from such forgetfulness and negligence; by shaking off such wicked doubts and distrusts; by fixing our hearts and hopes on him, who alone can help us; who is *our strength, the strength of our heart, of our life, of our salvation.*

Psal. 22. 19. 46. 1. 81. 1. 59. 7. 144. 1. Psal. 73. 26. 27. 1. 140. 7.

Of

Of him (to conclude) let us humbly implore, that he in mercy would beſtow upon us grace to ſubmit in all things to his Will, to acquieſce in all his diſpenſations, gladly to embrace and undergo whatever he allotteth to us; in every condition, and for all events befalling us heartily to adore, thank and bleſs him: Even ſo to the Ever-bleſſed God, our gracious maker and preſerver, be eternally rendred all glory, thankſgiving and praiſe. *Amen.*

SERMON X.

Of Patience.

1 PET. 2. 21.

Becauſe alſo Chriſt ſuffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye ſhould follow his ſteps.

IN theſe Words two things appear eſpecially obſervable; a duty implied (the *duty* of *patience*) and a reaſon expreſſed, which enforceth the practice of that duty (the *example* of *Chriſt.*) We ſhall (uſing no more Preface, or circumſtance) firſt briefly, in way of explication and direction, touch the duty it ſelf, then more largely deſcribe, and urge the example.

The word *patience* hath, in common uſage, a double meaning, taken from the reſpect it hath unto two ſorts of objects, ſomewhat different. As it reſpecteth provocations to anger, and revenge by injuries, or diſcourteſies, it ſignifieth a diſpoſition of mind to bear them with charitable meekneſs; as it relateth to adverſities and croſſes diſpoſed to us by providence, it importeth a pious undergoing and ſuſtaining them. That both theſe kinds of patience may here be underſtood, we may, conſulting and conſidering the context, eaſily diſcern: that which immediately precedeth, *If when ye do well, and ſuffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable to God*, relateth to good endurance of adverſity; that which preſently followeth, *who when he was reviled, reviled not again, when he ſuffered he threatned not*, referreth to meek comporting with provocations: The Text therefore, as it looketh backward, doth recommend the patience of adverſities, as forward, the patience of contumelies. But ſeeing both theſe objects are reducible to one more general, comprizing both, that is, things ſeeming evil to us, or offenſive to our ſenſe, we may ſo explicate the duty of patience, as to include them both.

Patience then is that vertue, which qualifieth us to bear all conditions, and all events, by God's diſpoſal incident to us, with ſuch apprehenſions and perſwaſions of mind, ſuch diſpoſitions and affections of heart, ſuch external deportments, and practices of life as God requireth, and good

reaſon directeth. Its nature will, I conceive, be underſtood beſt by conſidering the chief acts which it produceth, and wherein eſpecially the practice thereof conſiſteth; the which briefly are theſe.

1. A thorough perſwaſion, that nothing befalleth us by fate, or by chance, or by the meer agency of inferiour cauſes, but that all proceedeth from the diſpenſation, or with the allowance of God, (that, *Affliction doth not come forth of the duſt, nor doth trouble ſpring out of the ground*; but that all, both *good and evil proceedeth out of the mouth of the moſt high*) according as *David* reflected, when *Shimei* reviled him; *Let him* (ſaith the good King) *curſe, becauſe the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David*; and as *Job*, when he was ſpoiled of all his goods, acknowledged, *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away.*

Job 5. 6. Lam. 3. 38. 2 Sam. 16. 10. Job 1. 21.

2. A firm belief, that all occurrences (however adverſe, and croſs to our deſires) are well conſiſtent with the juſtice, wiſdom and goodneſs of God; ſo that we cannot reaſonably diſapprove, repine at, or complain of them; but are bound and ready to avow with the *Pſalmiſt*, that *All his paths are mercy and truth*; *He is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works*; to judge and ſay with *Hezekiah*, *Good is the word of the Lord, which thou haſt ſpoken*; to confeſs with *David* unto him, *I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right*; *and that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me.*

Pſal. 25. 10. 145. 17. 2 Kings 20. 19. Pſal. 119. 75.

3. A full ſatisfaction of mind, that all (even the moſt bitter, and ſad accidents) do (according to God's purpoſe) tend, and conduce to our good; acknowledging the truth of thoſe divine Aphoriſms; *Happy is the man whom God correcteth*; *whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a Father the Son, in whom he delighteth. As many as I love I rebuke, and chaſten.*

Job 5. 17. Jam. 1. 12. Prov. 3. 12. Heb. 12. 5. Rev. 3. 19.

4. An entire ſubmiſſion, and reſignation of our wills to the will of God; ſuppreſſing all rebellious inſurrections, and grievous reſentments of heart againſt his providence; which may diſpoſe us heartily to ſay after our *Lord*, *Let not my will, but thine be done*; with good *Eli*, *It is the Lord Let him do what ſeemeth him good*; with *David*, *Here I am, let him do to me as ſeemeth good to him*; yea even with *Socrates*, *If ſo it pleaſeth God ſo let it be.*

Luke 22. 42. 1 Sam. 3. 18. 2 Sam. 15. 26.

Bearing adverſities calmly, chearfully and courageouſly; ſo as not to be diſcompoſed with anger, or grief; not to be put out of humour, nor to be dejected or diſheartened; but in our diſpoſition of mind to reſemble the primitive Saints, who were ὡς λυπούμενοι ἀεὶ δὲ χαίροντες, *as grieved, but always rejoicing*; who *took joyfully the ſpoiling of their goods*, who *accompted it all joy when they fell into divers tribulations.*

2 Cor. 6. 10. Heb. 10. 34. Jam. 1. 2.

6. A hopeful confidence in God for the removal or eaſement of our afflictions, and for his gracious aid to ſupport them well; agreeable to thoſe good rules and precepts? *It is good that a man ſhould both hope, and wait quietly for the ſalvation of the Lord*; *Reſt in the Lord, and wait patiently for him*; *wait on the Lord, be of good courage, and he ſhall ſtrengthen thine heart*; according to the pattern of *David*, who, in ſuch a caſe, thus roused and ſtaid himſelf: *Why art thou caſt down, O my ſoul, and why art thou diſquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him for the help of his countenance*; and after the holy *Apoſtles*, who in their moſt forlorn eſtate could ſay, *We are troubled on every ſide, yet not diſtreſſed*; *we are perplexed, but not in deſpair*; *perſecuted, but not forſaken*; *caſt down but not deſtroyed.*

Lam. 3. 26. Pſal. 37. 7. 27. 14. Pſal. 42. 5. 2 Cor. 4. 8.

7. A willingneſs to continue, during God's pleaſure, in our afflicted ſtate, without wearineſs, or irkſome longings for alteration; according to that advice of the *wiſe Man*, *My ſon, deſpiſe not the chaſtning of the Lord, neither be weary of his correction*; and that of the *Apoſtle*, back'd with our Lord

Prov. 3. 11.

Lord's example; *Considering him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest we be weary, and faint in our minds.* Heb. 12. 3.

8. A lowly frame of mind (that is, being sober in our conceits of our selves, sensible of our unworthiness, and meanness, of our natural frailty, penury and wretchedness; of our manifold defects and miscarriages in practice; being meek and gentle, tender and pliable in our temper and frame of spirit; being deeply affected with reverence and dread toward the awful majesty, mighty power, perfect justice and sanctity of God; all this) wrought by our adversity effectually, according to its design, quelling our haughty stomach, softning our hard hearts, mitigating our peevish humours; according to St. *Peter's* injunction, *Be humbled under the mighty hand of God*; and God's own approbation joined with a gracious promise, *To this man will I look; even to him that is of a poor and contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.* 1 Pet. 5. 6. Ez. 66. 2. Isa.

9. Restraining our Tongues from all discontentful complaints, and murmurings, all profane, harsh, unsavoury expressions, importing displeasure, or dissatisfaction in God's dealing toward us, arguing desparation or distrust in him; such as were those of the impatient and incredulous *Israelites*; *They spake against God, and said, can God furnish a table in the wilderness? behold he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also, can he provide flesh for his people?* Such as they used, of whom the *Prophet* said —— *When they shall be hungry, they will fret themselves, and curse their King, and their God*; such as they were guilty of, whom St. *Jude* calleth γογγυσὰς ϗ μεμψιμοίρους, *murmurers, and querulous persons* (or such as found fault with their lot) that which is stiled, *charging God foolishly*; for abstaining from which (notwithstanding the pressure of his most grievous calamities) *Job* is commended (where 'tis said, *Job sinned not, neither charged God foolishly*) that which the *Prophet* condemneth as unreasonable in that expostulation; *Wherefore doth the living man complain?* In such cases we should smother our passions in a still and silent demeanour, as the *Psalmist* advised, and as he practised himself: *I was dumb* (saith he) *and opened not my mouth, because it was thy doings.* Yea contrariwise patience requireth. Pfal. 78. 19, 20. Isa. 8. 21. Jude 16. Job 1. 22. Lam. 3. 39. Pfal. 37. 7. 46. 10. 4. 4. Pfal. 39. 9.

10. Blessing and praising God (that is, declaring our hearty satisfaction in God's proceedings with us, acknowledging his wisdom, justice and goodness therein, expressing a grateful sense thereof, as wholsome and beneficial to us) in conformity to *Job*, who, upon the loss of all his comforts, did thus vent his mind: *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord.* Job 1. 21.

11. Abstaining from all irregular and unworthy courses toward the removal, or redress of our crosses; chusing rather to abide quietly under their pressure, than by any unwarrantable means to relieve or relaxe our selves; contentedly wearing, rather than violently *breaking our yoke*, or *bursting our bonds*; rather continuing poor, than striving to enrich our selves by fraud or rapine; rather lying under contempt, than by sinful or sordid compliances attempting to gain the favour and respect of men; rather embracing the meanest condition, than labouring by any turbulent, unjust, or uncharitable practices to amplifie our estate; rather enduring any inconvenience, or distress, than *setting our faces toward Egypt*, or having recourse to any succour which God disalloweth; according to what is replied in that reprehension of St. *Paul, Now therefore it is utterly a fault among you, because ye go to Law one with another; Why do ye not rather take wrong; why do ye not rather suffer your selves to be defrauded?* and in that advice of St. *Peter*; *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, com-* Jer. 5. 5. Jer. 42. 15. 1 Cor. 6. 7. 1 Pet. 4. 19.

mit the keeping of their ſouls to him in well-doing, as unto a faithful creator.

12. A fair behaviour toward the inſtruments and abettors of our affliction; thoſe who brought us into it, or who detain us under it, by keeping off relief, or ſparing to yield the ſuccour which we might expect; the forbearing to expreſs any wrath or diſpleaſure, to exerciſe any revenge, to retain any grudge, or enmity toward them; but rather even upon that ſcore bearing good-will, and ſhewing kindneſs unto them; unto them, not onely as to our brethren, whom according to the general law of charity we are bound to love, but as to the Servants of God in this particular caſe, or as to the inſtruments of his pleaſure toward us, conſidering that by maligning or miſchiefing them, we do ſignifie ill reſentment of God's dealings with us, and in effect through their ſides, do wound his Providence: Thus did the *pious King* demean himſelf, when he was bitterly reproached, and curſed by *Shimei*; not ſuffering (upon this accompt) any harm or requital to be offered to him; thus did the holy *Apoſtles*, who *being reviled did bleſs, being perſecuted did bear it, being defamed did intreat*; thus did our *Lord* deport himſelf toward his ſpiteful adverſaries, who *being reviled did not revile again; when he ſuffered did not threaten, but committed it to him that judgeth righteouſly.*

2 Sam. 16. 7.
1 Cor. 4. 12.
1 Pet. 2. 23. 3. 9.

13. Particularly in regard to thoſe, who by injurious and offenſive uſage, do provoke us; patience importeth,

1. That we be not haſtily, over-eaſily, not immoderately, not pertinaciouſly incenſed with anger toward them; according to thoſe divine Precepts, and Aphoriſms; *'Be ſlow to wrath; Be not haſty in thy ſpirit to be angry; for anger reſteth in the boſom of fools. Give place to wrath* (that is, remove it.) *Let all bitterneſs, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-ſpeaking be put away from you, with all malice. Ceaſe from anger, let go diſpleaſure, fret not thy ſelf any-wiſe to do evil.*

Jam. 1. 19.
Eccleſ. 7. 9.
Prov. 16. 32. 14, 17, 29.
Rom. 12. 19.
Eph. 4. 31, 26.
Coloſſ. 3. 8.

2. That we do not in our hearts harbour any ill-will, or ill-wiſhes, or ill-deſigns toward them, but that we truly deſire their good, and purpoſe to further it, as we ſhall have ability and occaſion; according to that Law (even charged on the *Jews*) *Thou ſhalt not bear any grudge againſt the children of thy people; but thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thy ſelf*; and according to that noble command of our Saviour; *Love your enemies, pray for them which deſpitefully uſe you, and perſecute you.*

Matt. 5. 21, 24.
Pſal. 37. 8.
Levit. 19. 18.
Matt. 5. 44.
Luke 6. 27.

3. That in effect we do not execute any revenge, or for requital do any miſchief to them, either in word or deed; but for their reproaches exchange bleſſings (or good words and wiſhes) for their outrages repay benefits and good turns; according to thoſe Evangelical Rules; *Do good to them that hate you, 'Bleſs them that curſe you: Bleſs them that perſecute you, bleſs and curſe not: See that none render evil for evil: 'Be pitiful, be courteous, not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing, but contrariwiſe bleſſing: If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirſt, give him drink: Say not I will do to him as he hath done to me; I will render to the man according to his work: Say thou not I will recompenſe evil, but wait on the Lord, and he ſhall ſave thee.*

Matt. 5. 44, 39.
Rom. 12. 14.
1 Theſſ. 5. 15.
1 Pet. 3. 9.
Prov. 25. 21.
Rom. 12. 20.
Prov. 24. 29. 20. 22.

14. In fine, Patience doth include and produce a general meekneſs and kindneſs of affection, together with an enlarged ſweetneſs, and pleaſantneſs in converſation and carriage toward all men; implying, that, how hard ſoever our caſe, how ſorry or ſad our condition is, we are not therefore angry with the World, becauſe we do not thrive, or flouriſh in it; that we are not diſſatisfied, or diſguſted with the proſperous eſtate of other men; that we are not become ſullen or froward toward any man, becauſe his fortune excelleth ours; but that rather we do *rejoice with them that rejoice*; we do find complacence, and delight in their good ſucce-

Rom. 12. 15.

we borrow satisfaction and pleasure from their enjoyments.

In these and the like acts, the practice of this vertue (a vertue, which all men, in this state of inward weakness, and outward trouble, shall have much need and frequent occasion to exercise) consisteth; unto which practice, even Philosophy, natural reason, and common sense do suggest many inducements; the tenour of our holy Faith and Religion do supply more and better; but nothing can more clearly direct, or more powerfully excite thereto, than that admirable example, by which our Text doth enforce it: Some principal of those rational inducements we shall cursorily touch, then insist upon this example.

It will generally induce us to bear patiently all things incident, if we consider, That it is the natural right and prerogative of God to dispose of all things, to assign our station here, and allot our portion to us; whence it is a most wrongful insolence in us, by complaining of our state, to contest his right, or impeach his management thereof: That we are obliged to God's free bounty for numberless great benefits and favours; whence it is vile ingratitude to be displeased for the want of some lesser inconveniences: That God having undertaken, and promised to support and succour us, it is a heinous affront to distrust him, and consequently to be dissatisfied with our condition: That seeing God doth infinitely better understand what is good for us, than we can do; he is better affected toward us, and more truly loveth us than we do our selves; he with an unquestionable right hath an uncontroulable power to dispose of us, it is most reasonable to acquiesce in his choice of our state: That since we have no claim to any good, or any pleasure, and thence in with-holding any, no wrong is done to us, 'tis unjust and frivolous to murmur, or grumble; since we are, by nature, God's servants, it is fit the appointment of our rank, our garb, our diet, all our accommodations, and employments in his family, should be left entirely to his discretion and pleasure: That we being grievous Sinners, *less than the least of God's mercies*, meriting no good, but deserving sore punishment from him, it is just, that we should be highly content and thankful for any thing on this side death and damnation: That our afflictions, being the natural fruits and results of our choice, or voluntary miscarriages, it is reasonable we should blame our selves rather than pick quarrels with Providence for them. That our condition, be it what it will, cannot, being duly estimated, be extremely bad, or insupportably grievous; for that as no condition here is perfectly and purely good (not deficient in some accommodations, not blended with some troubles) so there is none that hath not its conveniences and comforts; for that it is our fond conceits, our froward humours, our perverse behaviours, which create the mischiefs adherent to any state; for that also how forelorn soever our case is, we cannot fail, if we please, of a capacity to enjoy goods far more than countervailing all possible want of these goods, or presence of these evils; we may have the use of our reason, a good conscience, hope in God, assurance of God's love and favour, abundance of spiritual blessings here, and a certain title to eternal glory and bliss hereafter; which if we can have, our condition cannot be deemed uncomfortable. That indeed our adversity is a thing very good and wholsome, very profitable and desirable, as a means of breeding, improving and exercising the best vertues, of preparing us for, and entitling us to the best rewards. That our state cannot ever be desperate, our adversity probably may not be lasting (there being no connexion between the present and the future, vicissitudes being frequent, all things depending on the arbitrary dispensation of God, who doth always pity us, and is

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apt to relieve us.) That however our affliction will not outlive our selves, and certainly must soon expire with our life. That this World is not a place of perfect convenience, or pure delight; we come not hither to do our will, or enjoy our pleasure, we are not born to make laws, or pick our condition here; but that *trouble* is natural and proper to us (*We are born thereto, as the sparks flie upwards.*) *No tribulation seiseth us, but such as is humane*; whence 'tis reasonable that we contentedly bear the crosses sutable to our nature and state. That no adversity is in kind, or degree, peculiar to us, but if we survey the conditions of other men (of our brethren every where, of our neighbours all about us) and compare our case with theirs, we shall find, that we have many consorts and associates in adversity, most as ill, many far worse bestead than our selves; whence it must be a great fondness and perverseness to be displeased that we are not exempted from, but exposed to bear a share in the common troubles and burthens of mankind. That it hath particularly been the lot of the best men (persons most excellent in vertue, and most deep in God's favour) to sustain adversity; and it therefore becometh us willingly and chearfully to accept it. That, in fine, patience it self is the best remedy to ease us in, to rescue us from adversity, for it cannot much annoy us, if we bear it patiently, God will, in mercy, remove it, if we please him, by demeaning our selves well under it; but that impatience doth not at all conduce to our relief, doth indeed exasperate, and augment our pain: Such considerations may induce us to a patience in general respecting all sorts of evils.

Job 5. 7.
1 Cor. 10. 13.

There are also reasons particularly disposing to bear injuries and contumelies from men calmly and meekly, without immoderate wrath, rancorous hatred, or spiteful revenge toward them: Because they do proceed from divine providence, disposing or permitting them (for the trial of our patience, the abasing our pride, the exercising of some other vertues, or for other good purposes) to fall upon us: Because vindication of misdemeanours committed against us doth not appertain to us; we not being competent Judges of them, nor rightful executors of the punishments due to them; God having reserved to himself the right of decision, and power of execution: *Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord, I will repay it.* Because we are obliged to interpret charitably the actions of our neighbour, supposing his miscarriages to proceed from infirmity, from mistake, or from some cause, which we should be rather inclinable to excuse, than to prosecute with hatred, or revenge. Because indeed our neighbours most culpable offences, as issuing from distemper of mind, are more reasonably the objects of compassion, and charity, than of anger, or ill-will. Because we are bound to forgive all injuries by the command of God, and in conformity to his example, who passeth by innumerable most heinous offences committed against himself: *Gracious is the Lord, and full of compassion, slow to anger, and of great mercy; long-suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth*; so must we be also, if we will be like him, or please him. Because we our selves, being subject to incur the same faults in kind, or greater in value, do need much pardon, and should thence be ready to allow it unto others; both in equity, and in gratitude toward God; lest that in the Gospel be applied to us; *O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me; Shouldst not thou also have had compassion upon thy fellow-servant, even as I had pity on thee?* Because God hath made it a necessary condition of our obtaining mercy; promising us favour if we yield it, menacing us extremity, if we refuse it: *If ye forgive men their trespasses, our heavenly father will also forgive you; But if ye forgive*

Rom. 12. 19.
Heb. 10. 30.
Deut. 32. 35, 36.
Vid. Tert. *de pat. cap.* 10.
Psal. 145. 8. 86. 15.
Matt. 18. 32.
Matt. 6. 14.
Ecclus 8. 2.
Matt. 18. 35.
Mark 11. 25.

not

not men their treſpaſſes, neither will your father forgive your treſpaſſes. Becauſe our neighbour ſuffering by our revenge in any manner (in his body, intereſt, or reputation) doth not any-wiſe profit us, or benefit our eſtate, but needleſly doth multiply and encreaſe the ſtock of miſchief in the World; yea commonly doth bring farther evil upon our ſelves, provoking him to go on in offending us, rendring him more implacably bent againſt us, engaging us conſequently deeper in ſtriſe and trouble: Becauſe no wrong, no diſgrace, no prejudice we can receive from men is of much conſequence to us, if our mind be not diſorder'd, if we are free from thoſe bad paſſions, which really are the worſt evils that can befal us. Becauſe, in fine, impatience it ſelf is inſignificant, and ineffectual to any good purpoſe; or rather produceth ill effects: It doth not cure our wound, or aſſwage our grief; it removeth no inconvenience, nor repaireth any damage we have received; but rather enflameth our diſtemper, and aggravateth our pain; more really indeed moleſting and hurting us, than the injury or diſcourteſie which cauſeth it: Thus briefly doth reaſon dictate to us the practice of all patience.

Idcirco quis te lædit ut doleas, quia fructus lædentis in dolore læſi eſt. Tert. *de pat.* 8.

Si patientiæ incubabo, non dolebo; ſi non dolebo, ulciſci non deſiderabo. Ib. 10.

But the example propoſed by the *Apoſtle* here, and otherwhere by St. *Paul* (*Let the ſame mind be in you, which was alſo in Chriſt Jeſus*——) by the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* (*Let us run with patience the race that is ſet before us, Looking unto Jeſus the authour and finiſher of our faith*——) by our Lord himſelf (*Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly*) that doth in a more lively manner expreſs how in ſuch caſes we ſhould deport our ſelves, and moſt ſtrongly engageth us to comply with duties of this nature. Let us now therefore deſcribe it, and recommend it to your conſideration.

Phil. 2. 5. Heb. 12. 1, 2. Matt. 11. 22.

The example of our Lord was indeed in this kind the moſt remarkable that ever was preſented, the moſt perfect that can be imagined: He was, above all expreſſion, *a man of ſorrows and acquainted with grief*; he did undertake, as to perform the beſt works, ſo to endure the worſt accidents, to which humane nature is ſubject; his whole life being no other than one continual exerciſe of patience, and meekneſs, in all the parts, and to the utmoſt degrees of them: If we trace the footſteps of his life, from the ſordid Manger to the bloudy Croſs, we ſhall not be able to obſerve any matter of complacence, ſcarce any of comfort (in reſpect to his natural or worldly ſtate) to have befallen him.

Vid. Tertull. *de Pat. c.* 3. Cypr. *de Pat.* *T.* 2. *p.* 315. Iſa. 53. 3.

His parentage was mean, to appearance, and his birth, in all exteriour circumſtances, deſpicable: *Is not this the Carpenter's Son?* were words of contempt and offence, upon all occaſions thrown upon him.

Matt. 13. 55. Mark 6. 3.

His life was ſpent not onely in continual labour, and reſtleſs travel, but in hard poverty, yea in extream penury, beneath the ſtate, not onely of the meaneſt Men, but of the moſt ſhifting Beaſts: *The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have neſts, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*

Matt. 8. 20.

For his neceſſary ſubſiſtence we find him often deſtitute of ordinary proviſion (as when he ſought food from the barren Fig-tree) often indebted for it to the courteſie, and (as it were) alms of the vileſt people, of *Publicans and Sinners*: ſo δι' ἡμᾶς ἐπτώχευσεν *he was* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *a beggar for us.*

Matt. 21. 18, 19. *Nullius menſam, tectumve deſpexit.* Tert. 2 Cor. 8. 9.

Yet may we never perceive him any-wiſe diſcontented with, or complaining of his condition; not diſcouraged, or depreſſed in ſpirit thereby, not ſolicitouſly endeavouring any correction or change thereof; but willingly embracing it, heartily acquieſcing therein; and, notwithſtanding all its inconveniences, chearfully diſcharging his duties, vigorouſly purſuing his main deſigns of procuring glory to God, and benefit to men:

Nor

Nor did he onely with content undergo the incommodities of a poor eſtate, but he was ſurrounded with continual dangers; the moſt powerful men of thoſe times (enraged with envy, ambition and avarice) deſperately maligning him; and being inceſſantly attentive upon all occaſi-
John 15. 18. ons to moleſt, hurt and deſtroy him: *The world* (as he ſaith himſelf, that is, all the powerful and formidable part of the World) *hating me*; Yet did not this any-wiſe diſmay, or diſtemper him, nor cauſe him either to repine at his condition, or decline his duty. He utterly diſregarded all their ſpiteful machinations, perſiſting immoveable in the proſecution of his pious and charitable undertakings, to the admiration of thoſe who
John 7. 25. obſerved his demeanour: *Is not this he* (ſaid they) *whom they ſeek to kill? but lo he ſpeaketh boldly.*

Luke 4. 30. Matt. 21. 27. 22. 18. He did indeed ſometimes opportunely ſhun their fury, and prudently did elude their ſnares, but never went violently to repel them, or to execute any revenge for them; improving the wonderful power he was endued with, altogether to the advantage of mankind, never to the bane or hurt of his malicious enemies.

Senſible enough he was of the cauſeleſs hatred they bare him; (ἐμίσησάν με δωρεάν, *They*, ſaid he, *have hated me for nothing*;) and of their extream
John 15. 25. ingratitude; yet never could he be provoked to reſent, or requite their dealing; ſee how mildly he did expoſtulate the caſe with them; *Then*
John 10. 31. (ſaith St. *John*) *the Jews took up ſtones to ſtone him: Jeſus anſwered them, Many good things have I ſhewed you from my Father, for which of thoſe do ye ſtone me?*

To be extremely hated, and inhumanely perſecuted without any fault committed, or juſt occaſion offered, is greatly incenſive of humane paſſion; but for the pureſt, and ſtrongeſt good-will, for the moſt unexpreſſible beneficence, to be recompenced with moſt virulent reproaches, moſt odious ſlanders, moſt outrageous miſuſages, How exceeding was that meekneſs, which without any ſignification of regret, or diſguſt, could endure it?

Matt. 23. 37. Out of moſt tender charity, and ardent deſire of their ſalvation, he inſtructed them, and inſtilled heavenly doctrine into their minds, what thanks, what reward did he receive for that great favour? to be reputed,
John 7. 12. Matt. 27. 63. and reported an Impoſtour: πλανᾷ τὸν ὄχλον, *he* (ſaid they) *doth impoſe upon the people.*

He took occaſion to impart the great bleſſing of pardon for Sin to ſome of them, confirming his authority of doing it by a miraculous work of goodneſs: How did they reſent ſuch an obligation? by accompting him
Matt. 9. 3, &c. a blaſphemer: *Behold* (ſaith St. *Matthew*) *certain of the Scribes ſaid within themſelves, this man blaſphemeth*: Which moſt harſh and uncharitable cenſure of theirs he did not fiercely reprehend, but calmly diſcuſſed, and refuted by a clear reaſoning; τί ἐνθυμεῖσθε πονηρὰ; *Wherefore conceive ye*
Ingratos curavit, inſidiatoribus ceſſit. Tert. *evil in your hearts; for whether is eaſier to ſay, thy ſins are forgiven thee, or to ſay, ariſe and walk?* that is, Is it not credible that he, who can perform the one, may diſpenſe the other?

He freed them from moſt grievous diſeaſes, yea reſcued them from the
Acts 10. 38. greateſt miſchief poſſible in nature, being poſſeſſed by the unclean Fiend; How did they entertain this mighty benefit, by moſt horrible calumny
Matt. 9. 34. 12. 24. accuſing him of Sorcery, or conſpiracy with the Devil himſelf? *The Phariſees ſaid, he caſteth out devils by the prince of the devils*: yea thence at-
Matt. 10. 25. tributing to him the very name and title of the grand Devil: *If they have called the Maſter of the houſe Beelzebub, how much more* (ſhall they defame) *them of his houſhold?* Yet this moſt injurious defamation he no otherwiſe
Matt. 12. 25. rebuked, than by a mild diſcourſe, ſtrongly confuting it; *Every King-*

don

dom (said he) *divided against it self is brought to desolation —— and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how then shall his Kingdom stand?* that is, the Devil better understands his interest, than to assist any man in dispossessing himself.

He did constantly labour in reclaiming them from errour and sin, in converting them to God and goodness, in proposing fair overtures of grace and mercy to them, in shewing them by word and practice the sure way to happiness; What issue was there of all his care and pains? What but neglect, distrust, disappointment, rejection of himself, of what he said, and what he did? *Who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* was a Prophesy, abundantly verified by their carriage toward him. John 12. 38.

These, and the like usages, which he perpetually did encounter, he constantly received without any passionate disturbance of mind, any bitter reflections upon that Generation, any revengeful enterprises against them; yea requited them with continued earnestness of hearty desires, and laborious endeavours for their good.

We might observe the ingrateful disrespects of his own Countreymen, and Kindred toward him, which he passeth over without any grievous disdain; rather excusing it, by noting that entertainment to have been no peculiar accident to himself, but usual to all of like employment; *No Prophet* (said he) *is acceptable in his own countrey.* Luke 4. 24. Matt. 13. 57.

We might also mention his patient suffering repulses from strangers; as when being refused admittance into a *Samaritane* Village, and his Disciples being incensed with that rude discourtesie, would have fire called down from Heaven to consume those Churls, he restrained their unadvised wrath, and thus expressed his admirable meekness; *The Son of man is not come to destroy mens lives, but to save them.* Luke 9. 53, 56.

Non illi saltem civitati quæ eum recipere noluerat iratus est, cum etiam discipuli tam contumelioso oppido cælestes ignes repræsentari voluissent. Tert.

We might likewise remark his meek comporting with the stupid and perverse incredulity of his Disciples, notwithstanding so many pregnant, and palpable inducements continually exhibited for confirmation of their faith; the which he no otherwise, than sometime gently, admonisheth them of, saying, τί δειλοί ἐστε ὀλιγόπιστοι; *Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?* ὀλιγόπιστε, τί ἐδίστασας; *O thou of small faith, why didst thou doubt?* * Luke 9. 41. Matt. 17. 17. *Non peccatores, non publicanos, aspernatus est.* Tert. Matt. 8. 26. 14. 31.

What should I insist on these, although very remarkable instances? since that one scene of his most grievous (shall I say, or glorious) passion doth represent unto us a perfect, and most lively image of the highest patience and meekness possible: of the greatest sorrow that ever was or could be, yet of a patience surmounting it; of the extreamest malice that ever was conceived, yet of a charity overswaying it; of injury most intolerable, yet of a meekness willingly and sweetly bearing it: There may we observe the greatest provocations from all hands to passionate animosity of spirit, and intemperate heat of speech, yet no discovery of the least disorderly, angry, or revengeful thought, the least rash, bitter or reproachful word, but all undergone with clearest serenity of mind, and sweetness of carriage toward all persons.

To *Judas*, who betrayed him, How doth he address himself? Doth he use such terms as the Man deserved, or as passion would have suggested, and reason would not have disallowed; Did he say, Thou most perfidious Villain, thou monster of iniquity and ingratitude; thou desperately wicked Wretch; Dost thou, prompted by thy base covetousness, treacherously attempt to ruine thy gracious Master, and best Friend; thy most benign and bountiful Saviour? No, instead of such proper language,

Matt. 26. 50. he uſed the moſt courteous and endearing terms: Ἑταῖρε, ἐφ' ᾧ πάρει; *Friend* (or companion) *for what doſt thou come*? Or what is thy buſineſs here? a tacite charitable warning there is to reflect upon his unworthy and wicked action, but nothing apparent of wrath, or reproach.

From his own diſciples and ſervants, who had beheld his many miraculous works, and were indebted to him for the greateſt favours, he reaſonably might have expected a moſt faithful adherence, and moſt diligent attendance on him in that juncture; yet he found them careleſs, and ſlothful: What then? How did he take it? Was he angry, did he upbraid, did he ſtorm at them? Did he threaten to diſcard them? No;

Matt. 26. 40, 45. he onely firſt gently admoniſheth them: *What, could ye not watch one hour with me*? then a little exciteth them, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation*: He withal ſuggeſted an excuſe for their drowſineſs and dulneſs; *The Spirit is willing but the fleſh is weak*; in fine, he indulgeth to their weakneſs, letting them alone, ſaying, καθεύδετε λοιπὸν, *Sleep on now and take your reſt.*

Matt. 26. 31. When he foreſaw they would be offended at his (to appearance) diſaſtrous eſtate, and fearfully would deſert him, he yet expreſſed no indignation againſt them, or decreaſe of affection toward them upon that ſcore; but ſimply mentioneth it, as unconcerned in it, and not affected thereby.

And the unworthy Apoſtaſie of that Diſciple, whom he had eſpecially favoured and dignified, he onely did mildly forewarn him of, requiting it foreſeen by the promiſe of his own effectual prayers for his ſupport and recovery; and when St. *Peter* had committed that heinous fact, our good Lord onely *looked on him* with an eye of charity and compaſſion; which more efficaciouſly ſtruck him, than the moſt dreadful threat; or ſharp reprehenſion could have done; *Peter* thereupon *went out, and wept bitterly*

Luke 22. 61, 62. Ἐξελθὼν ἔξω ἔκλαυσε πικρῶς.

When the High-Prieſts officer, upon no reaſonable occaſion, did injuriouſly and ignominiouſly ſtrike him, he returned onely this mild expoſtulation: *If I have ſpoken evil, bear witneſs of the evil; if well, why ſmiteſt thou me?* That is, I adviſe thee to proceed in a fair and legal way againſt me, not to deal thus boiſterouſly and wrongfully, to thy own harm.

John 18. 23. Cypr. *Ep.* 65.

Even careful and tender he was of thoſe, who were the inſtruments of his ſuffering; he protected them from harm, who conducted him to execution; as we ſee in the caſe of the High-Prieſts ſervant, whom (with more zeal, than wherewith he ever regarded his own ſafety) he defended from the fury of his own friend, and cured of the wounds received in the way of perſecuting himſelf.

Luke 22. 51, &c.

All his demeanour under that great Trial was perfectly calm, not the leaſt regret, or reluctancy of mind, the leaſt contradiction, or obloquy of ſpeech appearing therein; ſuch it was as became *the lamb of God*, who was to *take away the ſins of the world*, by a willing oblation of himſelf; ſuch as did exactly correſpond to the ancient Prophecies; *He was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a Lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before the ſhearer is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth*: and, *I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from ſhame and ſpitting.*

Iſa. 53. 7. Iſa. 50. 6.

Neither did the wrongful ſlanders deviſed and alledged againſt him by ſuborned witneſſes, nor the virulent invectives of the Prieſts, nor the barbarous clamours of the people, nor the contemptuous ſpitting upon him and buffeting him, nor the cruel ſcourgings, nor the contumelious mockeries, nor all the bloudy tortures inflicted upon him, wring from him one ſyllable importing any diſſatisfaction in his caſe, any wrath conceived for his miſuſages, any grudge or ill-will in his mind toward his perſecu-

tors

tors; but on the contrary, instead of hatred and revenge he declared the greatest kindness and charity toward them, praying heartily to God his Father for the pardon of their sins. Instead of aggravating their crime and injury against him, he did in a sort extenuate and excuse it, by consideration of their ignorance and mistake: *Lord,* (said he, in the height of his sufferings) *forgive them, for they know not what they do.* The life they so violently bereaved him of, he did willingly mean to lay down for the ransom of their lives; the bloud they spilt he wished to be a salutary Balsam for their wounds and maladies; he most chearfully did offer himself by their hands a sacrifice for their offences. No small part of his afflictions was a sense of their so grievously displeasing God, and pulling mischief on their own heads, a foresight of his kind intentions being frustrated by their obstinate incredulity and impenitence, a reflection upon that inevitable vengeance, which from the divine Justice would attend them; this foreseen did work in him a distasteful sense, (more grievous than what his own pain could produce) and drew from him tears of Compassion (such as no resentment of his own case could extort) for, *When he was come near he beheld the City, and wept over it, saying, O that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace.* Luke 23. 34. Luke 19. 41. 13. 34.

If ever he did express any commotion of mind in reference to this matter, it was onely then when one of his friends, out of a blind fondness of affection did presume to dissuade him from undergoing these evils; then indeed being somewhat moved with indignation he said to St. *Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou art an offence unto me; for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.* Mat. 16. 23.

Neither was it out of a stupid insensibility or stubborn resolution that he did thus behave himself; for he had a most vigorous sense of all those grievances, and a strong (natural) aversation from undergoing them; as those dolorous Agonies wherewith he struggled; those deadly groans he uttered; those monstrous lumps of Bloud he swet out; those earnest Prayers he made to be freed from them, declare; but from a perfect submission to the Divine Will, and entire command over his Passions, an excessive Charity toward Mankind this patient and meek behaviour did spring: *The Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me; nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt; Let not my will, but thine be done. No man taketh away my life, but I lay it down of my own accord; I will give my flesh for the life of the world:* So doth our Lord himself express the true grounds of his passion and his patience. Mat. 26. 37, 38. Luke 22. 44. John 12. 27. Mat. 26. 39. Heb. 5. 7. John 18. 11. Mat. 26. 39. Luke 22. 42. John 10. 18. 6. 51.

Such is the Example of our Lord; the serious consideration whereof how can it otherwise than work patience and meekness in us; If he, that was *the Lord of Glory* (infinitely excellent in Dignity and Vertue) did so readily embrace, did so contentedly endure such extremities of penury, hardship, disgrace and pain, how can we refuse them or repine at them? Can we pretend to a better lot than he received, or presume that God must deal better with us than he did with his own deerest Son? Can we be displeased at a conformity to our Lord and Master? Can we without shame affect to live more splendidly, or to fare more deliciously than he chose to do? Shall we fret or wail, because our desires are crossed, our projects defeated, our interests any-wise prejudiced; when as his most earnest desires, and his most painful endeavours had so little of due and desired success: When he was ever ready, and had so constant occasion to say, *Let not my will be done?* Can we despise that state of meanness and sorrow which he from the highest sublimities of Glory and Beatitude

was pleaſed to ſtoop unto ? Can we take our ſelves for the want of any
Luke 14. 27. preſent conveniences or comforts to be wretched, when as the fountain of
9. 23. Mat. 10. 38. all happineſs was deſtitute of all ſuch things, and ſcarce did ever taſte any
16. 24. worldly pleaſure ? Are we fit or *worthy to be his Diſciples*, if we will not
Heb. 5. 8. *take up his Croſs and follow him* ; if we will not go to his School (that School wherein he is ſaid himſelf to have *learnt obedience*) if we will not con that leſſon which he ſo loudly hath read out, and tranſcribe that Copy which he ſo fairly hath ſet before us : Can we pretend to thoſe great benefits, thoſe high priviledges, thoſe rich and excellent rewards, which he hath
Heb. 2. 9, 10. attained for us, and which he propoſeth to us, if we will not go on toward
Phil. 2. 9. them in that way of patience which he hath trod before us ?

Heb. 12. 3. Can we alſo, if we *conſider him that endured ſuch contradiction of ſinners*, be tranſported with any wrathful or revengeful paſſion, upon any provocation from our brethren ? Can we hope, or wiſh for better uſage from men than our Lord did ever find ? Can we be much diſpleaſed with any man for thwarting our deſires or intereſts, for diſſenting from our conceits, for croſſing our humours, when as he (to whom all reſpect and obſervance was due) did meet with ſo little regard or compliance in any way ; continually did encounter repulſes, diſappointments, oppoſitions from the perverſe and ſpiteful world ? Can we be very jealous of our Credit, or furious when our imaginary honour (honour, that we never really deſerved, or can juſtly claim, being guilty of ſo many great faults and ſins) is touched with the leaſt diſgraceful reflection, if we do well obſerve and mind, that the moſt truly, and indeed onely honourable perſonage (onely honourable, becauſe onely innocent perſon) that ever was had his reputation aſperſed by the moſt odious reproaches, which deepeſt Envy and Malice could deviſe, without any grievous reſentment, or being ſolicitous otherwiſe to aſſert or clear it than by a conſtant ſilence ? Can we be exaſperated by every petty affront, (real or ſuppoſed) when the moſt noble, moſt courteous, moſt obliging perſon that ever breathed upon earth was treacherouſly expoſed to violence by his own ſervant, ſhamefully deſerted by his own moſt beloved friends, deſpitefully treated by thoſe whom he never had offended, by thoſe upon whom he had heaped the greateſt benefits, without expreſſing any anger or diſpleaſure againſt them, but yielding many ſignal teſtimonies of tendereſt pity and love toward them ? Can we ſee our Lord treated like a ſlave and a thief, without any diſturbance or commotion of heart ; and we vile wretches upon every ſlight occaſion ſwell with fierce diſdain, pour forth reproachful language, execute horrible miſchief upon our brethren ? He indeed was ſurrounded with injuries and affronts ; every ſin that ſince the foundation of things hath been committed was an offence againſt him, and a burthen
Iſa. 53. 6. upon him ; (*God laid upon him the iniquities of us all*) ſo many declared enemies, ſo many Rebels, ſo many Perſecutors, ſo many Murtherers he had as there have lived men in the World ; for every ſinner did in truth conſpire to his affliction and deſtruction ; we all in effect did betray him did accuſe him, did mock, did ſcourge, did pierce and crucifie him ; yet
Rom 5. 6, 8, 10 he forgave all offences, he died for all perſons ; *while we were yet enemies, yet ſinners, he died for us*, to reſcue us from death and miſery : And ſhall we not then in imitation of him, for his dear ſake, in gratitude, reſpect and obedience to him, be ready to bear the infirmities of our brethren, to forgive any ſmall wrongs or offences from them ; whatever they do to us, to love them, and do them what good we can ? If ſo admirable a pattern of patience and meekneſs ſo immenſe cannot, what is there that can oblige or move us ? I conclude with thoſe doxologies to our ſo patient and meek Redeemer :

Quam gravis cauſa ſit hominis Chriſtiani ſervum pati nolle cum prior paſſus ſit Dominus, &c. Cypr. *Ep.* 56.

Reprendamus illi patientiam, quam pro nobis ipſe dependit. Ter. *de pat.* 16.

Worth

Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever. Apoc. 5. 12, 13

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood, and hath made us Kings and Priests unto God and his Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen. Apoc. 1. 5.

SERMON XI.

Rejoyce evermore.

1 THESS. V. 16.

Rejoyce evermore.

Rejoyce evermore! O good Apostle, how acceptable Rules dost thou prescribe? O blessed God, how gracious Laws dost thou impose? This is a Rule to which one would think all men should be forward to conform: This is a Law, which it may seem strange that any man should find in his heart to disobey: for what can any Soul desire more than to be always on the merry pin, or to lead a life in continual alacrity? who readily would not embrace a Duty, the observance whereof is not onely pleasant, but pleasure it self? Who is so wild as to affect a sin, which hath nothing in it but disease and disgust?

That joy should be injoyned, that sadness should be prohibited, may it not be a plausible exception against such a Precept, that it is superfluous and needless, seeing all the endeavours of men do aim at nothing else, but to procure joy and eschew sorrow; seeing all men do conspire in opinion with *Solomon*, that *a man hath nothing better under the sun than——to be merry*? Were it not rather expedient to recommend sober sadness, or to repress the inclinations of men to effuse mirth and jollity? Eccl. 8. 15. 2. 24. 3. 12, 22. 5. 18, 26.

So it may seem; but yet alas, if we consult experience, or observe the World, we shall find this Precept very ill obeyed; for do we not commonly see People in heavy dumps; do we not often hear doleful complaints? is not this World apparently a stage of continual trouble, and grief? Did not the Preacher, upon a diligent survey of *all the works done under the Sun*, truly proclaim, *Behold all is vanity and vexation of Spirit*? Eccl. 1. 14. Where, I pray, is any full or firm content; where is solid and durable joy to be found?

It is true that men, after a confused manner, are very eager in the quest, and earnest in the pursuit of joy; they rove through all the Forest of Creatures, and beat every bush of Nature for it, hoping to catch it either in natural endowments and improvements of Soul, or in the gifts of Fortune, or in the acquists of Industry; in Temporal Possessions, in sensual

Enjoy-

Enjoyments, in ludicrous divertiſements and amuſements of Fancy; in gratification of their Appetites and Paſſions: They all hunt for it, though following a different ſcent, and running in various tracks, ſome in way of plodding for rare notions, ſome in compaſſing ambitious projects, ſome in amaſſing heaps of wealth, ſome in practice of over-reaching ſubtilties, ſome in wreeking their malice, their revenge, their envy; ſome in venting frothy conceits, bitter ſcoffs, or profane railleries; ſome in jovial converſation and quaffing the full bowls; ſome in muſick and dancing; ſome in gallantry and courting; ſome in all kinds of riotous exceſs, and wanton diſſoluteneſs; ſo each in his way doth inceſſantly prog for joy; But all much in vain, or without any conſiderable ſucceſs; finding at moſt inſtead of it ſome faint ſhadows, or tranſitory flaſhes of pleaſure; the which depending on cauſes very contingent and mutable, reſiding in a frail temper of fluid humours of body, conſiſting in ſlight touches upon the organs of ſenſe, in friſks of the corporeal ſpirits, or in fumes and vapours twitching the imagination, do ſoon flag and expire; their ſhort enjoyment being alſo tempered with regret, being eaſily daſhed by any croſs accident, ſoon declining into a nauſeous ſatiety, and in the end degenerating into gall and bitter remorſe; for *Even* (as *Solomon* obſerved) *in laughter, the heart is ſorrowful, and the end of that mirth is heavineſs*; and *Though* (as it is ſaid in *Job*) *wickedneſs is ſweet in the mouth——yet his meat in his bowels is turned, it is the gall of Aſps within him*: So that indeed the uſual delights, which men affect are ſuch, that we ſhould not if we could, and we could not if we would conſtantly entertain them; ſuch *rejoicing evermore* being equally unreaſonable and impoſſible.

Prov. 14. 13.
Sunt quædam triſtes voluptates—Sen. Ep. 67.
Job 20. 12.——14. 20. 5.

Quaquaverſum ſe verterit anima hominis, ad dolores figitur alibi, præterquam in te. Aug. *Conf.* 4. 10.

Wherefore there is ground more than enough, that we ſhould be put to ſeek for a true, ſubſtantial, and conſiſtent joy; it being withal implied, that we ſhould affect it in another way, or look for it in another box, than commonly men do; who therefore are ſo generally diſappointed, becauſe they would have it upon impoſſible or undue terms; and leaſt expect it there, where it is onely to be had.

It is a ſcandalous miſpriſion, vulgarly admitted, concerning Religion, that it is altogether ſullen and ſour, requiring a dull, lumpiſh, moroſe kind of life, barring all delight, all mirth, all good humour: Whereas on the contrary it alone is the never-failing ſource of true, pure, ſteady joy; ſuch as is deeply rooted in the heart, immoveably founded in the reaſon of things, permanent like the immortal ſpirit wherein it dwelleth, and like the eternal objects, whereon it is fixed; which is not apt to fade, or cloy; and is not ſubject to any impreſſions apt to corrupt, or impair it: Whereas in our Text, and in many Texts parallel to it, we ſee, that our Religion doth not onely allow us, but even doth oblige us to be joyful as much and often as can be, not permitting us to be ſad for one Minute, baniſhing the leaſt fit of Melancholly, charging us in all times, upon all occaſions to be chearful; ſuppoſing conſequently that it is in ſome manner poſſible to be ſo, and affording power to effect what it doth require.

Such indeed is the tranſcendent goodneſs of our God, that he maketh our delight to be our duty, and our ſorrow to be our ſin, adapting his holy Will to our principal inſtinct; that he would have us to reſemble himſelf as in all other perfections, ſo in a conſtant ſtate of happineſs; that as he hath provided a glorious Heaven of bliſs for us hereafter, ſo he would have us enjoy a comfortable paradiſe of delight here. He accordingly hath ordered the whole frame of our Religion in a tendency to produce

produce joy in those who embrace it; for what is the Gospel, but (as the holy Angel, the first promulger of it, did report) *good tydings of great joy to all people?* How doth God represent himself therein, but as *the God of love, of hope, of peace, of all consolation*, chearfully smiling in favour on us, graciously inviting us to the most pleasant enjoyments, bountifully dispensing most comfortable blessings of mercy, of grace, of salvation to us? for what doth our Lord call us to him, but *that he may give us rest, and refreshment to our souls*; that he may *wipe away all tears from our eyes*; that he may save us from most woful despair, and settle us *in a blessed hope*; that we may *enter into our Master's joy*; that *our joy may be full*, and such *as no man can take from us*? Luke 2. 10. Rom. 5. 33. 13. 5. Eph. 2. 4. 2 Cor. 1. 3. 13. 11. 1 Pet. 5. 10. Jam. 5. 11. Matt. 11. 28. Apoc. 7. 17. 21. 4. Tit. 2. Matt. 25. 21. John 15. 11.

What is the great overture of the Gospel, but the gift of a most blessed *Comforter, to abide with us for ever*, chearing our hearts with his lightsome presence, and ravishing consolations? Wherein doth the Kingdom of Heaven consist? *not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost?* What are the prime fruits sprouting from that root of Christian Life, the Divine Spirit? they are, as St. *Paul* telleth us, *Love, joy and peace*: Are there not numberless declarations importing a joyful satisfaction granted to the observers of God's Commandments; that *Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright in heart?* Doth not our Lord pronounce a special beatitude to the Practiser of every vertue? And if we scan all the Doctrines, all the Institutions, all the Precepts, all the promises of Christianity, will not each appear pregnant with matter of joy, will not each yield great reason, and strong obligation to this duty of *rejoycing evermore*? John 16. 22, 24. 14. 16. Rom. 14. 17. Gal. 5. 22. Psal. 97. 11. 118. 15. 32. 11. 68. 3.

Wherefore a Christian, as such, (according to the design of his Religion, and in proportion to his compliance with its dictates) is the most jocund, blith, and gay person in the World; always in humour, and full of chear; continually bearing a mind well satisfied, a light heart and calm spirit, a smooth brow and serene countenance, a grateful accent of speech, and a sweetly composed tenour of carriage: No black thought, no irksome desire, no troublesome passion should lodge in his breast; any furrow, any frown, any cloud doth sit ill upon his face; the least fretful word, or froward behaviour doth utterly misbecome him: If at any time it appear otherwise, 'tis a deflection from his character; 'tis a blemish and wrong to his profession; it argueth a prevarication in his judgment, or in his practice; He forgetteth that he is a Christian, or hath not preserved the innocence belonging to that Name. For, If a Christian remembreth what he is, or is sensible of his condition; if he reflecteth on the Dignity of his Person, the Nobleness of his Relations, the sublimity of his Priviledges, the greatness and certainty of his Hopes, how can he be out of humour? Is it not absurd for him that is at peace with Heaven, with his own Conscience, with all the World; for the possessor of the best goods, and the Heir of a blessed immortality; for the Friend, the Favourite, the Son of God, to fret or wail?

He that is settled in a most prosperous state, that is (if he pleaseth) secure of its continuance, that is well assured of its improvement; that hath whatever good he can wish in his reach, and more than he can conceive in sure reversion, what account can be given that he should be sad, or seem afflicted?

He that hath the unexhaustible spring of good for his portion, that hath his welfare entrusted in God's most faithful hand; that hath God's infallible word for his support; that hath free access to him, *in whose presence is fulness of joy*; that hath frequent tasts of God's goodness, in gracious dispensations of Providence, in entercourses of devotion, in the influences Psal. 16. 11.

of

of grace; that hath the infinite beauty and excellency for the perpetual object of his contemplation and affection; that enjoyeth the serenity of a sound mind, of a pure heart, of a quiet conscience, of a sure hope, what can he want to refresh or comfort him?

If a true and perfect Christian hath no care to distract him, having discharged all his concerns on God's Providence; If he hath no fear to dismay him, being guarded by the Almighty protection from all danger and mischief; If he hath no despair to sink him, having a sure refuge in the divine mercy and help; If he hath no superstitious terrours or scruples to perplex him, being conscious of his own upright intentions to please God, and confident of God's merciful willingness to accept his sincere endeavours; If he hath no incurable remorse to torment him, the stings of guilt being pulled out by the merits of his Saviour, applied by his faith and repentance: If he hath no longing desires to disquiet him, being fully satisfied with that he doth possess, or may expect from God's bounty; all other things being far beneath his ambition, or coveting: If he hath no contentions to enflame him, knowing nought here worth passionately striving for, and being resolved to hold a friendly good-will toward all men; If he hath no repining envy, seeing that none can be more happy than he may be, and that every man's good by charity is made his own; If he hath no fretful discontent, since he gladly doth acquiesce in the condition, and success allotted to him, resigning his will to God's pleasure, taking all for best which thence doth occur, being assured that *all things shall work together for his good* and advantage: If he hath no spiteful rancours to corrode his heart, no boisterous passions to ruffle his mind, no inordinate appetites, perverse humours, or corrupt designs to distemper his soul, and disturb his life, whence then may sorrow come, or how can sadness creep into him?

Ἐπιθυμίας ἁπλαδείους οὐδὲ ἡ ψυχὴ κ) χαλιωθῶσι γίνεται. Just. Mart. ad Græc. Paræn. 2.

What is there belonging to a Christian, whence grief naturally can spring? from God, *our exceeding joy*, the Fountain of Happiness; from Heaven the region of light and bliss; from divine truth, which illustrateth and cheareth the soul; from God's Law, which *rejoiceth the heart*, and *is sweeter than honey and the honey-comb*; from wisdom, whose *ways are ways of pleasantness, and all whose paths are peace*; from vertue, which cureth our afflictive distempers, and composeth our vexatious passions; from these things, I say, above which a Christian as such is onely conversant, no sorrow can be derived; from those sweet sources no bitter streams can flow; But hell, the flesh, the world, darkness, errour, folly, sin and irreligion (things with which a Christian should have nothing to do, from which he should keep a-loof, which he doth pretend utterly to renounce and abandon) these, these alone, are the parents of discomfort and anguish.

Psal. 43. 4.
Psal. 19. 10. 119. 103. Prov. 3. 17.
above
2 Cor. 7. 1. Matt. 5. 48. 1 John 3. 3.

Wherefore there is the same reason, the same obligation, the same possibility, that we should rejoice evermore, as that we should always be Christians, exactly performing duty, and totally forbearing sin; for innocence and indolency do ever go together, both together making Paradise; perfect vertue and constant alacrity are inseparable companions, both constituting beatitude; And as although from our infirmity we cannot attain the highest pitch of vertue, yet we must aspire thereto endeavouring to *perfect holiness in the fear of God*; so though it may not be possible to get, yet it is reasonable to seek perpetual joy; which doing in the right way we shall not fail of procuring a good measure of it.

Indeed to exercise piety and to rejoice are the same things, or things so

so interwoven, that nothing can disjoin them; religious practice is like that *river, the streams whereof make glad the City of God, the holy place of the Tabernacle of the most High*, that is, every pious soul: No good deed can be performed without satisfaction; each vertue hath a peculiar delight annexed to it; whence the acts of joy, which upon various objects, grounds, and occasions, we may exert, being numberless, I shall onely touch a few principal instances. Psal. 46. 4.

I. We should evermore rejoice in the exercise of our faith; according to that prayer of our Apostle for the *Romans*, *Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.* Rom. 15. 13.

Every kind of faith (that which embraceth divine truths, that which applieth God's mercy, that which ensureth God's promises, that which confideth in God's providence, each of them) is a clear spring of joy, ever standing open to us; which he that drinketh, *shall never thirst.* Joh. 6. 35. 7. 38. 4. 14.

1. The faith, which embraceth God's heavenly truth, doth not onely enlighten our minds, but is apt to affect our hearts; there being no Article of Faith, or mystery of our religion, which doth not involve some great advantage, some notable favour, some happy occurrence dispensed to us by the goodness of God, the which Faith doth apprehend and convey to our spiritual gust, so that we cannot hardly *but receive the word with joy.* Matt. 13. 20. Phil. 1. 25. For is it not very sweet with Faith to contemplate the rich bounty of God in the Creation of the World, and producing so goodly a Frame, so copious a store of things, with a special regard to our sustenance and accommodation? Is it not satisfactory to believe that God by his Almighty hand and vigilant care, with the same benign regard doth uphold and govern the same? Is it not extreamly pleasant with faith to reflect on that great honour and happiness, which God did vouchsafe, to confer on mankind, by sending down from Heaven his onely Son to assume our nature, and to converse with men, that we might be advanced to a *participation of the divine nature*, and to an enjoyment of *communion with God?* How without great delight can we be perswaded, that our Saviour by his meritorious obedience and passion hath appeased God's wrath, and inclined his favour toward us, hath satisfied justice, hath expiated our offences, hath ransomed and rescued our souls from the dominion of Sin and Satan, from death and corruption, from Hell and everlasting torment; hath purchased immortal life, and endless bliss for us? What comfort is there in being assured by the resurrection, and triumph of our Lord over death, that our souls are indeed immortal, that our bodies shall be raised from the dust, that our persons are capable of an eternal subsistence in happiness? will it not much please us with an eye of faith to behold our Redeemer sitting in glorious exaltation at God's right hand, governing the World for the benefit of his Church, dispensing benediction and grace to us; interceding as our *merciful and faithful High priest* for the pardon of our sins, the acceptance of our prayers, the supply of our needs, and the relief of our distresses; If we be fully convinced, that our Lord Jesus is the Christ, our Lord, and Saviour, *the authour of eternal Salvation, to all that obey him*, how can we otherwise than follow those, of whom St. *Peter* saith, *Whom having not seen ye love; in whom, though ye now see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory:* So from the hearty belief of every Evangelical Truth we may suck consolation; each of them is food to our Soul; and to believe it is to eat it; which how can we do without a delicious, or most savoury relish? 1 Pet. 2. 2. 1 John 1. 3. Heb. 2. 17. 1 John 2. 1. Heb. 5. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 8. *Crede & manducasti.* Aug.

2. At least methinks that faith greatly should exhilarate us, which applieth those verities (so *worthy of all acceptation*) wherein God doth open 1 Tim. 1. 15.

his arms wide to embrace us, propoſing moſt kind invitations, and favourable overtures of mercy, upon the faireſt terms poſſible; together with effectual remedies for all the maladies and miſeries of our ſouls: for if we are ſenſible of our heinous Guilts, if we are laden with the heavy burthen of our ſins, if our heart is galled with ſore compunction for our miſdeeds; if we are ſtruck with the *terrours of the Lord*, and *tremble with the fear of Gods judgments*; how comfortable muſt it be to be perſwaded that God is fully reconcileable to us, is very deſirous to ſhew us mercy and gladly will accept our repentance; that *we have an advocate with the Father*, who *hath propitiated for our ſins*, doth mediate for our peace, hath both full power and certain will, if we ſincerely do renounce our offences, wholly to remit them? ſo that *there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Chriſt Jeſus, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the ſpirit*; and that *being juſtified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*; Will not this belief revive us, and *make the broken bones to rejoyce*; will not the Goſpel of peace be hence in truth *a joyful ſound* to us? might it not hence well be proclaimed in the Prophet, *Comfort ye, Comfort ye my people*; *ſpeak ye comfortably to Jeruſalem, and cry unto her*; *that her warfare is accompliſhed, that her iniquity is pardoned.*

Pſ. 38. 1. 6. 1. 102. 4. 143. 4. 119. 120. 1 John 2. 1, 2. Rom. 8. 1. Rom. 5. 1. Pſal. 51. 8. 90. 8, 14. Iſa. 40. 1, 2.

And if we find our ſelves in habit of ſoul grievouſly diſtempered, labouring under great impotency and blindneſs, overborn and oppreſſed with the prevalency of corruption, peſtered with unreaſonable deſires and paſſions, unable to curb our inclinations and appetites, to reſiſt temptation to diſcharge our duty in any tolerable meaſure, or with any eaſe; is it not then comfortable to believe, that we have a moſt faithful and skilful Phyſician at hand to cure our diſtempers; that we have a powerful ſuccour within ken, to relieve our infirmities; that God is ready to impart an abundant ſupply of grace, of light, of ſpiritual ſtrength to direct and aſſiſt us; that if any man doth lack *wiſdom*, he is encouraged *with faith to ask it of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not*? if any man want ſtrength, God's Almighty Spirit is promiſed to thoſe, who with humble earneſtneſs do implore it; ſo that we may *be able to do all things* (incumbent on us) *by Chriſt who ſtrengtheneth us.*

Jam. 1. 5, 6. Luke 11. 13. Phil. 4. 13. Rom. 7. 25. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Ph. 2. 13. 2 Pet. 1. 4.

3. And what more hearty ſatisfaction can we feel, than in a firm perſwaſion concerning the real accompliſhment of thoſe *exceedingly great and precious promiſes*, whereby we become capable of the moſt excellent privi-ledges, the moſt ample benefits, the moſt happy rewards, that can be? how can the belief that by God's infallible word, or as ſurely as truth it ſelf is true, an eternal inheritance of a treaſure that cannot fail, of a glory that cannot fade, of a kingdom that cannot be ſhaken, of a felicity ſurpaſſing all expreſſion and all conceit, is reſerved for us, in recompence of our faithful obedience; how, I ſay, can that be a dead, dull, dry belief, void of ſprightly comfort and pleaſure?

Likewiſe the faith of confidence in God's good providence, and paternal care over us, (whatever our condition or circumſtances be) ſhould infuſe a chearful refreſhment of heart into us.

It is in holy Scripture moſt frequently aſſerted, that he who placeth his truſt in God, is a very bleſſed and happy Perſon; and can we without great ſatisfaction partake of that beatitude?

Can we by ſuch a truſt disburthen all our ſolicitous cares, all our anxious fears, all the troubles of our ſpirit, and preſſures of our condition upon God, with ſtrong aſſurance, that from his mighty power and watchful care, in due time, in the moſt expedient manner, we ſhall receive a competent ſupply of our wants, a riddance from our grievances, a protection from

rom all danger and harm, a bleſſing upon all our good endeavours and ndertakings, without feeling much eaſe and peace in our hearts?

What can be more chearing than a perſwaſion, that all our concerns re lodged in the hands of ſuch a Friend, ſo wiſe, ſo able, ſo faithful, ſo ffectionate, ſo ever readily diſpoſed to help us, and further our good? They who truſt in God, are ſaid *to abide under the ſhadow of the Almighty*, Pſal. 91. 1. nd *to be covered with his wings*; God is often ſtyled their rock, their for- Pſal. 61. 4. reſs, their ſhield and buckler, their defence and refuge; And are they 91. 4. 57. 1. 17. 8. 36. 7. ot then impregnably ſafe? why then ſhould they fear any diſaſter? at 18. 2. 62. 2. vhat occurrence ſhould they be diſturbed? Have they not huge reaſon to Pſal. 112. 2. ay with the *Pſalmiſt*, *In the ſhadow of thy wings will I rejoyce*; *The Lord* Pſal. 63. 7. *s my ſtrength and my ſhield, my heart truſteth in him, and I am helped*; *there-* Pſal. 28. 7. *ore my heart danceth for joy, and in my Song will I praiſe him*: May not (Pſal. 33. 21.) each of thoſe conſiders in God well repreſs all inſurrections of trouble and grief, with that holy charm, *Why art thou ſo vexed, O my ſoul, and why* Pſal. 42. 14. *rt thou ſo diſquieted within me, O truſt in God—for he is the health of my* 43. 5. *countenance, and my God.*

II. We ſhould evermore rejoice in the practice of Chriſtian hope, ma- king good that aphoriſm of *Solomon*, *The hope of the righteous ſhall be glad-* Prov. 10. 28. *neſs*; and obeying thoſe Apoſtolical injunctions, that we ſhould *rejoyce in hope*; that we ſhould *retain the confidence, and the rejoicing of hope firm to* Rom. 12. 12. *the end.* Thoſe excellent and moſt beneficial truths, thoſe ſweet propo- Heb. 3. 6. ſals of grace and mercy, thoſe rich promiſes, which faith doth apprehend as true in a general reference to all Chriſtians, hope doth appropriate, and apply as particularly touching our ſelves; improving the knowledge of our common capacity into a ſenſe of our ſpecial intereſt in them. God, faith our Faith, will aſſuredly receive all penitent Sinners to mercy, will crown all pious Chriſtians with glory, will faithfully perform whatever he hath graciouſly promiſed to all People, hath a tender care for all that love and fear him; But God, ſaith our hope, will have mercy on me, will *render to me the wages of righteouſneſs*, will *verify his good word to* 2 Tim. 4. 8. *me his ſervant*, will protect, will deliver, will bleſs me in all exigencies: 1 Kings 8. 26. if ſo, being conſcious of our ſincere endeavour to ſerve and pleaſe God; if diſcerning, from a careful reflection upon our heart and ways, that in ſome good meaſure with fidelity and diligence we have diſcharged the conditions required of us, we can entitle our ſelves to God's ſpecial affe- ction, we can accommodate his word to our caſe, we can aſſume a pro- priety in his regard, how can we forbear conceiving joy?

All hope, in proportion to the worth of its object, and the ſolidity of its ground, is comfortable; it being *the anchor of the ſoul*, which ſtayeth Heb. 6. 19. and ſupporteth it in undiſturbed reſt; it appeaſing un- quiet deſires, it ſetting abſent goods before us, and an- Καὶ ὡς ἐπ παρεσιῶσι τὰ πόρρωθεν πα- λιγγενεσίας αὐτὴ ἡ ψυχὴ τῇ ἐλπίδι ἀναφαίνεται. *Const. Ap.* 7. 33. icipating future enjoyments by a ſweet foretaſt; See- ing then if we have a good Conſcience, and *our heart* 1 John 3. 31. *loth not condemn us*, our hope is grounded *on the rock of* Iſa. 26. 4. *ges* (on the immutable nature, and the infallible word of God) ſeeing it is the hope of the moſt worthy, the moſt ſublime, the moſt in- comparable and ineſtimable goods, it muſt be moſt extremely delightful.

If it much pleaſeth men to conceit themſelves next heirs of a fair eſtate, to have the reverſion of a good office, to be probable expectants of a great preferment (although death may intercept, or other accidents may obſtruct the accompliſhment of ſuch hopes) how much more ſhall that *ively hope* (of which St. *Peter* ſpeaketh) *of an inheritance, incorruptible,* 1 Pet. 1. 4, 5. *nd undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reſerved in Heaven for us*; *who are*

kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, (which hope therefore can never be dashed or defeated) breed a most chearful satisfaction, far transcending all other pleasures, which spring from the most desirable fruitions here; according to that admonition of our Lord, *Notwithstanding* Luke 10. 20. *in this rejoice not that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice that your names are written in Heaven.*

III. We should evermore rejoice in the performing the duty of Charity; both that which we owe to God, and that which is due to our Neighbour.

Love is the sweetest and most delectable of all Passions; and when by the conduct of wisdom it is directed in a rational way toward a worthy, congruous, attainable object, it cannot otherwise than fill the heart with ravishing delight.

And such (in all respects superlatively such) an object is God: He infinitely beyond all other things deserveth our affection, as most perfectly amiable and desireable, as having obliged us by innumerable and inestimable benefits, all the good that we have ever enjoyed, or that we can ever expect, being derived from his pure bounty; all things in the world in competition with him, being pitifully mean, ugly and loathsome; all things without him, being vain, unprofitable, and hurtful to us; so that Psal. 89. 6. the *Psalmist* might well say, *Who in Heaven can be compared unto the Lord?* Psal. 73. 25. *who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the Lord? whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I can desire beside thee.* Matt. 22. 38. He is the most proper object of our love; for we chiefly were framed, and it is the *prime law* of our nature to love him; our Soul from original instinct vergeth toward him as its centre, and can have no rest till it be fixed on him; he alone can satisfie the vast capacity of our minds, and fill our boundless desires.

He of all lovely things, most certainly and easily may be attained; for whereas commonly men are crossed in their affection, and their love is embittered from their affecting things imaginary, which they cannot reach or coy things, which disdain and reject their affection; it is concerning God quite otherwise; for,

John 6. 37. Psal. 70. 4. He is most ready to impart himself, and *will not reject any that cometh unto him*; He most earnestly desireth, and woeth our love; He is not one- 2 Cor. 5. 20. John 14. 21, 23. ly most willing to correspond in affection, but doth prevent us therein; for *we love him,* (saith the *Apostle*) *because he first loved us.* Apoc. 3. 20. 1 John 4. 19.

He doth cherish and encourage our love by sweetest influences, and most comfortable embraces, by kindest expressions of favour, by most Rom. 8. 28. beneficial returns, ordering that *all things shall work together for good to those* 1 Cor. 2. 9. *who love him:* And whereas all other objects do in the enjoyment much fail our expectation, he doth ever far exceed it.

Wherefore in all affectionate motions of our hearts toward God, in desiring him, or seeking his favour and friendship; in embracing him or setting our esteem, our good-will, our confidence on him; in enjoying him by devotional meditations, and addresses to him; in a reflective sense 1 Cor. 6. 17. of our interest and propriety in him; in that mysterious union of spirit Acts 11. 23. hereby we do closely adhere to him, and are (as it were) inserted in him Deut. 10. 20. John 15. 4, 6. in a hearty complacence in his benignity, a grateful resentment of his kindness, and a zealous desire of yeilding some requital for it, we cannot but feel very pleasant transports, assuring to us the truth of that saying in Psal. 5. 12. the *Psalm, They that love thy name shall be joyful in thee*; and disposing us to Psal. 36. 7.— cry out with the *Psalmist, How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O Lord, Be-* Psal. 63. 3. *cause thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.*

Indeed

Indeed that celeſtial flame (kindled in our hearts by the ſpirit of love) cannot be void of warmth; we cannot fix our eyes upon infinite beauty, we cannot taſte infinite ſweetneſs, we cannot cleave to infinite felicity, without we ſhould alſo perpetually rejoice in the firſt daughter of love to God, charity toward men; the which in complection and chearful diſpoſition doth much reſemble its mother: For it doth rid all thoſe gloomy, keen, turbulent imaginations and paſſions, which cloud our mind, which fret our heart, which diſcompoſe the frame of our ſoul; (from burning anger, from ſtorming contention, from gnawing envy, from rankling ſpite, from racking ſuſpicion, from diſtracting ambition and avarice.) It conſequently doth ſettle our mind in an even temper, in a ſedate humour, in an harmonious order, in that pleaſant ſtate of tranquillity, which naturally doth reſult from the voidance of irregular paſſions.

And who can enumerate or expreſs the pleaſures which do wait on every kind, on each act of Charity?

How triumphant a joy is there in any-wiſe doing good? whereby we feed good humour, and gratify our beſt inclinations, whereby we oblige our brethren and endear our ſelves to them, whereby we moſt reſemble the divine goodneſs, and attract the divine favour?

St. *Paul* telleth us, that *God loveth the chearful giver*; and he preſcribeth, that *he who ſheweth mercy*, ſhould do it ὁ ἱλαρότητι *with mercifulneſs*; And in the Law it is commanded, *Thine heart ſhall not grieve, when thou giveſt to thy poor brother*; And who indeed can out of charity give alms, or ſhew mercy, without chearfulneſs? ſeeing that he thereby doth ſatisfy his own mind, and doth eaſe his own bowels; conſidering that in doing good to his neighbour he receiveth far more good to himſelf; that he then doth put forth his ſtock to very great and moſt certain advantage; that he diſchargeth an office very acceptable to God, doth much oblige him, and render him a debter, doth engage him abundantly to requite and reward that beneficence. 2 Cor. 9. 7. Rom. 12. 8. Deut. 15. 10. Eccluſ. 35. 10.

What ſatisfaction is there in forgiving offences; whereby we diſcharge our ſouls from vexatious inmates (black thoughts, and rancorous animoſities;) whereby we clear our ſelves from the troubles attending feuds and ſtrifes; whereby we imitate our moſt gracious Creatour, and tranſcribe the pattern of our meek Redeemer; whereby we render our ſelves capable of divine mercy, and acquire a good title to the pardon of our own ſins: according to that divine word, *If you forgive men their treſpaſſes, your heavenly Father will forgive you.* Matt. 11. 25. 25. 35.

How unconfinedly and inexhauſtibly vaſt is that delight, which a charitable complacence in the good of our neighbour (*a rejoicing with thoſe that rejoice*) may afford? a man thence engroſſing all the good in the World, and appropriating to himſelf all the proſperous ſucceſſes, all the pleaſant entertainments, all the comfortable ſatisfactions of his neighbour. Rom. 12. 15: 1 Cor. 13. 6.

Even a charitable ſympathy, or condolency, in the adverſities of our neighbour, is not deſtitute of content; for the ſoul is thereby melted into a gentle temper, ſuſceptive of the beſt impreſſions; we ſhare in the comfort, which we miniſter to others; we are refreſhed in that kindly ſubmiſſion to the good pleaſure of God, in that lightſome contemplation of God's mercy, in thoſe comfortable hopes of a happy iſſue, which we ſuggeſt to the afflicted; We thence are expoſed to a grateful ſenſe of God's goodneſs, in preſerving our ſelves from thoſe calamities, and in qualifying us to comfort our brethren; We feel ſatisfaction in reflecting upon this very practice, and obſerving that we do act conformably to good nature, to the dictates of reaſon, to the will of God, therein diſcharging a good conſcience, and enjoying a portion of that *continual feaſt*. Rom. 12. 15. 2 Cor. 1. 6. 7. 7. Συμπαρακλήσεως. Rom. 1. 12.

I

I ſhould, if the time would permit, farther declare how we ſhould find delight in the contemplation, of all God's Attributes, of his works, of his word; in thankful reſentment of all God's benefits; in willing obedience to all God's Laws; how joy is a proper fruit growing on the practice of humility, of juſtice, of temperance, of devotion, of every vertue and grace; More particularly I ſhould have evidenced how from a patient ſubmiſſion to God's afflicting hand, from penitential contrition of heart for our ſins, from a pious fear and ſolicitude in working out our ſalvation, moſt ſweet conſolations (ſo tempering thoſe ingredients, as to render their bitterneſs very ſavoury) may ſpring; But in recommending joy I would not produce grief; and therefore ſhall not farther annoy your patience.

SERMON XII.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

PROV. IV. 23.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

BEFORE we do apply our ſelves to inculcate this Precept, it is requiſite that we ſhould ſomewhat explain the terms, and ſettle the meaning thereof; in doing that, we begin with the laſt Words, which qualify the action injoined as to its degree, or extent: *with all diligence*; the words (מִכָּל־מִשְׁמָר) anſwering to theſe in the *Hebrew*, do, according to the various uſe, or force of the particle מִן, admit a threefold acception. They may (1.) denote abſolutely the intenſeneſs in degree or extenſion in kind of the performance required in this Precept: πάσῃ φυλακῇ τήρει τὴν καρδίαν, *Omni cuſtodia ſerva cor tuum*; keep thy heart with all cuſtody, that is, with all ſorts, or with all degrees of care and diligence; ſo the LXX *Interpreters*, and the *Vulgar Latin* following them, render thoſe words. They may (2.) taking the particle for a *Mem excellentiæ*, as they call it, ſignify comparatively; *præ omni cuſtodia ſerva cor tuum*; keep thy heart above all keeping; that is, eſpecially and more than thou keepeſt any other thing; ſo doth *Pagnin* underſtand them, not without cauſe, both for the reaſon ſubjoined here, *becauſe from it are the iſſues of life*; that is, becauſe it is the principal part and fountain of all vital operations, and therefore deſerveth the beſt cuſtody; as alſo for that in what follows, and in other places of Scripture frequently we are injoyned to keep our tongues from bad diſcourſe, our eyes from wandring after bad objects, our feet from declining to bad courſes; and therefore probably in compariſon to theſe, although needful and inferiour

cuſtodies,

custodies, we are admonished to this most especially incumbent custody of our hearts. They may also (3.) and that probably enough be taken so as to denote the universality of the object or matter of this keeping, or the adequate term and bound thereof, keep thy heart, ὑπὲρ παντὸς φυλάγματος, *ab omni re custodienda*, from every thing which it should be kept from; that is, from every thing offensive or hurtful to it: So did *Aquila* and *Theodotion* translate the words. These senses are all of them good, and each may fairly pretend to find place in the meaning of the words; which of them with most likelihood I shall not discuss, meaning only to insist upon the substance of the precept; the nature of which being duly considered, will infer that it is to be observed according to the manner and measure prescribed, understood according to any of those senses, or according to all of them conjointly.

As for the meaning of the words, *Keep thy heart*; two enquiries may be made: 1. what the heart is, which *Solomon* adviseth us to keep; what to keep it doth import.

To the *first* I answer, that in the stile of Scripture the heart doth commonly import the whole inward man, the ὁ ἔσω ἄνθρωπος, *the man within us*, (as St. *Paul* speaketh) the ὁ κρυπτὸς τῆς καρδίας ἄνθρωπος, *the hidden man of the heart* (as St. *Peter* calleth it) comprehending all the thoughts and imaginations, all the inclinations and dispositions; all the judgments and opinions, all the passions and affections; all the resolutions and purposes formed within us; in short, all interiour, whether tendencies to move, or actual motions of humane Soul. For the *Scripture* (by the way we may observe it) seemeth to favour that anciently most common and current opinion (embraced by *Aristotle* himself, even as true in strict Philosophy, although rejected by most of the latter Schools) that the heart, that material part and principal entrail of the Body, is the chief seat of the Soul, and immediate instrument of its noblest operations. However, because the heart in a man's breast is most inwardly seated, most secluded from sight, guarded from access, fenced from danger, thence whatever is inmost, most invisible, most inaccessible in any thing is called the heart thereof; and all a man's secret thoughts, inclinations, opinions, affections, designs are involved in this name; sometimes all, or divers of them conjunctly are called his heart, sometimes any one of them singly (as there is subject or occasion of using the word) is so termed: Instances in every kind are innumerably many, and very obvious; and therefore I shall not spend time in producing any, but shall suppose that here the word may be understood in its utmost extent, so as to comprehend all the particulars intimated; there being no apparent reason for preferring, or excluding any; all of them being capable of moral quality, both simply and immediately in themselves, and consequentially as they may be the principles of good or bad actions; and because all of them may be, need to be, ought to be the objects of the keeping here injoined.

Rom. 7. 22. 1 Pet. 3. 4.

But then what is this *keeping*? I answer, that the Word as applied to this matter is especially capable of three senses, each of which may be exemplified.

1. It may imply to observe, that is, to keep it under a constant view, as it were; to mark, or attend unto, to inquire into and study our heart. So, *My son* (saith the *wise Man*) *give me thy heart, and let thine eyes keep* (or observe) *my ways*; the same word which here, is there used both in the *Hebrew* and *Greek*, and can there well signifie no other custody, but that of attending unto; it being the office of the eye only to look, and observe. Likewise, *Observe* (saith God in the Law) *and hear all these words* Prov. 23. 25. Deut. 12. 28.

words which I command thee; that is, hear them very attentively: And so in divers other places.

2. It may also denote the governance, or good management of our hearts; keeping all the motions thereof in due order, within fit compass; applying them to good, and restraining them from bad things: So the
Psal. 39. 1. *Psalmist* useth the word, when he saith, *I will keep my mouth with a bridle*; that is, I will so rule and curb it, that no evil language shall issue from it:
Eccles. 5. 1. So when the *wise Man* adviseth to *keep our foot when we go to the house of God*; by keeping it, he means rightly to guide and order our proceedings; or well to dispose our selves when we address our selves to religious per-
Prov. 27. 18. formances: So again, *He* (saith he) *that keepeth the Fig-tree, shall eat the fruit thereof*; he that keepeth it, that is, he that dresseth and ordereth it to advantage for bearing fruit.

3. Again, keeping may be taken for preserving, guarding, securing from mischief or damage: which indeed is the most common use of the word; and therefore we need no instancing to countenance it.

Now any of these senses may be intended here, or all of them together; and they indeed are in the nature of the thing so coherent, or so mutually dependent one on the other, that any one of them can hardly be practised without the rest: For without heedfully observing our heart we cannot well govern it; and an ill-governed heart cannot easily be attended to; and without both watchful observation, and skilful management of it, we cannot guard it from evil; and reciprocally without guarding it, we cannot well rule it, or duly mind it: such a complication there is in practice of these three custodies.

I shall at present onely discourse concerning the first of them, which seems in the nature of things, and according to our method of acting to precede. According to this exposition, when 'tis said, *Keep thy heart with all diligence*, we may understand it, as if each of us were thus advised: With a most constant and wary care observe all the interiour propensions and motions of thy soul; whatever is done, or designed within thee; whither thy desires lean, what thy affections are stirred by, to what thy judgment of things doth lead thee, with greatest attention and assiduity mark and ponder it.

It is a peculiar excellency of humane nature, which seemeth more to distinguish a man from any inferiour rank of creatures, than bare reason it self, that he can reflect upon all that is done within him, can discern the tendencies of his soul, is acquainted with his own purposes; some shadows of other rational operations are discoverable in beasts, and 'tis not easie to convince them, who from plausible experiments do affirm them sometimes to syllogize; but no good reason or experience can (I suppose) make it probable, that they partake of this reflexive faculty; that they do ever regard, or remark upon their own imaginations; they seem always to march directly forward with a blind impetuousness toward some pleasing object, without attending to the fancy that guides them, or the appetite which excites them: neither indeed do they seem to need any such power in order to the preservation of their life, or gratifying of their sense, which are the main ends they were designed and fitted for. But man being designed by his Maker, disposed by the frame of his nature, and obliged by a Law imposed on him not to follow casual impulses from exteriour objects, nor the bare conduct of his imagination, nor the sway of his natural propensities, but to regulate as well the internal workings of his soul, as his external actions according to certain Laws or Rules prescribed him; to settle his thoughts upon due objects, to bend his inclinations

into

into a right frame, to constrain his affections within due bounds, to rectify his judgments of things, to ground his purposes upon honest reasons, and direct them unto lawful matters; it is needful, that he should have this power of discerning whatever moveth, or passeth within him; what he thinks upon, whither he inclines, how he judgeth, whence he is affected, wherefore he doth resolve; without this power he could not be a moral agent, not able to perform any duty, not properly subject to any Law, not liable to render an accompt of his doings: Did he not perceive his own thoughts, how could he dispel them, when they are bad, or vain? might he not observe his own inclinations, how could he strive to restrain them, or to reform them, when they draw to unlawful practices? were he not sensible of his affections, how could he endeavour to reduce or compose them, when they become exorbitant or tumultuous? were he not conscious of his own opinions, how could he weigh, and examine them; how could he conform his actions to them, or practice according to the dictates of his conscience? 'tis therefore plainly needful that man should be endued with this power, for that without it he can neither perform the duty required of him, nor enjoy the benefits he is capacified, and designed for: Our Maker therefore hath conferred it upon us, our duty consists in its right use, our advantage ariseth from the constant and careful exercise of this excellent faculty: Constant and careful, I say: *constant*, for observation implies so much; for, if ever we shut our eyes, or turn our heads aside, what we look to may be gone; much therefore will pass away undiscerned and unobserved by us; especially such quick and fleeting things as are the interiour motions of our soul will escape; wherefore a continual vigilancy is requisite to a keeper of the heart; It must also be *careful*, as the keeper of a thing so nimble and slippery must not sleep, so he must not slumber; he must not be oscitant, but very intent upon his charge; superficial glances upon the outward face, as it were, of the soul will not suffice; to *observe* is with earnest care to look through the matter; to discern whatever lurketh therein, to pierce into the very depth and bottom of it, to spy through every nook and corner therein; otherwise 'tis but slightly viewed rather than truly observed; especially so subtile, so intricate, so obscure a thing as a man's heart is requireth an extraordinary application of mind in observing it with judgment and fruit.

This is then our duty, recommended by the Wise Man, to be continually with extream diligence, looking inward upon our selves, observing what thoughts spring up within us, what imaginations find most welcome harbour in our breasts, what objects most affect us with delight, or displeasure (what it is that we love and readily embrace; what we distast and presently reject) what prejudices do possess our minds; wherefore we propose to our selves such undertakings; conversing with our selves, and as it were discoursing in this manner: What is it that I think upon, are my thoughts serious, seasonable, and pure? Whither do I propend; are my inclinations compliant to God's Law, and good reason? What judgments do I make of things; are my apprehensions clear, solid, sure, built upon no corrupt prejudice? What doth most easily stir me, and how is my heart moved; are my affections calm, and orderly, and well placed? What plots do I contrive, what projects am I driving on; are my designs good, are my intentions upright and sincere? let me throughly enquire into these points, let me be fully satisfied in them; thus should we continually be doing. The holy Scripture doth often bid us to judge our selves, to examine our works; to search and try; to weigh, to heed, to watch over our ways: *If* (saith St. *Paul*) *we would judge* (discern, or distinguish)

1 Cor. 11. 31. ſtinguiſh) *our ſelves, we ſhould not be judged*; that is, we ſhould avoid
Gal. 6. 4. Ἑι ἑαυτὸς δοκείνομεν. those miſcarriages, which bring the divine judgments upon us: and, *Let*
Lam. 3. 40. *us* (ſaith the Prophet *Jeremy*) *ſearch and try our ways, and turn unto the*
Pſal. 39. 1. *Lord*; and, *I ſaid I will take heed to my ways* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*); and,
Prov. 4. 26. *Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be eſtabliſhed*, is the *Wiſe Man's* advice: Search our ways, and ponder our paths, this implies, that we firſt do examine, and weigh our hearts; for there our ways begin; thence is motion derived to our feet, and to our hands alſo: All our actions depend as effects of them, all do receive their moral quality thence:
Mark 7. 23. Whatever in our doings is good or bad ἔσωθεν ἐκπορεύεται, doth (as our Lord expreſſeth it) iſſue from within us; our actions are but ſtreams ſweet or bitter, clear or foul, according to the tincture they receive at thoſe inward ſources of good or evil inclinations, of true or falſe judgments, of pure or corrupt intention; there conſequently we are principally obliged, to exerciſe the ſcrutiny and trial required of us.

Socrates is reported to have much admired that Verſe in *Homer*,

Ὅστις τοι ἐν μεγάροισι κακὸν ἀγαθόν τε τέτυκται.

Gell. *XIV. 6.* affirming that in it the ſum of all Wiſdom is comprized: the ſenſe and drift thereof being this, as he took it: Seek and ſtudy what good or bad is at home, within thy houſe; ſee how all goes in thy breaſt; employ thy chief inquiry upon the affairs of thy ſoul; there confining thy curioſity and care.

Such is the duty; and the practice thereof is of huge profit and uſe; bringing many great benefits and advantages with it; the neglect of it is attended with many grievous inconveniences and miſchiefs, and for perſwading to the one, diſſwading from the other, I ſhall propound ſome of them, ſuch as are moſt obvious, and offer themſelves to my meditation.

The moſt general, and moſt immediate advantage ariſing hence is this, that by ſuch a conſtant and careful inſpection, or ſtudy upon our hearts, we may arrive to a competent knowledge of, and a true acquaintance with our ſelves (a moſt uſeful knowledge, a moſt beneficial acquaintance)
Jer. 17. 9. neither of them being otherwiſe attainable. *The heart* (as you know the Prophet ſays) *is deceitful above all things*; and, *who* (adds he) *can know it?* who can know it: none it ſeems, but God that made it; and the man that hath it: he that hath it, muſt, I ſay, be able competently to know it; even in regard to him the queſtion may intimate ſome difficulty, but it doth not denote an abſolute impoſſibility: Hard it may be for us to know the heart by reaſon of its deceitfulneſs; but the ſlieſt impoſture, if narrowly looked into, may be detected: 'Tis a very ſubtle and abſtruſe, a very various and mutable thing; the multiplicity of objects it doth converſe with, the divers alterations it is ſubject to from bodily temper, cuſtom, company, example, other unaccomptable cauſes; eſpecially its proneneſs to comply with, and to ſute its judgments of things unto preſent circumſtances without, and preſent appetites within do render it ſuch; wherefore it is not indeed eaſie to know it; but yet poſſible it is; for under ſevere penalties we are obliged not to be deceived by it, or which is all one, not to ſuffer it to be deceived: *Let no man* (ſaith St.
1 Cor. 3. 18. *Paul*) *deceive himſelf: ſee that ye be not deceived*, ſaith our *Saviour*, *Take*
Luke 21. 8. *heed* (ſaith *Moſes*) *to your ſelves, that your heart be not deceived*; ſuch Pre-
Deut. 11. 16. cepts there are many, obliging us to know our hearts, and to diſcover the fallacies put on them, or upon us by them; carrying with them directions how to compaſs it; that is, by looking about us, and taking heed; (by careful circumſpection and caution.) It is therefore a feaſible thing to avoid being impoſed upon, and well to underſtand our ſelves: But as other

abſtruſe

abſtruſe pieces of knowledge, ſo this eſpecially cannot be attained without induſtrious applications of our mind, and conſtant obſervations, to find the corners wherein the deceit lurks; we muſt purſue its ſecret windings and intrigues; we muſt trace it ſtep by ſtep, (as Hunters do wild Beaſts) into the utmoſt receſſes of its firſt deſires, and moſt deeply radicated prejudices; we muſt do as *David* did, when he ſtrove to free himſelf from diſtruſt and impatience in his ſtraits: *I communed with my own heart* (ſaith he) *and my ſpirit made diligent ſearch*; by which practice he found, as he farther acquaints us, that it was *his infirmity*, which moved him to doubt of God's mercy and benignity toward him. *Cicero* having ſomewhere commended Philoſophy as the moſt excellent gift by Heaven beſtowed upon man, aſſigns this reaſon; *becauſe it teaches us, as all other things, ſo eſpecially this of all moſt difficult thing, to know our ſelves*: but he, with his favour, doth ſeem to promiſe for his friend more than ſhe is able to perform; the main part of this knowledge doth lye beyond the reach of any particular method; the Empirick ſeems to have more to do here than the Doctor: Philoſophy may perhaps afford us ſome plauſible notions concerning the nature of our ſoul; its ſtate, its power, its manners of acting; it may preſcribe ſome wide directions about proceeding in the diſcovery of our ſelves; but the particular knowledge (and therein the chief difficulty lieth) of our ſelves, how our ſouls ſtand inclined and diſpoſed, that only our particular earneſt ſtudy, and aſſiduous obſervation can yield unto us; and it is an ineſtimable advantage to obtain it. All men are very curious and inquiſitive after knowledge, the being endued therewith paſſeth for a goodly ornament, a rich poſſeſſion, a matter of great ſatisfaction, and much uſe: Men are commonly aſhamed of nothing ſo much as ignorance; but if any knowledge meriteth eſteem for its worth and uſefulneſs, this next to that concerning Almighty God, may ſurely beſt pretend thereto; if any ignorance deſerveth blame, this certainly is moſt liable thereto; to be ſtudious in contemplating natural effects, and the cauſes whence they proceed; to be verſed in the writings and ſtories of other mens doings; to be pragmatical obſervers of what is ſaid or done without us (that which perchance may little concern, little profit us to know) and in the mean while to be ſtrangers at home, to overlook what paſſeth in our own breaſts, to be ignorant of our moſt near and proper concernments, is a folly, if any, to be derided, or rather greatly to be pitied, as the ſource of many great inconveniences to us. For it is from ignorance of our ſelves that we miſtake our ſelves for other Perſons than we really are, and accordingly we behave our ſelves toward our ſelves with great indecency and injuſtice; we aſſume and attribute to our ſelves that which doth not any-wiſe belong unto us, or become us: As put caſe we are ignorant of the Perſons we converſe with, as to their quality, their merit, their humour; we ſhall be apt to miſcall, and miſtake them; to miſbehave our ſelves in our demeanour toward them; to yield them more or leſs reſpect than befits them; to croſs them rudely, or unhandſomely to humour them: In like manner, if we be ſtrangers to our hearts, ſhall we carry our ſelves toward our own ſelves: We ſhall hence, like men in a frenzy, take our ſelves for extraordinary People, rich and noble, and mighty, when indeed our condition being duly eſtimated, we are wretchedly mean and beggarly. We do frequently hug our ſelves (or rather ſhadows in our room) admiring our ſelves for qualities not really being in us; applauding our ſelves for actions nothing worth; ſuch as proceed from ill principles, and aim at bad ends, when as did we turn our thoughts in-

Pſ. 77. 6, 10.

Hæc enim una nos cum cæteras res omnes, tum quod eſt difficillimum docuit, ut noſmet ipſos noſceremus. Cic. *de Leg.* 1.

Rev. 3. 17.

wards, and regard what we find in our hearts, by what inclinations we are moved, upon what grounds we proceed, we ſhould be aſhamed, and ſee cauſe rather to bemoan, than to bleſs our ſelves: Deſcending into our ſelves we might perchance diſcern that moſt of our gallant performances (ſuch as not conſidering our hearts we preſume them to be) are derived from ſelf-love, or pride; from deſire of honour, or love of gain; from fear of damage or diſcredit in the World, rather than out of love, reverence, and gratitude toward God, of charity, compaſſion, and good-will toward our brethren, of ſober regard to our own true welfare and happineſs; which are the onely commendable principles, and grounds of action: St. *Luke* telleth us of certain men, who *perſwaded themſelves that they were righteous, and deſpiſed others*; upon occaſion of whom our Saviour dictateth the Parable of the *Phariſee* and *Publican*; whence think we came that fond confidence in themſelves, and proud contempt of others? from ignorance ſurely of themſelves, or from not obſerving thoſe bad diſpoſitions, thoſe wrong opinions, thoſe corrupt fountains within, from whence their ſuppoſed righteous deeds did flow. *If any man* (ſaith St. *Paul*, giving an account of ſuch preſumptions) *thinks himſelf to be ſomething, when he is nothing, he cheats himſelf in his mind*; *but let every man examine his work, and then he ſhall have rejoicing in himſelf alone* (or, privately with himſelf); ſome, he implieth, do impoſe upon, and delude themſelves, imagining themſelves ſome-bodies, (indued forſooth with admirable qualities, or to have atchieved very worthy deeds) when as, if they would enquire into themſelves, they ſhould find no ſuch matter; that themſelves were no ſuch Men, and their Works no ſuch Wonders: But if (ſaith he) a Man doth δοκιμάζειν ἑαυτὸν τὸ ἔργον, implore and examine what he doeth, and in reſult thereof doth clearly perceive, that he acteth upon good reaſons, and with honeſt intentions, then may he indeed injoy a ſolid interiour ſatisfaction (a true καύχημα, or exultation of mind) whatever others, not acquainted with thoſe inward ſprings of his motion, do pleaſe to judge of him, and his proceedings. No man indeed can truly value himſelf, or well approve of his own doings, ſo as to find any perfect comfort in himſelf, or in them, who doth not by ſtudying himſelf diſcover whence, and why he acts: One may be a flatterer, but cannot be a true friend to himſelf, who doth not throughly acquaint himſelf with his own inward ſtate; who doth not frequently conſult, and converſe with himſelf: A friend to himſelf, I ſaid, and to be ſo is one of the greateſt benefits that humane life can enjoy; that which will moſt ſweeten and ſolace our life to us: friendſhip with others (with perſons honeſt and intelligent) is a great accommodation, helping much to allay the troubles, and eaſe the burthens of life; but friendſhip with our ſelves is much more neceſſary to our well-being: for we have continual opportunities and obligations to converſe with our ſelves; we do ever need aſſiſtance, advice and comfort at home: and as commonly 'tis long acquaintance, and familiar entercourſe together, which doth conciliate one man to another, begetting mutual dearneſs and confidence, ſo it is toward ones ſelf: As no man can be a friend to a mere ſtranger, or to one whoſe temper, whoſe humour whoſe deſigns he is ignorant of; ſo cannot he be a friend to himſelf, if he be unacquainted with his own diſpoſition and meaning; he cannot in ſuch a caſe rely upon his own advice

Ut nemo in ſeſe tentat deſcendere, nemo.

Luke 18. 7.

Ῥᾷον ἑαυτὸν ἀπατᾶν, ἢ οἷός ἐστιν ἕνα τινὰ ὄντα, καὶ ἀπὸ κενῆς δόξης φυσώμενον. Nazianz. *Orat.* 27.

Gal. 6. 3.

Πρὸς ἑαυτὸν μόνον.

——*patriæ quis exul ſe quoque fugit?*

Αὐτὸς σεαυτῷ χρῶ συμβέλῳ, καὶ πᾶν θεῷ. Naz. *Epiſt.* 60.

Ἔνιοι δὲ ἡδὺν βίον ὡς ἀπερίσπαστον ἡσυχίαν διώκειν οὐκ ἀπολιπόντες, ἐν ἀνακλίσει δὲ λογισμὸν ὡς φῶς ἐφ' ἑαυτὸν καὶ θεραπείαν ἀλλ' ἢ ψυχῆς ἄμοιρα κακῶν παντοδαπῶν, καὶ φείσηται, καὶ φοβερὸν τὸ ἔνδον ἐπισκήψῃ συσχίσει. Plut. *de Curioſ.* p. 916.

vice, or aid, when need is; but will ſuſpect, and diſtruſt himſelf; he cannot be pleaſant company to himſelf, but ſhall be ready to croſs, and fall out with himſelf; he cannot adminiſter conſolation to his own griefs and diſtreſſes; his privacy will become a deſertion, his retirement a mere ſolitude. But paſſing over this general advantage, I ſhall with ſome more minuteneſs of diſtinction conſider divers particular advantages accruing from the practice of this duty, together with the oppoſite inconveniences, which are conſequent upon the neglect thereof, in the following Diſcourſe.

SERMON XIII.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

PROV. IV. 23.

Keep thy Heart with all diligence, &c.

I Proceed to the particular advantages of the practice of this duty, and the inconveniences of the neglect of it.

1. The conſtant and careful obſervation of our hearts will ſerve to prevent immoderate ſelf-love, and ſelf-conceit; to render us ſober and modeſt in our opinions concerning, and in our affections toward our ſelves; qualifying us to comply with the Apoſtolical Precept, μὴ φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ ὃ δεῖ φρονεῖν, that is, not to overween, or overvalue our ſelves, and our own things: for he that by ſerious inſpection upon his own heart, ſhall diſcern how many fond, impure, and ugly thoughts do ſwarm within him; how averſe his inclinations are from good, and how prone to evil; how much his affections are miſplaced, and diſtempered (while he vehemently delights in the poſſeſſion, and impotently frets for the want of trifles, having ſmall content in the fruition, and but ſlender diſpleaſure for the abſence of the greateſt goods; while empty hopes exalt him, and idle fears deject him; while other various paſſions, like ſo many tempeſts, drive, and toſs him all about) who ſhall obſerve, how clouds of darkneſs, errour and doubt do hover upon the face of his ſoul; ſo that he quickly taketh up opinions, and ſoon layeth them down, and often turneth from one miſtake unto another; how unſettled his reſolutions are, eſpecially in the purſuance of the beſt goods; and what corrupt mixtures cleave to his beſt purpoſes; who taketh notice how backward he is unto, and how cold in devotions toward God, how little ſenſible of his goodneſs, or fearful of his diſpleaſure, or zealous for his honour, or careful of performing his duty toward him; how little alſo it is that he deſireth, or delighteth in the good, that he pitieth and grieveth at the evil of his neighbour; how ſluggiſh alſo and remiſs he is in the purſuance of his own beſt affairs, and

higheſt

highest concernments; he that doth, I say, frequently with heedfulness regard these imperfections and obliquities in his own heart, how can he be ravished with self-love? how can he be much taken with himself? can any man dote upon such deformity, admire such weakness and naughtiness? No surely; that men are so amorous of themselves, so haughty and arrogant in their conceits, doth constantly arise from not reflecting on their own hearts; not beholding themselves wistly enough in that mirrour; not considering according to just representation there how little lovely, or worthy they are: If they did practice that, they would see reason, and thence become inclinable rather to despise, to loath, to pity themselves.

2. Upon that advantage is consequent, that this practice will dispose us with equanimity, and patience to bear all crosses and grievances befalling us; so producing not onely an excellent vertue, but a considerable solace to us; for the being conscious of so much unworthiness, which observation of our heart will necessarily discover, will not onely justify the providence, (so removing all just cause of complaint) but will commend the benignity of God unto us (so administring good matter of thanks.) It will prompt us heartily to confess with those in *Ezra*, that *our punishments are less than our deservings*; to join in acknowledgment with the *Psalmist*, that *God hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities*; to say with *Jeremy*, *It is of the Lord's mercy, that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not*; with *Jacob*, *I am less than any of thy mercies.*

Leniter ex merito quicquid patiare ferendum est. Ovid. *Ep.* 5.

Ezra 9. 13.

Psal. 103. 10.

Lam. 3. 22.

Gen. 32. 10.

3. Particularly this Practice will fence us against immoderate displeasure occasionable by Mens hard opinions, or rash censures passed on us: For he that by inquiry into himself perceives so many defects in himself, will not so easily, nor so greatly be offended, if some of them (or some like to them) be objected to him; since he finds himself truly liable to many more, and greater. *Epictetus*, his advice is, when you are told, that any Man speaks ill of you, that you should not apologize, but answer onely, that he was ignorant of many other faults of yours, or he would not onely have mentioned those: To be disposed without dissembling, or affection to follow his counsel would argue a man very intelligent of himself, and well prepared to endure happily and handsomely encounters of this kind, which every man shall be sure to meet with. None indeed can so contentedly brook reproach, or blame, as he that by intimate acquaintance with his own heart doth know the censure passed on him to be in effect mild and favourable; as finding himself a witness of more faults, than any adversary can accuse him of; as being a stricter examiner, and severer judge of himself than the most envious eye, or disaffected mind can be. It is also some comfort, that if censures be very outragious, a Man by knowledge of himself (by knowing his own dispositions, if his person be disfigured by a very ill character; by knowing his own purposes, if his actions be grievously aspersed) is certain they are such; that he can be as well a faithful witness, and just Judge for himself, as against himself.

4. Likewise this practice will defend us, as from the discomforts of harsh censure, so from the mistakes and miscarriages, to which the more favourable opinions of Men, or their flattering expressions (those luscious poisons) may expose us.

Index ipse sui se totum explorat ad unguem
Quid proceres, vanique ferat quid opinio vulgi
Securus——

——Nihil est quod credere de se
Non possit, cum laudatur——

'Tis not onely true of great men, but even of all men: The common nature of men disposeth them to be credulous, when they are commended, or receive any signification of esteem from others:

Every

Every ear is tickled with this ἡδιστον ἄκουσμα, this sweet musick of applause: But we are not to relye upon others imperfect and ill-grounded judgment so much as upon our own more certain knowledge concerning our selves:

——*ne cui de te plus quam tibi credas.*

Take no man's word before thine own sense, in what concerns thine own case and character, is an advice deserving our regard and practice: For that a man in questions of this kind is able to be a skilful and indifferent Umpire between himself and others; that he is neither elevated, nor depressed in mind by external weights, but keepeth himself equally poised in a just consistence by his own well-informed conscience; that neither his heart is exasperated with the bitterest gall of reproach, nor his head intoxicated with the sweetest wine of flattery, is an invaluable convenience of life; or rather it is a vertue arguing a most strong and healthful constitution of soul. *How great a levity of mind, how great a vanity is it* (saith a good Father) *setting aside a man's own conscience to follow other mens opinions (and even that feigned and forged) to be snatched away by the wind of false praise, to rejoice in being circumvented, and to receive being mocked for a benefit?* From being thus abused, this practice alone can secure us: If we know our selves well, we cannot so easily be deluded by the mistakes of others concerning us, on either hand.

Quæ hæc tanta levitas est animi, quæ tanta vanitas relicta propria conscientia alienam opinionem sequi, & quidem fictam, atque simulatam; rapi ventositate falsæ laudationis, gaudere ad circumventionem suam & illusionem pro beneficio accipere? Hier. (*vel* Paulinus) *ad* Celant.

5. Likewise, farther upon the same this practice will conduce to qualifie our opinions, and moderate our passions toward others; so that without intemperate anger, or bitterness, we may bear the faults, errours, and infirmities of our brethren; that we shall be benign in our carriage, and gentle in our censures even toward them, who do not behave themselves so well and wisely as they should do. St. *Paul* thus admonisheth the *Galathians, Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual* (the more spiritual whether in truth, or in our own esteem, the more especially are we obliged hereto) *restore such an one in the spirit of meekness, considering thy self, lest thou may be also tempted:* σκοπῶν σεαυτὸν, looking upon, or spying into thy self; such considering our selves, taking notice of our own infirmity within, perceiving how subject we are to the impressions of temptation, and that hence it may be our own case to fall and faulter, if occasion concur with our weakness; discerning this, I say, as it will be a reason obliging, so it may be an instrument conducing to a mitigation of spirit toward those, whom we see overtaken with mistake, or overborn by frailty. *Why dost thou see a mote in thy brothers eye, but dost not consider the beam in thine own eye?* is our Saviour's question; why a man should do so, there cannot (as he implies) any good reason be assigned; 'tis a very unreasonable and inexcusable miscarriage) but whence a man doeth so, is obvious and plain; it is, because he curiously pryes into other mens doings, and carelesly neglecteth the observation of his own heart: Did we reflect our sight inwards, we should be more apt to mark our own faults, and less ready to discover those of others; or however we should be more gently affected in regard to them: For he that knows himself a beggarly Wretch, will he reproach poverty to another? He that consulting the glass doth find himself ill-favoured, will he upbraid another for want of grace or beauty? He that perceives that the dart will rebound, and thereby wound himself, will he not be careful of flinging it? Will a man be forward in pronouncing a heavy sentence against another, who considers himself by plain consequence involved in the condemnation thereof? Should a man do so, he doth at least render himself

Gal. 6. 1.

Marc. Ant. XI. 18.

Matt. 7. 2.

Rom. 2. 1. self uncapable of apology, or excuse: So we are told by St. *Paul*: *Every censurer* (πᾶς ὁ κρίνων) *is*, saith he, *inexcusable*; *for that in arraigning another he condemns himself*: guilty is he of inexcusable folly, or impudence; of folly and blindness, if he see not; of extream impudence, if seeing his own obnoxiousness he will not abstain from judging others for that, of which himself is guilty in the same kind, or equivalently in some other. 2 Sam. 12. You know how *David* was caught by *Nathan*, and unwarily adjudged himself to death: And so may every man expose himself, that is rigorous in censure toward others without reflecting on himself, and considering his own heart; wherein he shall find so much ground and matter of being angry with, and judging himself. If we will be fierce and keen, 'tis reason we should be so first, and chiefly there, where our greatest enemies do abide, whence most mischief ariseth to us; where there is fittest matter, and justest cause of passion: Thus is this practice a most proper and effectual remedy for those baneful vices of pride and peevishness in our selves, of malignity and fury toward others. But farther,

Si volumus æqui rerum omnium judices esse, hoc primum nobis suadeamus, neminem esse nostrum sine culpa. Sen. *de Ir.*
Συγγνώμων ἔφη δεῖν εἶναι πᾶσι πᾶς ἁμαρτάνων, πλὴν ἑαυτῷ. Cato *Maj.* Plut. *p.* 624.

6. The observation of our heart yieldeth great advantage in being very conducible to render men truly wise and prudent; in those things especially, which most nearly concern them: Giving them to see before them, and to understand what they do; and to proceed without security; as contrarily the neglect thereof rendereth men unadvised and uncertain in their doings. A main point of prudence consisteth in suiting a man's undertakings to his powers and capacities; in not attempting things surpassing his ability, or fitness; and in not declining such useful, or beneficial attempts, as he may well compass. Some are overbold and rash in setting upon things beyond their strength to accomplish, or skill to manage; whence commonly with shame and sorrow they are defeated in their enterprizes; Others are overbackward and diffident, so as not to adventure upon what they may with good advantage, or perhaps ought to perform; thence depriving themselves of the benefits they might obtain, or omitting the duties, which they are obliged to; both which inconveniences usually do proceed from the not looking into, and studying the heart; for the most and greatest impediments of action do lye there; being grounded upon inward indispositions, or disagreeableness of mens temper, capacity, inclination to the matters, to which they apply themselves: A tender foot will be galled and lamed, if you set it going in rugged paths; a weak head will turn, if you place it high, or upon the brink of a precipice; a soft spirit cannot well comport with boisterous employment: he that naturally affects calm and quiet, must not hope to come off well if he engage himself upon affairs exposed to abundance of care and tumult; nor will he if he be well studied this way, and rightly understand himself, adventure thereupon. It was as well according to wisdom, as modesty, that *David* could say: Psal. 113. 1. *My heart is not haughty, nor mine eyes lofty; neither do I exercise my self in great matters, or in things too high for me.* In every undertaking two things occur to be considered, what of difficulty is found therein, and what of temptation; whether it can be done, and whether it should be done: It is a folly to spend our care and pains upon that, which is too hard for us to effect, and 'tis worse than so to adventure upon that, which most probably will bring us into sin, and hurt our souls; onely the study of our selves, weighing our power, and trying our temper, will prevent both: He that doeth this may commonly foresee what the case being put he shall do; that if such a temptation dotl assaul

assault him in such circumstances, his inclinations will be apt to comply therewith, and he shall scarce be able to resist (that for instance he shall wax haughty in a state of dignity, become luxurious in abundance of wealth, be distracted with care in a busie employment) and therefore he will not be so forward to ingage himself upon such occasions; danger and mischief being so vividly pre-represented to his sight. But he that pondereth not his own heart is ready to presume, that be the business what it will, he shall come off well; and so unadvisedly rusheth into the snare; he assumes unweildy burthens upon his shoulders, which he soon feeleth sorely to oppress and pain him; which he can neither bear with ease, nor put off with convenience; When, for instance, the Prophet told *Hazael* what Cruelties and Rapines, should (when he got power and opportunity) be committed by him; you see how he was startled at the report: *am I a Dog*, saith he; that is, can I be so vile and base; yes, he might himself have perceived that he should in likelihood be so; the probability of his doing, as the Prophet said, had been no great news to him; if he had observed his own inclinations. Good *Agur* on the other side did better understand himself, when he prayed; *Give me neither poverty nor riches, but feed me with food convenient for me*; he was conscious of natural infirmity, and therefore afraid of being in a condition that might prevail upon it; of great wealth, lest it should tempt him to forgetfulness, and neglect of God (*lest*, (saith he) *I be full and deny thee, and say who is the Lord?*) of extreme want, lest it should put him upon unjust, dishonest and impious courses to maintain his life; (*lest*, adds he, *I be poor and steal, and take the name of my God in vain*;) he saw by looking into himself, that self-love (the root of pride and injustice) was potent in him, and formidable, when occasion should favour it, and therefore by imploring divine aid, he strove to decline the advantages and occasions of it. It was good counsel which *Xenophon* tells us the *Oracle* gave *Crœsus*, consulting about the success of his attempt against *Cyrus*, Σαυτὸν γνώσεσθαι δίκαιον Κροῖσον πρῆξιν· *Knowing thy self thou shalt pass on happily* (in the course of thy life and undertakings:) had he, considering his own ability, in relation to the dubious event of things (that as he could not promise himself good fortune, so he did not know how he should comport with bad; being not sure that he should overcome either his enemies, or himself) thus, I say, had he complied with the *Oracle*'s advice, he might have escaped the loss and sorrow which befell him. So is t with us; if we know not the burthen of our Vessel, we shall either put more sail to it than it can bear, or less than will suffice to carry it on, it will be overladen, or want fit balast: If we are ignorant of our capacities, we shall either soar too high with a dangerous confidence, or grovel below in a sluggish listlessness: Studying our selves will help to preserve us in a middle pitch, will direct us in a moderate course, wherein we may proceed with sufficient courage and alacrity; with a prudent foresight, or at least with a comfortable hope of good success.

2 Kings 12. 8.

Prov. 30. 8.

De Cyri Instit. 7.

7. Near to that lies another considerable benefit, attending this practice, which is, that it will help to render us expedite in our resolutions, and constant to them; consistent with our selves, and uniform in our proceedings; whence will arise both great convenience to our selves, and satisfaction to others with whom we deal or converse: As on the contrary side from the neglect thereof we shall become slow in deliberation, doubtful in resolution, and unstable in performance. When any occasion of acting is presented, we shall be ready to close with what is agreeable to our inclination, and not repugnant to our judgment, if by due study and experience we are acquainted with them; that acquaintance is a certain

preparation to a speedy choice; and we shall upon the same grounds constantly adhere to our choice, standing upon so firm a base; and so shall neither discompose our selves, nor disappoint others by our irresolution and inconstancy. But he that skills not his own heart, first will dwell long upon consultation (not feeling perfectly whither his inward Bias doth draw him) and when he seems upon some superficial reason to have determined on one side, some discordance to his own inclination, or some latent prejudice soon discovering it self, he wavers, and at length falls off; finding that he hath promised to himself or others what he is unable or
Jam. 1. 8. unwilling to perform; so like St. *James* his two-souled man, he is unsteady in all his ways. The hard Student of himself is like a man that hath his Estate *in numerato*, in ready Cash, all in his hand, or at his command; he can presently tell what he can do, and satisfie those he hath to do with; go to him, you may know where to have him, even just where you left him, or where he uses to be; you may expect a sudden dispatch, and you may rely upon his word; for he knows before-hand what he doeth, and shall continue to like; why he determines so or so; and cannot be removed from his well-grounded purpose (that which is by the Philosopher
Sen. *de Vit. B.* 8. termed *ratio nec dissidens, nec hæsitans*, a reason that doth not strive, nor stick, he is master of.) But he that neglects this practice, what he hath any title to, lieth dispersed, and laid up in corners unknown to himself, so that himself cannot come readily by it; you can hardly tell where to find him; you must wait his resolution, and when 'tis told you, you cannot be assured thereof; nor any-wise satisfied that he will stick to his word, or his mind; he knows not throughly what he would have himself, can you then hope for a certain answer from him? He cannot well trust himself, can you then relie upon him? He will find himself mistaken and crossed in his own choice, can you expect less? *Quid est sapientia? semper*
Sen. *Ep.* 20. *idem velle, atque idem nolle*: Constancy to a Man's self is, saith he, the very being of Wisdom; however nothing more beseems a Man, more commends him to society, and suits him to business, is more pleasant and grateful to those, who have to do with him, than such a clear, uniform, steady disposition of mind; such a smooth and even tenour of action; nothing renders conversation and commerce more unpleasant, than a fickle lubricity of humour, and unaccountable deformity of behaviour: That study therefore is very useful, which conduceth to breed and maintain the one, and which removeth the other.

8. Again, another valuable convenience of this practice is, that it disposeth unto, and preserveth a Man's mind in a sober temper, agreeable to his state, and to the circumstances into which he is cast; such a temper I mean as that, which the *Wise Man* prescribes, where he saith, *In the*
Eccles. 7. 14. *day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider.* It is apt to beget either a comfortable joy, or a wholsome regret, according as the interiour condition of his soul (that wherein the chief cause of the one, or of the other affection is grounded) doth seasonably and justly require. To be transported with mirth and jollity in a state of grievous misery, when reason it self demands sorrow and pity; to be sad and dumpish when all things flow prosperously, either of those will seem marvellously incongruous, and argue a kind of stupidity in him that so behaves himself. Now there is not in truth any calamity so disastrous as that which befals us within our selves, no Prosperity so worthily delightful as the good proceeding of affairs in our souls: 'Tis the most excellent pleasure a Man is capable of, that which doth spring from the being conscious, that his mind doth
3 John 1. 2. εὐοδοῦται (as St. *John* speaks) that is, go well forward in a happy course; that

that good thoughts freely do spring up, that good inclinations are strong and prevalent, that good habits of mind wax vigorous; that the love of goodness is improved; that he generally doth thrive in health and strength spiritual: No increase of treasure can affect the covetous, no rising in power and dignity can satisfie the ambitious, no enjoyment of sensual entertainments can ravish the voluptuous man with so true or great content, as the sensible proficiency in vertuous and pious dispositions of soul, growing *richer unto God*, and stronger in the hopes of his favour do produce in him that doth affect it, and can perceive it: 'Tis a joy in all respects incomparable; onely wise and reasonable, pure and innocent, firm and durable. As on the other hand if it be so that we discern, that within our hearts bad thoughts do swarm and multiply, bad appetites do sway, bad customs do encroach upon us; that desire of, and delight in good things decay; that we become more dark, dull, unsettled in our spiritual apprehensions, more feeble and languid in our prosecutions of vertue, 'tis a great benefit to have a timely remorse prompting and urging us to endeavour a deliverance from so unhappy a condition: But no man can well either enjoy that comfortable delight, or be affected with this profitable sorrow, who doth not with a careful attention view his heart, and descry how things go there. This consideration mindeth of a farther and more general advantage accruing from this practice; which is this, that

9. A serious inspection into our hearts doth much avail toward the reformation of our hearts and lives; curing the distempers, and correcting the vices of them. For to the curing any disease it is requisite to know the complexion and temper of the Patient, and the part affected, and the next causes thereof: As the most grievous of bodily diseases are seated in, or do proceed from the entrails; but not all of them from the same one of them; and the same disease depends upon the distemper sometimes of one, sometimes of another among them: So do all vices (as our *Saviour* expressly teacheth) issue from the heart, or interiour man; some from one, some from another part or region thereof; and the same from different parts: Sometimes natural temper, sometimes false opinion, sometimes evil custom is the root of the same kind of disease; and 'tis expedient we should know distinctly which of them in particular cases is the root, that accordingly we may understand what method of cure to use, whence to fetch the remedy, where to apply it; for unskilfulness in these points may frustrate our endeavours of amendment. If the mischief proceed from natural inclination, we must not hope ever utterly to subdue it, nor to free our selves suddenly from the incursions thereof; nor is bare reasoning a proper Weapon against it; it being grounded in the original constitution of the soul, either immediately, or as linked to the body; which by no operation of our mind can be soon altered; for, *No wisdom* (as *Seneca* speaketh well) *can remove the natural vices of body or mind; what is infixed and inbred may be allayed by art, not subdued.* Reason alone and directly, is not able to grapple therewith; she'll break her teeth upon so tough and knotty matter: It will weary her armes in vain to swim against the rapid current of natural propension; the violent eruptions thereof may indeed somewhat be restrained; occasions of complying therewith may often be declined; it may in time, and by degrees, be weakned by subtracting the food and incentives thereof: But especially Devils of this kind must, as our Saviour instructeth us, be ejected by humble, earnest and frequent invocation of divine assistance; without which other means commonly will prove ineffectual: But if the vice

Matt. 15. 18.

Nulla sapientia naturalia corporis, aut animi vitia ponuntur: quicquid infixum & ingenitum est leniter arte, non vincitur. Sen. *Ep.* 11.

Τὶ φθείρει τὸ ΔΔΔ, ἐνάντιον ΔΔΔ. Epict.

proceed onely from ill habit, or the prevalency of bad cuſtom we are to oppoſe a contrary cuſtom thereto, preſently diſuſing that practice, and acting otherwiſe, ſo ſhall we eaſily remove and extirpate it: If neither of theſe cauſes are diſcernable, we may preſume our indiſpoſition is derived from ill opinion; and that conſequently our beſt courſe of redreſſing it, is to examine the reaſon of the thing; to get clear and right apprehenſions concerning it. For example, if we obſerve our ſelves apt to be frequently tranſported with anger, let us look into our hearts, and take notice, whether the root of that diſtemper be a cholerick complexion, or whether it ariſe from an habitual indulgence to our ſelves of being moved upon ſlight cauſes, whereby a peeviſh humour is grown upon us; or whether it cometh from vain conceits of our ſelves, as of Perſons unto whom extraordinary deference and obſervance is due, ſo that no man ſhould preſume to diſſent from our opinion, or contravene our deſire; and as we find, ſo we muſt reſpectively proceed in repreſſing the cauſes of this diſeaſe; praying, if it ariſe from nature, to the Omnipotent (the onely Lord and Commander of nature) that he would by his grace free us from that inflamable temper, and inable us to govern our paſſion; withal ſhunning occaſions of being provoked; abſtaining from ſuch diet, ſuch buſineſs, ſuch company, as naturally do kindle or ferment that humour: If the Malady grow from cuſtom, uſing our ſelves to bear patiently harſh words, unkind dealings, croſs accidents; if our opinion diſpoſe us thereto, reaſoning our ſelves into moderate conceits about our ſelves, conſidering the reaſons that may acquit or excuſe others to us upon occaſion of offence: Uſing all, or ſome of theſe means, or the like, ſuch as the obſervation of our heart ſhall diſcover to us to be moſt proper and ſuitable to the nature, or to the cauſe of this diſtemper infeſting us, we ſhall wholly, or in good part rid our ſelves from it. Again, (to adjoin another example, the matter ſeeming to deſerve our heed) ſuppoſe we experience our ſelves inclining to covetouſneſs; eager in getting, ſolicitous in keeping, unwilling to part with our goods upon reaſonable occaſion (for the maintenance of our convenient reſpect in the World, or for relieving the needs of our Brethren, or for ſerving the publick, or for promoting the intereſts of Piety and Vertue) let us then look, and ſee whether this ariſeth from a natural ſtraitneſs, hardneſs, ſuſpiciouſneſs, or diffidence of Heart (ſome ſuch diſpoſitions may be obſerved in men) or from being by our Education, or manner of life enured to ſuch a love of getting, or of ſparing, or of tenacity; or whether it ſprings from conceits about the worth, or the neceſſity of wealth (that without being furniſhed with heaps of treaſure, we ſhall come into danger of want or diſgrace; we ſhall not be able to maintain our life, or uphold our credit; we ſhall not enjoy any thing, or be any bodies among men) let us, I ſay, by examining our hearts find out from which of theſe ſprings this ſordid diſpoſition floweth, and accordingly ſtrive to correct it; either praying to Almighty God, that he would inlarge and ſupple our heart, if it be natural to us; or addicting our ſelves upon reaſonable occaſion to liberality and free expence, if cuſtom hath therein prevailed upon us; or, if vain ſurmiſes have ſeduced us, rectifying our judgments; as by other good diſcourſes, proper againſt that brutiſh vice, ſo eſpecially by conſidering that God is moſt good and bountiful, and tender of our being overwhelmed with need; that he continually watcheth over us, ſo that he cannot but ſee, and will regard what we want; and that he faithfully hath promiſed, if we endeavour to pleaſe him, and uſe a moderate diligence in honeſt ways to maintain our ſelves, that he will yield his bleſſing, and never will leave

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us destitute. So in all cases we may proceed discreetly in the cure of our spiritual, and in withstanding the temptations to sin, that assault us, if we do but search into our hearts, and learn thence, whence they flow, and by what they are nourished.

10. This practice farther, doth particularly serve to regulate our devotions, and performances more immediately spiritual; by shewing us what we need to pray for, what we are obliged to give thanks for, what it becomes us to confess, and deprecate, for want thereof we shall be apt not onely to neglect, but indecently to confound, yea miserably to pervert these duties; to confound them by praying for what is already given us, is put into our hand, or lies within our reach; for which therefore we are not to pray, but to render thanks; also by giving thanks formally for that, which perhaps we are far from possessing, and do most want; so, I say, we shall be apt to confound and misplace, to render vain and chimerical in a sort our spiritual addresses, as wanting due ground and object; yea to pervert them by asking for things really prejudicial and hurtful to us (in the circumstances we stand) and thanking God for what Psal. 73. 18.
in anger and judgment he dispenseth to us (so indeed are many appearing Heb. 12. 11.
goods, grateful to present sense) as also deprecating things most beneficial and useful, and healthful to our souls; neglecting to return thanks for what God disposeth in mercy (so are many things at present bitter, and unsavoury to our carnal appetite and fancy) thus from ignorance of our selves, and what we truly need, are we apt to pervert our devotions, not onely defeating our selves of the advantages they might yield us; but (if God be not more gracious than to hearken to us, and to grant our wishes) bringing lamentable mischief on our selves. Many examples of these confusions and perverse misapplications of devotion both Scripture affords, and experience will suggest, if we observe them. You know the comparison in the *Gospel* between the devotions of the *Pharisee* and the *Publican*, with the different acceptance they found: The one was prompt enough to give thanks for the graces he had received, and the advantages he conceived that he had in his qualities, and in his performances above others; but not having duly studied himself; did not perceive, that he was rather bound to ask pardon for the pride of his heart, and the vanity that adhered to his performances, which rendered his thanksgiving very improper and unseasonable: The other being conscious of his demerits and wants, with a manner suitable to his condition, in words few, but full and fit, did confess his unworthiness (which to do did best beseem him) and implored mercy (which was the thing he chiefly needed) so was his discreet Prayer better accepted, than the others impertinent thanksgiving: *I tell you* (saith our *Saviour*) *this man went down to his house justified rather than the other.* Luke 18. 14.

Evertere domos totas optantibus ipsis Dii faciles, &c. Juv. *Sat.* 10.

Luke 18.

The two Sons of *Zebedee*, conceiting that our Lord would shortly become a great Prince, and affecting to become Favourites then, did confidently sue for the next place of dignity about him; our Lord repressed their fond ambition by downright telling them first that Matt. 20. 21.
they knew not what they asked; then by demanding of them whether they were able to undergo the trials they should meet with; implying what they should rather have requested; that they more needed humility and patience, than pomp and pleasure: And it was the same two persons, whose intemperate zeal he otherwhere checked with an οὐκ οἴδατε ὁποίου πνεύματος Luke 9. 55.
ἐστε, *Ye know not of what spirit ye are*: And no wonder, if they who knew not what they were, did ask they knew not what; that being ignorant of their own hearts, they should endite absurd petitions; that in such a case they should desire things not onely incongruous and inconvenient,

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but dangerous and destructive to themselves. For to make a right distinction of these duties; to be able discreetly and pertinently (if I may so speak) to converse with God it is requisite to look into our hearts; and from them to take fit matter, due measure, right season of request, and of acknowledgment respectively; things commonly not being as they appear to our present sense, or to our gross conceit, in themselves, or in their degree good or bad; but according to the disposition of our hearts, and the effects they work upon them: That is not good, which pleaseth our sense and fancy, nor that bad, which disgusts them; but that is good, which rendereth our heart wiser and better; which correcteth our inclinations, composeth our affections, informeth our judgments rightly, and purifieth our intentions; that is bad, which hath contrary effects within us. We it's likely should pray with greatest seriousness and earnestness for the removal of those infirmities, for ease from those afflictions, which we see the Holy *Apostles* (being better instructed in things, being more acquainted with themselves) did rejoice, did glory in, did give thanks for; as finding the wholsome operations they had upon their hearts (that by them their vertues were exercised, and improved, their faith tried, their patience increased, their hope confirmed; that, (to use the *Apostles* Words) they did *in the sequele return the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who were exercised by them*; but leaving this Point, though deserving perhaps farther consideration, I proceed, and say farther, that

Jam. 1. 2. Rom. 5. 3. 2 Cor. 12. 9. Gal. 6. 14. 1 Pet. 1. 6. Heb. 12. 11.

11. The continual visitation of our inward parts doth not onely yield much advantage, (as in some measure hath been shewed) at the long-run by influence at the spring-head upon the principles and causes of action, but doth immediately conduce to good practice, preventing and stifling in the very birth many sinful and vain practices: That so many indiscreet and impertinent, so many irregular and unsavoury, so many unjust and uncharitable speeches do issue from our mouths, it is especially because we are not then imployed upon this duty; are not watching over our hearts, and observing those inward fountains (levity and wantonness of thought, precipitancy and disorder of passion) from whence they overflow; were we intent there, we should perhaps endeavour to stop the current, and contain these inward bad motions from venting themselves. The like we may say concerning many unwarrantable actions, into which we inconsiderately plunge our selves, not heeding whence they spring. Did we regard that such actions were arising from ambitious, covetous froward dispositions; or from certain ill-grounded prejudices lurking in our minds, we should often surely forbear them; but while we keep none or bad sentinels; while in the custody of our hearts we sleep, or are drowsie; while we neglect to examine and weigh our actions what they are and whence they come, they (although very bad and hurtful) do steal by us, and pass as friends, and we hear no more of them, but in their woful consequences. What efficacy the consideration of God's omnipresent eye beholding all our doings, hath, and how all wise men do press it as a powerful means to contain us from bad action, you cannot but well know; as likewise that some of them in order to the same purpose direct us to conceive our selves always under the inspection of some person especially venerable for his worth, or for his relation to us, whom we should be afraid, or ashamed to displease: And surely were the faith concerning God's presence, or the fancy concerning the presence of a *Cato*, or a *Lælius* strong enough, they could not but have great effect: However did we but live even in our own presence, under the eye of our own judgment and conscience; regarding not onely the matter and body, but the reason

Sen. *Ep.* 11. 25.

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and ground (that is the soul) of our actings; even that would do much; the love and reverence of our selves would somewhat check and controll us; we should fear to offend, we should be ashamed to vilify even our selves by fond or foul proceedings: It would (in the Philosophers esteem) supply the room of any other Keeper or Monitor, if we could thus keep our selves: *If* (saith he) *we have so far profited, as to have got a reverence of our selves, we may then well let go a Tutour, or Pedagogue.* Sen. *Ep.* 25. *Cum jam profeceris tantum, ut sit tibi etiam tui reverentia, licebit dimittas pædagogum.* Ibid.

12. This practice doth much conduce to the knowledge of humane nature, and the general dispositions of mankind, which is an excellent and most useful part of Wisdom: For the principal inclinations and first motions of the soul are alike in all men; whence he that by diligent study of himself hath observed them in his own soul, may thence collect them to be in others; he hath at least a great advantage of easily tracing them, of soon descrying them, of clearly perceiving them in those he converseth with; the which knowledge is of great use, as directing us how to accommodate our selves in our behaviour and dealing with others.

No Man indeed can be a good Instructor or Adviser in Moral Affairs, who hath not attained this Skill, and doth not well understand the nature of Man: His Precepts and Rules will certainly be fallacious, or misapplied without it: This is that, which rendered the Dictates of the *Stoicks* and other such Philosophers so extravagant and unpracticable, because they framed them not according to the real nature of Man, such as is existent in the World, but according to an Idea formed in their own imaginations.

Some Caution indeed is in this matter to be used, that those motions of Soul, which proceed from particular Temper and Complexion, from supervenient Principles or Habits, may be distinguished from those which are natural and common unto all: Which distinction to make is of great use and benefit, in order to the governing, restraining or correcting them.

If there be any in us, which are not observable in any other men; or in other men, which are not in us, those do not arise from common nature, but from the particular disposition of one or other respectively.

13. I add lastly, that universally this Practice is requisite and necessary for the well-governing of our Heart. Politicians inculcate much, that to the well-governing of a People, squaring fit Laws for it, and keeping it in good order, the nature and humour of that People should be chiefly heeded and well understood, for that the grave *Romans*, and light *Greeks*; the soft *Persians*, and stout *Germans*; the subtile *Africans*, and gross *Scythians* would not be well managed in the same manner. So to govern any man's heart (since the hearts of men, as their faces, and as their voices, differ according to diversities of complexion, of age, of education, of custom and manner of living) it conduceth to know how it is disposed from any of those, or the like causes. (But how we are to guide and govern our hearts, and what particular influence this practice hath thereupon, I reserve for other Meditations; when we shall endeavour more distinctly to shew how we may apply our thoughts to due objects; how curb and (o rect our inclinations; how order our passions; how rectify our opinions; how purify our intentions, now) I conclude with the good *Psalmist*'s Requests to God Almighty: *Teach us thy way, Lord, unite our hearts to fear thy name. Give us understanding, and we all keep thy Law, yea we shall observe it with our whole heart. Search us O God, and know our hearts; try us, and know our thoughts; see if there be any wicked way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting.* Amen. *Vid.* Naz. *Orat.* 1. Psal. 86. 11. Psal. 119. 34. Psal. 139. 23.

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SERMON XIV.

The Consideration of our Latter End.

PSAL. XC. 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisedom.

THIS *Psalm* is upon several peculiar accompts very remarkable; for its antiquity, in which it perhaps doth not yield to any parcel of Scripture; for the eminency of its Authour, *Moses* the Man of God; the greatest of the ancient Prophets (most in favour, and (as it were) most intimate with God:) 'Tis also remarkable for the form and matter thereof, both affording much useful instruction. In it we have a great Prince, the Governour of a numerous People sequestring his mind from the management of publick Affairs to private Meditations; from beholding the present outward appearances, to considering the real nature and secret causes of things: In the midst of all the splendour and pomp, of all the stir and tumult about him he observes the frailty of humane condition, he discerns the Providence of God justly ordering all; this he does not onely in way of wise consideration, but of serious devotion, moulding his observations into pious acknowledgments and earnest prayers to God; thus while he casts one eye upon Earth viewing the occurrences there, lifting up the other to Heaven; there seeing God's all-governing Hand, thence seeking his gracious favour and mercy. Thus doth here that great and good Man teach us all, (more particularly Men of high Estate, and much Business) to find opportunities of withdrawing their thoughts from those things, which commonly amuse them (the Cares, the Glories, the Pleasures of this World) and fixing them upon matters more improvable to devotion; the transitorineſs of their Condition, and their subjection to God's just Providence; joining also to these Meditations sutable acts of Religion, due acknowledgments to God and humble prayers. This was his practice among the greatest encumbrances that any man could have; and it should also be ours. Of those his devotions, addressed to God, the Words are part, which I have chosen for the subject of my meditation and present discourse; concerning

the meaning of which I shall first touch somewhat; then propound that observable in them, which I design to insist upon.

The Prophet *David* hath in the 39th *Psalm* a Prayer very near in words, and of kin (it seems) in sense to this here; *Lord*, prays he, *Make me to know my end, and the measure of my days, what it is, that I may know how frail I am*: Concerning the drift of which place, as well as of this here, it were obvious to conceive, that both these Prophets do request of God, that he would discover to them the definite term of their life (which by his decree he had fixed, or however by his universal prescience he did discern; concerning which we have these words in *Job*, *Seeing man's days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds, that he cannot pass*) we might, I say, at first hearing be apt to imagine, that their Prayer unto God is, (for the comfort of their mind burthened with afflictions, or for their better direction in the management of their remaining time of life) that God would reveal unto them the determinate length of their life. But this sense, which the Words seem so naturally to hold forth is by many of the Fathers rejected; for that the knowledge of our lives determinate measure is not a fit matter of Prayer to God; that being a secret reserved by God to himself, which to inquire into savours of presumptuous curiosity; the universal validity of which reason I will not debate; but shall defer so much to their judgment, as to suppose that the numbring of our days (according to their sense) doth not only imply a confused indefinite computation of our days number, or the length of our life; such as, upon which it may appear, that necessarily our life cannot be long (not according to the accompt mentioned in this *Psalm*) the same with that of *Solon*, in *Heroditus* (above 70 or 80 Years, especially as to purposes of health, strength, content) will probably by reason of various accidents, to which it is exposed, be much shorter (7 or 10 Years according to a moderate esteem) may possibly, from surprises undiscoverable, be very near to its period; by few instants removed from death (a Year, a Month, a Day, it may be somewhat less.) This I shall allow to be the *Arithmetick* that *Moses* here desires to learn; whence it doth follow that teaching (or making to know, so it is in the *Hebrew*) doth import here (as it doth otherwhere frequently in Scripture) God's affording the Grace to know practically, or with serious regard to consider this state and measure of our life (for in speculation no Man can be ignorant of humane lives brevity and uncertainty; but most Men are so negligent and stupid, as not to regard it sufficiently, not to employ this knowledge to any good purpose). This Interpretation I chuse, being in it self plausible enough, and countenanced by so good authority; yet the former might well enough (by good consequence, if not so immediately) serve my design: Or be a ground able to support the discourse I intend to build upon the Words; the subject whereof briefly will be this, that the consideration of our lives certain and necessary brevity and frailty, is a mean proper and apt to dispose us toward the wise conduct of our remaining life; to which purpose such a consideration seems alike available, as the knowledge of its punctual or definite measure; or more than it; upon the same, or greater reasons.

Psal. 39. 4.

Job 14. 5.

Οὐ γὰρ ὑβριστὰς ἔχουσι θεοὶ ἀνθρώπους ἀγνοεῖν ὅτι ἄνθρωποί ἐσμεν ζῶον σύντομον καὶ ὀλίγον χρόνον εἰς τὸ ἀποθανεῖν. Plut. *ad* Apoll. p. 202.

Quis est tam stultus, quamvis sit adolescens, cui sit exploratum se vel ad vesperum esse victurum. Cic. *de Sen.*

As for the latter clause, *that we may apply our hearts to wisedom*; 'tis according to the *Hebrew*, *and we shall bring the heart to wisedom*; implying, the application of our hearts to wisedom to be consequent upon the skill

and practice (bestowed by God) of thus computing our days. As for *wisedom*, that may denote either *sapience*, a habit of knowing what is true; or prudence, a disposition of chusing what is good; we may here understand both, especially the latter; for, as *Tully* saith of Philosophy, *Omnis summa Philosophiæ ad beatè vivendum refertur*, The sum or whole of Philosophy refers to living happily; so all Divine Wisedom doth respect good practice. The word also comprehends all the consequences and adjuncts of such wisdom (for so commonly such words are wont by way of *metonymie* to denote, together with the things primarily signified, all that naturally flow from, or that usually are conjoined with them) in brief (to cease from more explaining that, which is in it self conspicuous enough) I so understand the Text, as if the Prophet had thus expressed himself: Since, O Lord, all things are in thy hand, and sovereign disposal; since it appears that man's life is so short and frail, so vexatious and miserable; so exposed to the just effects of thy displeasure; we humbly beseech thee, so to instruct us by thy wisedom, so to dispose us by thy grace; that we may effectually know; that we may seriously consider the brevity and uncertainty of our lives durance; whence we may be induced to understand, regard, and chuse those things which good reason dictates best for us; which according to true wisedom, it most concerns us to know and perform. From which sense of the words we might infer many useful documents, and draw matter of much wholsome discourse: but passing over all the rest, I shall onely insist upon that one point, which I before intimated, *viz.* that the serious consideration of the shortness and frailty of our life is a proper instrument conducible to the bringing our hearts to wisedom, to the making us to discern, attend unto, embrace and prosecute such things as are truly best for us; that it is available to the prudent conduct and management of our life; the truth of which proposition is grounded upon the divine Prophet his opinion: He apprehended such a knowledge or consideration to be a profitable means of inducing his heart to wisedom; wherefore he prays God to grant it him in order to that end; supposing that effect would proceed from this cause. And that it is so in way of reasonable influence I shall endeavour to shew by some following reasons.

De fin. II. p. 95.

Natura dedit usuram vitæ, tanquam pecuniæ, nulla præstituta die. Tusc. quæst. I. p. 326.

1 John ii. 17. *Love not the world; for——the world passeth away, and the desire thereof.*

I. The serious consideration of our lives frailty and shortness will confer to our right valuation (or esteem) of things, and consequently to our well placing, and our duly moderating our cares, affections and endeavours about them. For as we value things, so are we used to affect them, to spend our thoughts upon them, to be earnest in pursuance or avoiding of them. There be two sorts of things we converse about, good and bad; the former, according to the degree of their appearance so to us (that is, according to our estimation of them) we naturally love, delight in, desire and pursue; the other likewise in proportion to our opinion concerning them, we do more or less loath and shun. Our actions therefore being all thus directed and grounded, to esteem things aright both in kind and degree (ἀξίως τοῦ πράγματος ἕκαστον τιμᾶν, to assign every thing its due price, as *Epictetus* speaks; *quanti quidque sit judicare*, to judge what each thing is worth as *Seneca*,) is in order the first, in degree a main part of wisedom; and as so is frequently by wise men commended. Now among

Primum est, ut quanti quidque sit judices; secundum, ut impetum ad illa capias ordinatum temperatumque; tertium, ut inter impetum tuum, actionemque conveniat, ut in omnibus istis tibi ipsi consentias. Sen. Epist. 89.

among qualities that commend or vilifie things unto us, duration and certainty have a chief place; they often alone suffice to render things valuable or contemptible. Why is Gold more precious than Glass or Chrystal; why prefer we a Ruby before a Rose, or a Gilly-flower? 'tis not because those are more serviceable, more beautiful, more grateful to our senses than these (it is plainly otherwise) but because these are brittle and fading, those solid and permanent; these we cannot hope to retain the use or pleasure of long; those we may promise our selves to enjoy so long as we please; whence on the other side is it, that we little fear or shun any thing how painful, how offensive soever, being assured of its soon passing over, the biting of a flea, or the prick in letting bloud? The reason is evident; and that in general nothing can on either hand be considerable (either to value or disesteem) which is of a short continuance. Upon this ground therefore let us tax the things concerning us whether good or bad, relating to this life, or to our future state; and first the good things relating to this life; thence we shall be disposed to judge truly concerning them, what their just price is, how much of affection, care and endeavour they deserve to have expended on them. In general, and in the lump concerning them all St. *Paul* tells us, that τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ κοσμου παράγει, *the* shape or *fashion* (all that is apparent or sensible) in *this present world doth flit, and soon give us the go-by*: We gaze a while upon these things, as *in transitu*, or *intra conspectum*; as they pass by us, and keep a while in sight; but they are presently gone from us, or we from them. They are but like objects represented in a Glass; which having viewed a-while, we must shortly turn our backs, or shut our eyes upon them, then all vanishes, and disappears unto us. Whence he well infers an indifferency of affection toward them; a slackness in the enjoyment of them to be required of us; a *using this world, as if we used it not*; a *buying, as if we were not to possess*; a *weeping, as if we wept not*; *and a rejoicing, as if we rejoiced not*; a kind of negligence and unconcernedness about these things. *The world* (saith St. *John*) *passeth away, and the desire thereof*; whatever seemeth most lovely and desirable in the World is very flitting; however our desire and our enjoyment thereof must suddenly cease. Imagine a man therefore possessed of all worldly goods, arm'd with power, flourishing in credit, flowing with Plenty, swimming in all delight (such as were sometime *Priamus*, *Polycrates*, *Crœsus*, *Pompey*) yet since he is withal supposed a man and mortal; subject both to fortune and death; none of those things can he reasonably confide, or much satisfy himself in; they may be violently divorced from him by fortune, they must naturally be loosed from him by death; the closest union here cannot last longer than till death us depart; wherefore no man upon such accompt can truly call or (if he consider well) heartily esteem himself happy; a *man cannot* hence (as the most able judge, and trusty voucher of the commodities doth pronounce) *receive profit or content from any labour he taketh* (upon these transitory things) *under the sun*. Why then (let me inquire) do we so cumber our heads with care, so rack our hearts with passion, so waste our spirits with inessant toil about these transitory things? why do we so highly value, so rdently desire, so eagerly pursue, so fondly delight in, so impatiently want, or lose, so passionately contend for and emulate one another in regard to these bubbles; forfeiting and foregoing our homebred most precious goods, tranquillity and repose, either of mind or body, for them? Why erect we such mighty fabricks of expectation and confidence upon

1 Cor. 7. 31.

——πάντα παρέρχεται ἡμᾶς,
Ἐι δ' μὴ, ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ πάντα παρερχόμεθα. Gr. Epig. Anthol.

1 John 2. 17. Ἐπιθυμία αὐτοῦ.

Eccl. 1. 3. &c.

Commorandi natura nobis diversorium dedit non habitandi locum. Cic. de Sen.

such unsteady sands? why dress we up these our Inns, as if they were our homes, and are as careful about a few nights lodging here, as if we designed an everlasting abode (we that are but *sojourners and pilgrims* here, and have *no fixed habitation* upon earth; who *come forth like a flower, and*

1 Pet. 2. 11. 1. Heb. 13. 11. 11. 15. 1 Chron. 29. 15. Job 14. 1. Psal. 78. 39. Jam. 4. 14. Isa. 64. 6. Psal. 102. 3. 90. 5. 9. 103. 15. 39. 5. 144. 4. 119. 19. Psal. 103. 15. Isa. 40. 6.

are soon cut down; flee like a shadow and continue not; are winds passing away, and coming not again; who fade all like a leaf, whose life is a vapour appearing for a little time, and then vanishing away; whose days are a hand-breadth, and age is nothing; whose days are consumed like smoak, and years are spent as a tale. Who wither like the grass, upon which we feed; *and crumble as the dust,* of which we are compacted; for thus the Scripture by apposite comparisons represents our condition) yet we build (like the Men of *Agrigentum*) as if we were to dwell here for ever; and hoard up, as if we were to enjoy after many ages; and inquire, as if we would never have done knowing? The Citizens of *Croton* (a Town in *Italy*) had a manner (it is said) of inviting to Feasts a Year before the time, that the Guests in appetite and garb might come well prepared to them; do we not usually resemble them in this ridiculous solicitude and curiosity; *spes inchoando longas*, commensing designs, driving on projects, which a longer time than our life would not suffice to accomplish? How deeply do we concern our selves in all that is said or done; when the morrow all will be done away and forgotten? when (excepting what our duty to God, and charity towards men requires of us, and that which concerns our future eternal state) what is done in the World, who gets or loses, which of the spokes in fortune's wheel is up, and which down, is of very little consequence to us. But the more to abstract our minds from, and temper our affections about these secular matters, let us examine particularly by this standard, whether the most valued things in this World deserve that estimate which they bear in the common Market, or which popular opinion assigns them.

1. To begin then with that which takes chief place, which the World most dotes on, which seems most great and eminent among men; secular state and grandeur, might and prowess, honour and reputation, favour and applause of men, all the objects of humane pride and ambition;

1 Pet. 2. 24. of this kind, St. *Peter* thus pronounces πᾶσα δόξα ἀνθρώπου, *All the glory of men is as the flower of the grass; the grass is dried up, and the flower thereof doth fall off*; 'tis as the flower of the grass, how specious soever, yet the most fading and failing part thereof; the grass it self will soon wither, and the flower doth commonly fall off before that. We cannot hold this flower of worldly glory beyond our short time of life; and we may easily much sooner be deprived of it: Many tempests of fortune may beat it down, many violent hands may crop it, 'tis apt of its self to fade upon the stalk; however the sun (the influence of age and time) will assuredly

Psal. 62. 9. burn and dry it up, with our life that upholds it. *Surely* (saith the *Psalmist*) *men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lye:* Men of high degree; The mighty Princes, the famous Captains, the subtile Statesmen, the grave Senatours; they who turn and toss about the World

Isa. 14. 17. at their pleasure; who, (in the *Prophet*'s language) *make the Earth tremble, and shake Kingdoms*: Even these, they are a lie; (said he, who himself was none of the least considerable among them, and by experience well knew their condition, the greatest and most glorious Man of his time King *David*.) They are a lie; that is, their state presents something of brave and admirable to the eye of Men; but 'tis only *deceptio visus*; a shew without a substance; it doth but delude the careless spectatours with

false

false appearance; it hath nothing under it solid or stable; being laid in the balance (the royal *Prophet* there subjoins; that is, being weighed in the scales of right judgment, being thoroughly considered) it will prove lighter than vanity it self; it is less valuable than mere emptiness, and nothing it self; that saying sounds like an *hyperbole*, but it may be true in a strict sense: Seeing, that the care and pains in maintaining it, the fear and jealousie of losing it, the envy, obloquy and danger that surround it, the snares it hath in it, and temptations inclining men to be pufft up with Pride, to be insolent and injurious, to be corrupted with pleasure (with other bad concomitants thereof) do more than countervail whatever either of imaginary worth or real convenience may be in it. Perhaps could it without much care, trouble and hazard continue for ever, or for a long time, it might be thought somewhat considerable; but since its duration is uncertain and short; since *man in honour abideth not, but is like the beasts that perish*; that they who look so *like Gods*, and are called so, and are worshipped as so, *yet must die like men* (like men, yea *like sheep &c. shall be laid in the grave*;) Since, as 'tis said of the King of *Babylon* in *Esay*; *their pomp must be brought down to the grave, and the noise of their viols*; *the worm shall be spread under them, and the worm shall cover them*; seeing that a moment of time shall extinguish all their lustre, and still all that tumult about them; that they must be disrobed of their Purple, and be cloathed with Corruption; that their so spatious and splendid Palaces must soon be exchanged for close darksome Coffins; that both their own breath, and the breath of them who now applaud them must be stopped; that they who now bow to them, may presently trample on them; and they who to day trembled at their presence, may the morrow scornfully insult upon their memory: *Is this the man* (will they say, as they did of that great King) *who made the Earth to tremble; that did shake Kingdoms; that made the World as a Wilderness; and destroyed the Kingdoms thereof?* Since this is the fate of the greatest, and most glorious among Men, what reason can there be to admire their condition; to prize such vain and short-liv'd preeminences? For who can accompt it a great happiness to be styled and respected as a Prince, to enjoy all the Powers and Prerogatives of highest dignity for a day, or two; then being obliged to descend into a sordid and despicable estate? Who values the fortune of him that is brought forth upon the Stage to act the Part of a Prince; though he be attired there, and attended as such; hath all the garb and ceremony, the insigns and appurtenances of Majesty about him; speaks and behaves himself imperiously; is flattered and worshipped accordingly; yet, who in his heart doth adore this Idol; doth admire this mockery of greatness? Why not? because after an hour or two the Play is over, and this Man's reign is done. And what great difference is there between this and the greatest worldly state? between *Alexander* in the History, and *Alexander* on the Stage? Are not (in the *Psalmist*'s accompt) *all our years spent as a tale that is told*; or, as a Fable, that is acted? This in comparison of that, what is it at most, but telling the same story, acting the same Part a few times over? What are a few years more than a few hours repeated not very often? not so often as to make any considerable difference; so a great Emperour reflected: *τί διαφέρει τεσσάρες ἢ τριακοντα ἐτη*; *what* (said he) *doth the age of an infant, dying within three days, differ from that of Nestor, who lived three ages of men*; since both shall be past and ended; both then meet, and thereby become equal; since considering the immense time that runs on, and how little a part thereof any of us takes up (*Juvenes & senes in æquo*

Pfal. 82. 6.
Pfal. 49. 12.
Isa. 14. 11.
Isa. 14. 16.
Pfal. 90.
Anton. IV. 50.
Sen. Ep. 99. 24.

æquo sumus) we are all alike young and old; as a drop and a Pint bottle in compare to the Ocean are in a sort equal, that is, both altogether inconsiderable. *Quid enim diu est, ubi finis est?* saith St. *Austine*: *what can be long that shall be ended*; which coming to that pass is as if it never had been? Since then upon this accompt (upon worldly accompts, I speak all this; and excepting that Dignity and Power may be Talents bestowed by God, or advantages to serve God, and promote the good of Men; excepting also the relation Persons justly instated in them bear to God as his Deputies and Ministers; in which respects much reverence is due to their Persons, much value to their Places; even the more, by how much less their present outward Estate is considerable, and because at present they receive so slender a reward for all their cares and pains employ'd in the discharge of their Offices; this I interpose to prevent mistakes, lest our discourse should seem to disparage, or detract from the reverence due to Persons in eminent Place. But since, under this caution) all worldly Power and Glory appear so little valuable, the consideration hereof may avail to moderate our affections about them; to quell all ambitious desires of them, and all vain complacencies in them. For why should we so eagerly seek and pursue such empty shadows, which if we catch, we in effect catch nothing; and whatever it is, doth presently slip out of our hands? Why do we please our selves in such evanid dreams; is it not much better to rest quiet and content in any station wherein God hath placed us, than to trouble our selves and others in climbing higher to a Precipice, where we can hardly stand upright, and whence we shall certainly tumble down into the grave? This Consideration is also a remedy, proper to remove all regret and envy grounded upon such regards? For why, though suppose Men of small worth, or vertue should flourish in Honour and Power, shall we repine thereat? Is it not as if one should envy to a Butterfly, its gaudy Wings to a Tulip its beautiful colours, to the Grass its pleasant verdure; the Grass, to which in this *Psalm* we are compared; *which in the morning flourisheth, and groweth up, in the evening is cut down and withereth*? I may say of this discourse with the *Philosopher*, ἰδιωτικὸν μὲν, ὅμως δ' ἀνυπνὸν βοήθημα 'tis a homely remedy (there may be divers better ones) yet hath its efficacy; for *David* himself made use thereof more than once: *Be not, saith he, afraid* (or troubled) *when one is made rich, when the glory of his house is encreased; for when he dieth he shall carry nothing away, his glory shall not descend with him. I was* (saith he again) *envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked; but I went into the sanctuary, then understood their end; surely thou didst set them in slippery places—how are they brought into desolation as in a moment:* Thus considering the lubricity and transitorines of that Prosperity, which foolish and wicked Men enjoyed, did serve to cure that envious distemper, which began to affect the good man's Heart.

Mihi ne diuturnum quidem quidquam videtur, in quo est aliquid extremum, &c. Cic. *de Senect.*

Pſal. 90. 6.

Ant. *IV.* 50.

Pſal. 49. 16. 73. 17. 37. 1. Prov. 23. 17.

2. But let us descend from Dignity and Power (that is, from names and shews) to somewhat seeming more real and substantial; to Riches; that great and general Idol, the most devoutly adored that ever any hath been in the World; which hath a Temple almost in every House, an Altar in every Heart; to the gaining of which most of the thoughts, most of the labours of Men immediately tend; in the Possession of which Men commonly deem the greatest Happiness doth consist. But this consideration we discourse about, will easily discover, that even this, as all other Idol is *nothing in the World*, nothing true and solid; Will (I say) justify the advic

1 Cor. 8. 4.

advice and verifie that assertion of the *Wise-man*: *Labour not for riches, wilt thou set thy heart upon that which is not?* it well applied will pluck down the high places reared to this great Idol of Clay in Mens Hearts; will confute the common Conceits and Phrases, which so beautifie Wealth; shewing that whoever dotes thereon is more truly and properly styled a miserable Man, than a happy, or blessed one: For is he not indeed miserable, who *makes lies his refuge*, who confides in that which will deceive and disappoint him? The *Prophet* assures us so: *Woe* (saith the Prophet *Habbakkuk*) *woe be to him, who coveteth an evil covetousness to his house; that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil*: Men (he implies) imagine by getting Riches, they have secured and raised themselves above the reach of all mischief: But ye see it was in the *Prophet*'s judgment a woful mistake. St. *Paul* doth warn Men (very emphatically) *not to hope* ἐπὶ πλούτου ἀδηλότητι *in the uncertainty* (or obscurity) *of riches*; intimating, that to trust in them, is to trust in darkness it self; in that wherein we can discern nothing; in we know not what? They are, we cannot but observe, subject to an infinity of chances, many of them obvious and notorious; more of them secret and unaccomptable: *They make* (the *Wise-man* tells us) *themselves wings* (they need it seems no help for that) *and fly away like as an eagle toward heaven* (quite out of sight, and beyond our reach they of their own accord do swiftly fly away) however, should they be disposed to stay with us, we must fly from them; were they inseparably affixed to this life, yet must they together with that be severed from us; as we came naked of them into this World, so naked shall we return: *As he came*, saith the *Preacher*, *so shall he go*; *and what profit* (then) *hath he that laboureth for the wind?* From hence, that we must so soon part with riches, he infers them to be but wind; a thing not any wise to be fixed or setled; which 'tis vain to think we can appropriate, or retain; and vain therefore greedily to covet, or pursue: So the *Psalmist* also reasons it: *Surely, every man* (saith he) *walketh in a vain shew; surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and knoweth not who shall gather them.* Men, in his accompt, that troubled themselves in accumulating Wealth, did but idly delude themselves, fanying to receive content from such things, which they must themselves soon be separated from; and leave at uncertainties, to be disposed of they know not how: That which in his wise Son's esteem was sufficient to make *a man hate all his labour under the sun*: *Because*, saith he, *I shall leave it to the man that shall be after me, and who knoweth, whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet he shall have rule over all my labour, wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed my self wise under the sun*: All, it seems, that we are so wise, and so industrious about; that we so beat our heads about, and spend our spirits upon, is at most but *gaudium hæredis*; *the joy of an heir*, and that an uncertain one (for your Son, your Kinsman, your Friend may for all you can know dye before you, or soon after you) 'tis but a toiling at great pains and charges in tilling the Land, and sowing and dressing it; whence we are sure not to reap any benefit to our selves, and cannot know who shall do it.

Prov. 23. 5.

Μακάριος, *Beatus, &c. pro divite.*

Hab. 2. 9.

1 Tim. 6. 19.

Prov. 23. 5.

Job 1. 21.

27. 19.

1 Tim. 6. 7.

Eccl. 5. 21.

Psal. 39. 6.

Eccl. 2. 18.

In his elaborant, quæ sciunt nihil omnino ad se pertinere; serunt arbores quæ alteri seculo prosint. Cic. *de Senect.*

The rich man (St. *James* tells us) *as the flower of the grass shall he pass away; for the sun is no sooner risen with a burning heat, but it withereth the grass, and the flower thereof falleth, and the grace of the fashion thereof perisheth; So also shall the rich man fade in his ways*; all the comfort (we see by the *Apostles* discourse) and the convenience, all the grace and ornament

Jam. 1. 11.

ornament that riches are supposed to yield will certainly wither and decay, either before, or with us; whenever the sun (that is, either some extream mischance in life, or the certain destiny of death) doth arise, and make impression on them. But our *Saviour* hath best set out the nature and condition of these things in that *Parable* concerning the man, who having had a plentiful crop of Corn, and having projected for the disposal of it, resolved then to *bless himself*, and entertain his mind with pleasing discourses, that having, in readiness and security, so copious accommodations, he might now enjoy himself with full satisfaction and delight; not considering, that though his Barns were full, his life was not sure; that God's Pleasure might soon interrupt his *Pass*-time; that the fearful sentence might presently be pronounced; *Thou fool, this night thy life shall be required of thee, and what thou hast prepared, to whom shall it fall? Euripides* calls riches φιλόψυχον χρῆμα *a thing which much endears life*; or makes men greatly love it; but they do not enable at all to keep it: There is no ἀντάλλαγμα τῆς ψυχῆς. *no* price, or *ransome equivalent to life*; *all that a man hath, he would give* to redeem it, but it is a purchase too dear for all the riches in the World to compass; so the *Psalmist* tells us, *They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransome for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious:* They cannot redeem their Brother's soul, or life; nor therefore their own; for all souls are of the same value, all greatly surpass the price of gold and silver. Life was not given us for perpetuity, but lent, or deposited with us; And without delay or evasion it must be resigned into the hand of its just Owner, when he shall please to demand it; and although righteousness may, *yet riches* (as the *Wiseman* tells us) *cannot deliver from death, nor at all profit us in the day of wrath.* Could we probably retain our Possessions, for ever in our hands; nay, could we certainly foresee some considerable long definite time, in which we might enjoy our stores, it were perhaps somewhat excusable to scrape and hoard, it might look like rational *Providence*, it might yield some valuable satisfaction; but since, *Rape, congere, aufer, possside, statim relinquendum est*; since, as *Solomon* tells us, *Riches are not for ever, nor doth the crown endure to every generation*; yea, since they must be left very soon, nor is there any certainty of keeping them any time; that one day may consume them; one night may dispossess us of them; and our life together with them, there can be no reason why we should be solicitous about them; no accompt given of our setting so high a rate upon them. For who would much regard the having custody of a rich treasure for a day or two, then to be stripped of all, and left bare? To be to day invested in large demains, and to morrow to be dispossessed of them? No Man surely would be so fond, as much to affect the condition. Yet this is our case; whatever we call ours, we are but guardians thereof for a few days. This consideration therefore may serve to repress, or moderate in us all covetous desires, proud conceits, vain confidences and satisfactions in respect to worldly Wealth, to induce us (in *Job*'s language) *not to make gold our hope, nor to say to the fine gold, thou art my confidence; not to rejoyce because our wealth is great, and because our hand hath gotten much*: to extirpate from our hearts that root of all evil, the love of Money. For if, as the *Preacher* thought, the greatest pleasure or benefit accruing from them, is but looking upon them for a while, (*what good*, saith he, *is there to the owners thereof, saving the beholding of them with their eyes?*) it a little will, nay must suffice our natural appetites, and our present necessities

Luke 12. 20.

Τίνι ἔσται.

Psal 49.

Luke 12. 20.

Prov. 11. 4.

Prov. 27. 24.

Sen. Ep. 98.

Job 31. 24.

Eccl. 5. 11.

ties; if more than needs, is but (as the Scripture teaches us) *a trouble* disquieting our minds with care; *a* dangerous *snare*, drawing us into mischief and sorrow; if this, I say, be their present quality; and were it better, yet could it last for any certain, or any long continuance, is it not evidently better to enjoy that pittance God hath allotted us with ease and contentation of mind; or if we want a necessary supply, to employ only a moderate diligence in getting thereof by the fairest means, which with God's blessing promised thereto, will never fail to procure a competence, and with this to rest content; than with those in *Amos*, *to pant after the dust of the earth*; *to lade our selves with thick clay*; to thirst insatiably after flouds of gold, to heap up mountains of treasure, to extend unmeasurably our possessions, (*joining house to house, and laying field to field, till there be no place, that we may be placed alone in the midst of the earth*; as the Prophet *Esay* doth excellently describe the covetous Man's humour) than, I say, thus incessantly to toil for the maintenance of this frail body, this flitting breath of ours? If Divine Bounty hath freely imparted a plentiful estate upon us, we should indeed bless God for it; *making our selves friends* thereby (as our *Saviour* advises us) employing it to God's Praise and Service; to the relief and comfort of our Brethren that need; but to seek earnestly, to set our heart upon it, to relye thereon; to be greatly pleased or elevated in mind thereby, as it argues much infidelity and prophaneness of heart, so it signifies much inconsiderateness and folly, the ignorance of its nature, the forgetfulness of our own condition, upon the grounds discoursed upon.

Eccl. 5. 12. & 1 Tim. 6. 9.
Simplici cura constant necessaria, in delicias laboratur. Sen. Ep. 89.
Matt. 6.
Heb. 13. 15.
1 Tim. 6. 8.
Psal. 55. 26.
Amos 2. 7. 6.
Hab. 2. 6.
Isa. 5. 8.
Luke 16. 9.

3. Now, in the next place; for Pleasure, that great Witch, which so enchants the World, and which by its mischievous Baits so allures Mankind into sin and misery; although this consideration be not altogether necessary to disparage it (its own nature sufficing to that; for it is more transitory than the shortest life, it dyes in the very enjoyment) yet it may conduce to our wise and good practice in respect thereto, by tempering the sweetness thereof, yea souring its relish to us; minding us of its inefficiency and unserviceableness to the felicity of a mortal creature; yea, of extreamly dangerous consequences to a soul, that must survive the short enjoyment thereof. Some Persons indeed, ignorant or incredulous of a future estate; presuming of no sense remaining after death, nor regarding any accompt to be rendred of this life's actions, have encouraged themselves, and others in the free enjoyment of present sensualities, upon the score of our life's shortness and uncertainty; inculcating such *Maxims* as these:

——*Brevis est hic fructus homullis*; Lucr.
——*post mortem nulla voluptas.*

Quem fors dierum cunque dabit, lucro
Appone, nec dulces amores
Sperne puer, &c. Hor. l. 9.

Let us eat and drink for to morrow we shall dye; because our life is short, let us make the most advantageous use thereof we can; because death is uncertain, let us prevent its surprisal, and be beforehand with it, enjoying somewhat, before it snatches all from us. The Authour of *Wisedom* observeth, and thus presents these Mens discourse: *Our life is short and tedious; and in the 1 Cor. 15. 32.*
Sap. 2. 1, &c.
end of a man there is no remedy; neither was there any man known to have returned from the grave: ——*Come on, therefore let us enjoy the good things that are present; let us speedily use the creatures like as in youth; Let us fill our selves with costly wine and ointments; and let no flower of the spring pass us, let us crown our selves with rose-buds before they be withered; let none of us go without his part of voluptuousness* ——*for this is our portion, and our lot*

is this. Thus, and no wonder, have some men conceiving themselves beasts, resolved to live as such; renouncing all sober care becoming men, and drowning their reason in brutish sensualities; yet no question, the very same reflexion, that this life would soon pass away, and that death might speedily attack them, did not a little quash their mirth, and damp their pleasure. To think, that this perhaps might be the last *Banquet* they should taste of; that they should themselves shortly become the feast of Worms and Serpents; could not but somewhat spoil the gust of their highest delicacies, and disturb the sport of their loudest jovialties; but Job 20. 14. in *Job*'s expression, *make the meat in their bowels to turn, and be as the gall of Asps within them.* Those customary enjoyments did so enamour them of sensual delight, that they could not without pungent regret imagine a necessity of soon for ever parting with them; and so their very Pleasure was by this thought made distastful and embittered to them. So did the *Wiseman* observe: *O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at rest in his possessions; unto the man that hath nothing to vex him; and that hath prosperity in all things; Ye* (adds he) *unto him, that is* Ecclus 41. 1. *yet able to receive meat*: And how bitter then must the remembrance thereof be to him, who walloweth in all kind of corporal satisfaction and delight; that placeth all his happiness in sensual enjoyment? However, as to us, who are better instructed and effected; who know and believe a future state; the consideration, that the time of enjoying these delights Eccles. 7. 6. will soon be over; that this World's jollity is but like *the crackling of thorns under a pot* (which yields a brisk sound, and a chearful blaze, but heats little, and instantly passes away) that they leave no good fruits behind them, but do onely corrupt and enervate our minds; war against, and hurt our souls; tempt us to sin, and involve us in guilt; that therefore *Solomon* was surely in the right, when he said of *laughter*, that *it is mad,* Eccl. 2. 2. *and of mirth, what doeth it?* (that is, that the highest of these delights are very irrational impertinences) and of intemperance; that, at the Prov. 23. 32. last, *it biteth like a Serpent, and stingeth like an Adder*; with us, I say, who reflect thus, that (πρόσκαιρος ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσις) Heb. 11. 25. *enjoyment of sinful pleasure for a season cannot* obtain much esteem and love; but will rather, I hope, be despised and abhorred by us. I will add onely

Δοκεῖ γὰρ ἡ σοφία θαυμαστὰς ἡδονὰς ἔχειν καὶ διαφοράν, ἂν τις ἐκβαίνῃ. Arist. Eth. X. 7.

4. Concerning secular Wisdom and Knowledge; the which Men do also commonly with great earnestness and ambition seek after, as the most specious ornament, and pure content of their mind; this consideration doth also detect the just value thereof; so as to allay intemperate ardour toward it, pride and conceitedness upon the having or seeming to have it, envy and emulation about it. For, imagine, if you please, a Man accomplished with all varieties of learning commendable, able to recompt all the stories, that have been ever written (or the deeds acted) since the World's beginning; to understand, or with the most delightful fluency and elegancy to speak all the languages, that have at any time been in use among the sons of men; skilful in twisting and untwisting all kinds of subtilties; versed in all sorts of natural experiments, and ready to assign plausible conjectures about the causes of them; studied in all Books whatever, and in all Monuments of Antiquity; deeply knowing in all the mysteries of art, or science, or policy, such as have ever been devised by humane wit, or study or observation; yet all this, such is the pity, he must be forced presently to abandon; all the use he could make of all his notions, the pleasure he might find in them, the reputation accruing

cruing to him from them must at that fatal minute vanish; *his breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth, in that very day his thoughts perish. There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisedom in the grave, whither he goeth.* 'Tis seen (saith the *Psalmist*, seen indeed every day, and observed by all) *that wise men die; likewise the fool and brutish person perisheth; one event happeneth to them both; there is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool for ever*; (both dye alike, both alike are forgotten) as the wisest man himself, did (not without some distast) observe and complain. All our subtile conceits, and nice criticisms; all our fine inventions and goodly speculations shall be swallowed up either in the utter darkness, or in the clearer light of the future state. One Potion of that *Lethean* cup (which we must all take down upon our entrance into that *Land of forgetfulness*) will probably drown the memory, deface the shape of all those *Ideas*, with which we have here stuffed our minds; however they are not like to be of use to us in that new, so different, state; where none of our languages are spoken; none of our experience will sute; where all things have quite another face unknown, unthought of by us. Where *Aristotle*, and *Varro* shall appear mere Idiots; *Demosthenes* and *Cicero* shall become very infants; the wisest and eloquentest *Greeks* will prove senseless and dumb *Barbarians*; where all our Authours shall have no authority; where we must all go fresh to school again; must unlearn perhaps, what in these misty regions we thought our selves best to know; and begin to learn, what we not once ever dream'd of; Doth therefore, I pray you, so transitory and fruitless a good (for it self I mean and excepting our duty to God, or the reasonable diligence we are bound to use in our calling) deserve such anxious desire; or so restless toil; so careful attention of mind, or assiduous pain of body about it? Doth it become us to contend, or emulate so much about it? Above all do we not most unreasonably, and against the nature of the thing it self we pretend to (that is ignorantly and foolishly) if we are proud and conceited, much value our selves or contemn others, in respect thereto? *Solomon* the most experienced in this matter, and best able to judge thereof (He that gave his heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things, that had been done under Heaven, and this with extream success; even he) passeth the same sentence of vanity, vexation and unprofitableness, upon this, as upon all other subcelestial things. True, he commends wisdom as an excellent and useful thing comparatively; *exceeding folly, so far as light exceedeth darkness*; But since light it self is not permanent, but must give way to darkness; the difference soon vanished; and his opinion thereof abated; considering, that as it happened to the fool, so it happened to him, he breaks into that expostulation: *And why then was I more wise?* to what purpose was such a distinction made, that signified in effect so little? And indeed the Testimony of this great personage may serve for a good *Epilogue* to all this discourse, discovering sufficiently the slender worth of all earthly things: seeing he, that had given himself industriously to experiment the worth of all things here below, to sound the depth of their utmost perfection and use; who had all the advantages imaginable of performing it; Who flourished in the greatest magnificences of worldly pomp and power; who enjoyed an incredible affluence of all riches; who tasted all varieties of most exquisite pleasure; whose heart was (by God's special gift, and by his own industrious care) enlarged with all kind of knowledge (furnished

Pſal. 46. 4. Eccl. 9. 10.

Pſal. 49. 10. Eccl. 2. 14, &c.

Pſal. 88. 12.

Τῷ δ' Ἰσοκράτει διατριβὴ ἐπισκώπτων, γηρᾷν φησι παρ' αὐτῷ τὰς μαθητὰς, ὡς ἐν ᾅδου χρησομένους τῷ τέχνῃ, καὶ δίκας ἐρήσοντας. Cato Sen. apud Plut. pag. 641.

Διπλῆν ὁρᾶσιν ὅτι μᾶλλον τὸ φῶς τοῦ σκότους περίσσευμα. Eccl. 2. 13.

1 Kings 4. 29. with notions many *as the Sand upon the Sea shore)* above all that were before him; who had possessed and enjoyed all that fancy could conceive, or heart could wish, and had arrived to the top of secular Happiness; Yet even *He* with pathetical reiteration pronounces all to be *vanity and vexation of spirit*; altogether unprofitable and unsatisfactory to the mind of Man. And so therefore we may justly conclude them to be; so finishing the first grand advantage this present consideration affordeth us in order to that wisedom, to which we should apply our hearts.

I should proceed to gather other good fruits, which it is apt to produce and contribute to the same purpose; but since my thoughts have taken so large scope upon that former head, so that I have already too much, I fear, exercised your patience, I shall only mention the rest. As this consideration doth, as we have seen, First, dispose us rightly to value these temporal goods, and moderate our affections about them; so it doth, Secondly, in like manner, conduce to the right estimation of temporal evils; and thereby to the well tempering our passions in the resentment of them; to the begetting of patience and contentedness in our minds. Also, Thirdly, it may help us to value, and excite us to regard those things (good or evil) which relate to our future state; being the things only of a permanent nature, and of an everlasting consequence to us. Fourthly, It will engage us to husband carefully, and well employ this short time of our present life: Not to defer or procrastinate our endeavours to live well; not to be lazy and loitering in the dispatch of our only considerable business, relating to eternity; to embrace all opportunities, and improve all means; and follow the best *compendiums* of good practice leading to eternal bliss. Fifthly, It will be apt to confer much toward the begetting and preserving sincerity in our thoughts, words and actions; causing us to decline all oblique designs upon present mean interests, or base regards to the opinions or affections of men; bearing single respects to our conscience and duty in our actions; Teaching us to speak as we mean; and be what we would seem; to be in our hearts and in our closets, what we appear in our outward expressions and conversations with Men; For considering, that within a very short time all the thoughts of our hearts shall be disclosed; and all the actions of our lives exposed to publick view (being strictly to be examined at the great bar of divine judgment before Angels and Men) we cannot but perceive it to be the greatest folly in the World, for this short present time to disguise our selves; to conceal our intentions, or smother our actions. What hath occurred (upon these important subjects) to my meditation, I must at present, in regard to your patience, omit. I shall close all with that good *Collect* of our Church.

Almighty God, give us grace, that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of light now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him, who liveth and reigneth with thee, and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. Amen.

SER-

SERMON XV.

The Consideration of our Latter End.

PSAL. XC. 12.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisedom.

IN discoursing formerly upon these words (expounded according to the most common and passable interpretation) that which I chiefly observed was this: That the serious consideration of the shortness and frailty of our life is a fit mean or rational instrument subservient to the bringing our hearts to wisedom; that is, to the making us discern, attend unto, embrace, and prosecute such things, as according to the dictates of right reason are truly best for us.

Job 14. 14. *All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come.*

I. The truth of which observation I largely declared from hence, that the said consideration disposeth us to judge rightly about those goods (which ordinarily court and tempt us, *viz.* worldly glory and honour; riches, pleasure, knowledge; to which I might have added wit, strength and beauty) what their just worth and value is; and consequently to moderate our affections, our cares, our endeavours about them; for that if all those goods be uncertain and transitory, there can be no great reason to prize them much, or to affect them vehemently, or to spend much care and pains about them.

II. I shall next in the same scales weigh our temporal evils; and say, that also, The consideration of our lives brevity and frailty doth avail to the passing a true judgment of, and consequently to the governing our passions, and ordering our behaviour in respect to all those temporal evils, which either according to the Law of our nature, or the fortuitous course of things, or the particular dispensation of providence do befal us. Upon the declaration of which point I need not insist much, since what was before discoursed concerning the opposite goods doth plainly enough infer it; more immediately indeed in regard to the *mala damni*, or *privationis* (the evils, which consist onely in the want, or loss of temporal goods) but sufficiently also by a manifest parity of reason in respect to the *mala sensus*, the real pains, crosses and inconveniences, that assail us in this life. For if worldly glory do hence appear to be no more than a transient blaze, a fading shew, a hollow sound, a piece of theatrical pageantry, the

the want thereof cannot be very considerable to us. Obscurity of condition (living in a valley beneath that dangerous height, and deceitful lustre) cannot in reason be deemed a very sad or pitiful thing; which should displease, or discompose us; if we may thence learn that abundant wealth is rather a needless clog, or a perillous snare, than any great convenience to us; we cannot well esteem to be poor a great infelicity, or to undergo losses a grievous calamity; but rather a benefit to be free from the distractions that attend it; to have little to keep for others, little to care for our selves. If these present pleasures be discerned hence to be only wild fugitive dreams; out of which being soon roused we shall only find better regrets to abide; why should not the wanting opportunities of enjoying them be rather accompted a happy advantage, than any part of misery to us? If it seem, that the greatest perfection of curious knowledge (of what use or ornament soever) after it is hardly purchased, must soon be parted with; to be simple or ignorant will be no great matter of lamentation: as those will appear no solid goods, so these consequently must be onely *umbræ malorum*, phantasms, or shadows of evil, rather than truly or substantially so; (evils created by fancy and subsisting thereby; which reason should, and time will surely remove.) That in being impatient or disconsolate for them, we are but like children, that fret and wail for the want of petty toys. And for the more real or positive evils such as violently assault nature, whose impressions no reason can so withstand, as to distinguish all distast or afflictive sense of them; yet this consideration will aid to abate and asswage them; affording a certain hope and prospect of approaching redress. It is often seen at Sea, that Men (from unacquaintance with such agitations, or from brackish streams arising from the salt Water) are heartily sick, and discover themselves to be so by apparently grievous symptomes; yet no man hardly there doth mind or pity them, because the malady is not supposed dangerous, and within a while will probably of it self pass over; or that however, the remedy is not far off; the sight of Land, a taste of the fresh air will relieve them: 'Tis near our Case: We passing over this troublesome Sea of life; from unexperience, joined with the tenderness of our constitution, we cannot well endure the changes and crosses of fortune; to be toss'd up and down; to suck in the sharp vapours of penury, disgrace, sickness, and the like, doth beget a qualm in our stomachs; make us nauseate all things, and appear sorely distempered; yet is not our condition so dismal, as it seems; we may grow hardier, and wear out our sense of affliction; however, the Land is not far off, and by disembarking hence we shall suddenly be discharged of all our molestations. 'Tis a common solace of grief, approved by wise men, *si gravis, brevis est*; *si longus, levis*; if it be very grievous and acute, it cannot continue long, without intermission or respit; if it abide long, it is supportable; intolerable pain is like lightening, it destroys us, or is it self instantly destroyed. However, death at length (which never is far off) will free us; be we never so much tossed with storms of misfortune, that is a sure haven; be we persecuted with never so many enemies, that is a safe refuge; let what pains or diseases soever infest us, that is an assured *Anodynon*, and infallible remedy for them all; however we be wearied with the labours of the day, the night will come and ease us; the grave will become a bed of rest unto us.

Sen. *Ep.* 89.

Θάρσει· πόνε, σὸ ἄχθος ἐν ἔχει χρόνον.

Τὸ μὲν ἀφόρητον ἐξάγει· τὸ δ' ὑπερβάλλον φορητόν Ant. *VII. Sect.* 33.

Summi doloris intentio in venit finem: nemo potest valde dolere, & diu: sic nos amantissima nostri natura disposuit, ut dolorem aut tolerabilem, aut brevem faceret. Sen. *Ep.* 24.

Dolore perculsi mortem imploramus, eamque unam, ut miseriarum malorumque terminum, exoptamus. Cic. *Consol.*

Moriar? hoc dicis; desinam ægrotare posse, &c. Sen.

us. Shall I dye? I shall then cease to be sick; I shall be exempted from disgrace; I shall be enlarged from prison; I shall be no more pinched with want; no more tormented with pain. Death is a Winter, that as it withers the Rose and Lilly, so it kills the Nettle and Thistle; as it stifles all worldly joy and pleasure, so it suppresses all care and grief; as it hushes the voice of mirth and melody, so it stills the clamours, and the sighs of misery; as it defaces all the World's glory, so it covers all disgrace, wipes off all tears, silences all complaint, buries all disquiet and discontent. King *Philip* of *Macedon* once threatened the *Spartans* to vex them sorely, and bring them into great straits; but, answered they, *can he hinder us from dying*; that indeed is a way of evading, which no enemy can obstruct, no Tyrant can debar Men from; they who can deprive of life, and its conveniences, cannot take away death from them. There is a place, *Job* tells us, *where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary be at rest; where the prisoners rest together; they hear not the voice of the oppressour; the small and great are there; and the servant is free from his Master.* 'Tis therefore but holding out a while, and a deliverance from the worst this World can molest us with, shall of its own accord arrive unto us: in the mean time 'tis better that we at present owe the benefit of our comfort to reason, than afterward to time; by rational consideration to work patience and contentment in our selves; and to use the shortness of our life as an argument to sustain us in our affliction, than to find the end thereof onely a natural and necessary means of our rescue from it. The contemplation of this cannot fail to yield something of courage and solace to us in the greatest pressures; these transient, and short-liv'd evils, if we consider them as so, cannot appear such horrid bugbears, as much to affright or dismay us; if we remember how short they are, we cannot esteem them so great, or so intolerable. There be, I must confess, divers more noble considerations, proper and available to cure discontent and impatience. The considering, that all these evils proceed from God's just will, and wise providence; unto which it is fit, and we upon all accompts are obliged readily to submit; that they do ordinarily come from God's goodness, and gracious design toward us; that they are medicines (although ungrateful, yet wholsome) administred by the Divine Wisdom to prevent, remove or abate our distempers of soul (to allay the tumours of pride, to cool the fevers of intemperate desire; to rouse us from the lethargy of sloath; to stop the gangrene of bad conscience) that they are fatherly corrections intended to reclaim us from sin, and excite us to duty; that they serve as instruments or occasions to exercise, to try, to refine our vertue; to beget in us the hope, to qualify us for the reception of better rewards; such discourses indeed are of a better nature, and have a more excellent kind of efficacy; yet no fit help, no good art, no just weapon is to be quite neglected in the combat against our spiritual foes. A Pebble-stone hath been sometimes found more convenient than a Sword or a Spear to slay a Giant. Baser remedies (by reason of the Patient's constitution, or circumstances) do sometime produce good effect, when others in their own nature more rich and potent want efficacy. And surely frequent reflexions upon our mortality, and living under the sense of our lives frailty cannot but conduce somewhat to the begetting in us an indifferency of mind toward all these temporal occurrents; to extenuate both the goods and the evils we here meet with; consequently therefore to compose and calm our passions about them.

Ἄδηλον ἔχων βουλὴν, ἢ τρέμω σκιάς. *Eripere vitam nemo non homini potest; At nemo mortem.* Sen. Trag.

Job 3. 17.

Ὁ μέλλεις τῷ χρόνῳ χαρίζεσθαι τοῦτο τῷ λόγῳ χαρίζεσθαι Plut. ad Apol. p. 195.

Omnia brevia tolerabilia esse debent, etiamsi magna. Cic. Læl. ad fin.

III. But

III. But I proceed to another uſe of that conſideration we ſpeak of emergent from the former, but ſo as to improve it to higher purpoſes. For ſince it is uſeful to the diminiſhing our admiration of theſe worldly things, to the withdrawing our affections from them, to the ſlackning our endeavours about them; it will follow that it muſt conduce alſo to beget an eſteem, a deſire, a proſecution of things conducing to our future welfare; both by removing the obſtacles of doing ſo, and by engaging us to conſider the importance of thoſe things in compariſon with theſe. By removing obſtacles I ſay; for while our hearts are poſſeſſed with regard and paſſion toward theſe preſent things, there can be no room left in them for reſpect and affection toward things future. 'Tis in our ſoul as in the reſt of nature; there can be no penetration of objects (as it were) in our hearts, nor any vacuity in them; our mind no more than our body can be in ſeveral places, or tend ſeveral ways, or abide in perfect reſt; yet ſomewhere it will always be; ſome-whither it will always go; ſome-what it will ever be doing. If we *have a treaſure* here (ſome-what we greatly like and much confide in) *our hearts will be here* with it; and if here, they cannot be otherwhere; they will be taken up; they will reſt ſatisfied; they will not care to ſeek farther. If we affect worldly glory and delight in the applauſe of men, we ſhall not be ſo careful to pleaſe God, and ſeek his favour. If we admire and repoſe confidence in riches, it will make us neglectful of God, and diſtruſtful of his Providence; if our mind thirſts after, and ſucks in greedily ſenſual pleaſures, we ſhall not reliſh ſpiritual delights, attending the practice of vertue and piety, or ariſing from good conſcience; adhering to, attending upon Maſters of ſo different, ſo oppoſite a quality is inconſiſtent; they cannot abide peaceably together, they cannot both rule in our narrow breaſts; we ſhall love and hold to the one; hate and deſpiſe the other. *If any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him*; the love of the World, as the preſent gueſt, ſo occupies and fills the room; that it will not admit, cannot hold the love of God. But when the heart is diſcharged and emptied of theſe things; when we begin to deſpiſe them as baſe and vain; to diſtaſt them as inſipid and unſavoury; then naturally will ſucceed a deſire after other things promiſing a more ſolid content; and deſire will breed endeavour; and endeavour (furthered by God's aſſiſtance always ready to back it) will yeild ſuch a glimps and taſte of thoſe things, as will ſo comfort and ſatisfie our minds, that thereby they will be drawn and engaged into a more earneſt proſecution of them. When (I ſay) driving on ambitious Projects, heaping up Wealth, providing for the fleſh (by our reflecting on the ſhortneſs and frailty of our life) become ſo inſipid to us, that we find little appetite to them, or reliſh in them; our reſtleſs minds will begin to hunger and thirſt after righteouſneſs, deſiring ſome ſatisfaction thence: Diſcerning theſe ſecular and carnal fruitions to be meer *huſks* (the proper food of ſwine) we ſhall bethink our ſelves of that better nouriſhment (of rational or ſpiritual comfort) which our Fathers houſe doth afford to his children and ſervants. Being ſomewhat diſentangled from the care of our farms and our trafficks; from yoaking our oxen and being married to our preſent delights; we may be at leaſure, and in diſpoſition to comply with divine invitations to entertainment ſpiritual. Experiencing, that our trade about theſe petty commodities turns to ſmall accompt, and that in the end we ſhall be nothing richer thereby; reaſon will induce us with the Merchant in the Goſpel *to ſell all that we have* (to forego our preſent intereſts and deſigns) for the purchaſing that *rich Pearl* of God's Kingdom,

Matt. 6. 21.
John 5. 44. 12. 43.
Mat. 6. 24.
Rom. 8. 5.
1 John 2. 15.
Luke 22. 5.
Matt. 22. 5.
Matt. 13. 46.

dom, which will yield so exceeding profit; the gain of present comfort to our conscience, and eternal happiness to our souls, In fine, when we consider seriously, that *we have here no abiding City*, but are onely *sojourners and pilgrims upon Earth*; that all our care and pain here do regard only an uncertain and transitory state; and will therefore suddenly as to all fruit and benefit be lost unto us; this will suggest unto us, with the good Patriarchs, κρείττονος ὀρέγεσθαι πατρίδος, *to long after a better Countrey*; a more assured, and lasting state of life; where we may enjoy some certain and durable repose; to tend homeward, in our desires and hopes, toward those eternal mansions of joy and rest prepared for God's faithful servants in Heaven. Thus will this consideration help toward the bringing us to inquire after and regard the things concerning our future state; and in the result will engage us to compare them with these present things, as to our concernment in them and the consequence of them to our advantage or damage, whence a right judgment, and a congruous practice will naturally follow. There be four ways of comparing the things relating to this present life with those which respect our future state: Comparing the goods of this with the goods of that; the evils of this with the evils of that; the goods of this with the evils of that; the evils of this with the goods of that. All these comparisons we may find often made in Scripture; in order to the informing our judgment about the respective value of both sorts; the present consideration intervening, as a standard to measure and try them by. Heb. 13. 14. 1 Pet. 2. 11. Heb. 11. 16.

First then; comparing the present goods with those which concern our future state, since the transitoriness and uncertainty of temporal goods detract from their worth, and render them in great degree contemptible; but the durability and certainty of spiritual goods doth encrease their rate, and make them exceedingly valuable; 'tis evident hence, that spiritual goods are infinitely to be preferred in our opinion, to be more willingly embraced, to be more zealously pursued than temporal goods, that, in case of competition, when both cannot be enjoyed, we are in reason obliged readily to part with all these, rather than to forfeit our title unto, or hazard our hope of those. Thus in the Scripture it is often discoursed: *The world* (saith St. *John*) *passeth away, and the desire thereof; but he that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever*: The World, and all that is desirable therein is transient; but obedience to God's commandments is of an everlasting consequence; whence he infers, that we should *not love the world*; that is, not entertain such an affection thereto, as may any way prejudice the love of God, or hinder the obedience springing thence, or suitable thereto. 1 John 2. 17.

All flesh is grass (saith St. *Peter*) *and all the glory of man as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, and the flower thereof falleth away; But the word of the Lord endureth for ever*: All worldly glory is frail and fading, but the Word of God is eternally firm and permanent; that is, the goodnings by God promised to them, who faithfully serve him, shall infallibly be conferred on them to their everlasting benefit; whence it follows, that as he exhorts, we are bound to gird up the loins of our mind, to be sober, and hope to the end; to proceed and persist constantly in faithful obedience to God. *Charge those* (saith St. *Paul*) *who are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God; that they do good, be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; treasuring up for themselves a good foundation for the future; that they may attain everlasting life*: Since, argues he, present riches are of 1 Pet. 1. 24. v. 13. 1 Tim. 6. 19.

uncertain, and short continuance; but faith and obedience to God, exercised in our charity and mercy toward men, are a certain stock improveable to our eternal interest; therefore be not proud of, nor relye upon those, but regard especially, and employ our selves upon these. Our Saviour himself doth often insist upon, and inculcate this comparison: *Treasure not unto your selves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust do corrupt; and where thieves break through and steal; but treasure up to your selves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not corrupt, and where thieves do not break through and steal. Do not take care for your soul, what ye shall eat, and what ye shall drink; nor for your body, what ye shall put on; but seek first the kingdom of God. Labour not for the food that perisheth, but for the food that abideth to eternal life; sell your substance, and give alms; provide your selves bags that wax not old; an indefectible treasure in the heavens*: Thus doth the Holy Scripture, setting forth the uncertainty and transitoriness of the present, the certainty and permanency of future goods, declare the excellency of these above those; advising thereupon, with highest reason, that we willingly reject those (in real effect, if need be, however always in ready disposition of mind) in order to the procuring or securing of these. It also, for our example and encouragement, commends to us the wisdom and vertue of those Persons, who have effectually practised this duty: of *Abraham, our Father*, who, in expectation of that well-founded City, made and built by God, did readily desert his Countrey and Kindred, with all present accommodations of life; of *Moses*, who disregarded the splendours and delights of a great Court; rejected the alliance of a great Princess, and *refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter*; in respect to the μισθαποδοσία, that future distribution of reward; a share wherein shall assuredly fall to them, who above all other considerations regard the performance of their duty to God; of the *Apostles*, who *forsook all*, Parents, Brethren, Lands, Houses, Trades, receits of Custome, to follow *Christ*; him at present poor, and naked of all secular honour, power, wealth and delight; in hope onely to receive from him divine benefits, and future preferments in his Kingdom; of *Mary*, who neglecting present affairs, and seating her self at *Jesus* his feet, attending to his discipline; is commended for her wisdom, in minding the *only necessary thing*; in chusing *the better part, which could never be taken from her*: of St *Paul*, who *accompted all his gains* (all his worldly interests and priviledges) *to be damage*, to be *dung in respect to Christ, and the excellent knowledge of him* with the benefits thence accruing to him. On the contrary there we have *Esau* condemned and stigmatized for *a profane* and a *vain person*, who (ἀντὶ μιᾶς βρώσεως) *for one little eating-bout*; one mess of Pottage (for a little present satisfaction of sense, or for the sustenance of this frail life) did withgo his birthright, that embleme of spiritual blessings and priviledges. We have again represented to us that unhappy young *Gentleman*; who though he had good qualities, rendring him amiable even to our Saviour and had been trained up in the observance of God's Commandments yet not being content to part with his large Possessions, in lieu of the treasure by *Christ* offered in Heaven, was reputed deficient; could find no acceptance with God, nor admission into his Kingdom; for a petty temporal commodity forfeiting an infinite eternal advantage. For, saith our Saviour, *He that loveth father or mother above me; he that doth not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yea his own life (for me and the Gospel) is not worthy of me, nor can be my disciple.* He that in his esteem or affection doth prefer any temporal advantages before the benefi-

Matt. 6. 20.
v. 25.
John 6. 27.
Luke 12. 33. Θησαυρὸν ἀνέκλειπτον
Heb. 11. 10.
v. 23.
Matt. 19. 27. Luke 18. 28.
Luke 10. 39.
Phil. 3. 7, 8.
Heb. 12. 16.
Mark 10. 18.
Matt. 10. 37. Luke 14. 26.
Mark 10. 29.

benefits tendred by our Saviour (yea doth not in comparison despise, renounce and reject his deerest contents of life, and the very capacity of enjoying them, his life it self) doth not deserve to be reckoned among the Disciples of *Christ*; to be so much as a Pretender to eternal joy, or a candidate of immortality. Our *Saviour* rejects all such unwise and perverse traders, who will not exchange brittle glass for solid gold; counterfeit glistering stones for genuine most precious jewels; a garland of fading flowers for an incorruptible crown of Glory; a small temporary pension for a vastly rich freehold; *an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in the heavens.* Thus doth the Holy Scripture teach us to compare these sorts of good things; 1 Pet. 1. 4.

And, secondly, so also doth it to compare the evils of both states; for that seeing, as the soon ceasing of temporal mischiefs should (in reasonable proceeding) diminish the fear of them, and mitigate the grief for them; so the incessant continuance of spiritual evils doth (according to just estimation) render them hugely grievous and formidable; 'tis plain, that we should much more dislike, abominate, and shun spiritual evils, than temporal; that we should make no question rather to endure these paroxysms of momentany pain, than incur those chronical and (indeed) incurable maladies; that we should run willingly into these shallow plashes of present inconvenience, rather than plunge our selves into those unfathomable depths of eternal misery. There is (I suppose) no man, who would not accompt it a very great calamity (such as hardly greater could befal him here) to have *his right eye plucked out*, and *his right hand cut off*, Matt. 5. 29. and *his foot* taken from him; to be deformed and maimed, so that he can 18. 8. do nothing, or stir any whither; yet our Lord represents these to us as inconsiderable evils, yea as things very eligible and advantageous in comparison of those mischiefs, which the voluntary not embracing them, in case we cannot otherwise than by so doing avoid sin, will bring on us: συμφέρει σοι, *it is* (saith he) *profitable for thee, that one of thy members be lost, rather than that thy whole body be cast into hell*; καλόν σοι ἐστι, *'tis good*, 'tis excellent for thee *to enter into life lame and maimed, and one ey'd, rather than having two hands, and two feet, and two eyes* (in all integrity and beauty of this temporal, or corporal state) *to be cast into eternal fire.* To be banished from ones native soil, secluded from all comforts of friendly acquaintance, devested irrecoverably of great estate and dignity; becoming a vagrant and a servant in vile employment, in a strange Countrey, every Man would be apt to deem a wretched condition; yet *Moses*, we Heb. 11. 25. see, freely chose it, rather than by enjoying unlawful pleasures at home, in *Pharaoh*'s Court, to incur God's displeasure and vengeance: συγκακουχεῖσθαι μᾶλλον ἐλὼν, *chusing rather to undergo evil together with God's people, than to have* πρόσκαιρον ἁμαρτίας ἀπόλαυσιν, *a temporary fruition of sinful delight*, dangerous to the welfare of his soul. Death is commonly esteemed the most extream and terrible of evils incident to man; yet our *Saviour* bids us not to regard or fear it, in comparison of that deadly ruine, which we adventure on by offending God: *I say unto you my friends* (saith he, he intended Luke 12. 4. it for the most friendly advice) *Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and* Matt. 10. 28. *after that have nothing farther to do; but I will shew you whom ye shall fear; Fear him, who after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell*, to cast both Ἀποκτεῖναι πᾶσαν, βαλεῖν δὲ εἰς body and soul into Hell, and destroy them therein; *Yea, I say unto you* (so he inculcates and impresses it upon them) *fear him.*

But thirdly; Considering the good things of this life together with the evils of that, which is to come; Since enjoying these goods in compa-

risón with enduring those evils is but rejoicing for a moment in respect of mourning to eternity; if upon the seeming sweetness of these enjoyments to our carnal appetite be consequent a remedilesse distempering of our soul; so that what tasts like honey proves gall in the digestion; gripes our bowels, gnaws our heart, and stings our conscience for ever; if present mirth and jollity have a tendency to that dreadful weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth threatned in the Gospel; if for the praise and favour of a few giddy men here we venture eternal shame and confusion before God and Angels and all good men hereafter; if for attaining or preserving a small stock of uncertain riches in this World we shall reduce our selves into a state of most uncomfortable nakedness and penury in the other. 'Tis clear as the Sun that we are downright fools and mad men, if we do not upon these accompts rather willingly reject all these good things, than hazard incurring any of those evils; for, saith truth it self,

Mark 8. 36. Luke 9. 25. *What will it profit a man, if he gain the whole World (κερδήσῃ τὸν κόσμον ὅλον) and be endamaged as to his soul,* or lose his soul as a mulct. 'Tis a very disadvantageous bargain for all the conveniencies this World can afford to be deprived of the comforts of our immortal state. But,

Lastly, comparing the evils of this life with the benefits of the future; since the worst tempests of this life will be soon blown over, the bittrest crosses must expire (if not before, however) with our breath; but the good things of the future state are immutable and perpetual; 'tis in evident consequence most reasonable; that we freely (if need be) undertake, and patiently endure these for the sake of those; that in hope of

1 Pet. 1. 4. that *incorruptible inheritance, laid up for us in Heaven,* we not only support and comfort our selves, but even rejoyce and exult in all the afflictions by God's wise and just dispensation imposed on us here; as they in

Ibid. 'Αγαλλιᾶσθε ὀλίγον ἄρτι * Πειρασμοῖς. Jam. 1. 2. St. *Peter*; wherein (saith he) *ye greatly rejoyce (or exult,) being for a little while as in heavinesse through manifold * afflictions or trials. Accounting it all joy* (saith St. *James*) *when ye fall into divers temptations* (that is, afflictions or trials) *knowing that the trial of your faith perfecteth patience*; that is, seeing the sufferance of these present evils conduceth to the furtherance

Rom. 5. 8. of your spiritual and eternal welfare. And, *We glory in tribulation,* saith St. *Paul*; rendring the same accompt, because it tended to their souls advantage: St. *Paul*, than whom no man perhaps ever more deeply tasted

Ἐν ἀκαταστασίαις. of the cup of affliction; and that tempered with all the most bitter ingredients which this World can produce; Whose life was spent in continual agitation and unsettledness; in all hardships of travel and labour and care; in extreme sufferance of all pains both of body and mind; in all imaginable dangers and difficulties and distresses, that nature exposes man unto, or humane malice can bring upon him; in all wants of natural comfort (food, sleep, shelter, liberty, health) in all kinds of disgrace and contumely; as you may see in those large inventories of his sufferings

2 Cor. 11. 23. 6. 5. registred by himself, in the 6th and 11th *Chapters* of his 2d *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*; Yet all this considering the good things he expected afterward to enjoy, he accompted very slight and tolerable: *For* (saith he,)

2 Cor. 4. 17. c. 1. Τὸ γὰρ παραυτίκα ἐλαφρὸν τῆς θλίψεως. *our lightness of affliction, that is for a little while here, worketh for us a far more exceeding weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen but at those, which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know, that when our earthly house of this tabernacle* (of this unsteady transitory abode) *is dissolved we are to have a tabernacle from God, a house not made with hands, eternal*

Rom. 8. 18. *in the Heavens. I reckon,* saith he again, that is having made a due com-

parison

pariſon and computation I find) *that the ſufferings of this preſent time are not worthy* (that is are not conſiderable, come under no rate or proportion) *in reſpect of the glory which ſhall be revealed* (or openly conferred) *upon us.* The like opinion had thoſe faithful Chriſtians, in the *Epiſtle* to the *Hebrews*, of whom 'tis ſaid, that *being expoſed to publick ſcorn as in the theatre,* Heb. 10. 34. *with reproaches and afflictions, they did with gladneſs accept the ſpoiling* * (or rapine) *of their goods; knowing that they had in Heaven a better and more enduring ſubſtance.* But the principal example (moſt obliging our imitation) of this wiſe choice is that of our *Lord* himſelf; who, in contemplation of the future great ſatisfaction and reward of patient ſubmiſſion to the divine will, did willingly undergo the greateſt of temporal ſorrows and ignominies; *Who* (ſaith the *Apoſtle to the Hebrews*, propounding his example to us) *for the joy that was ſet before him endured the Croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame, and is ſet down at the right hand of God.* Heb. 12. 2.

* Θεατριζόμενοι ἁρπαγὴν Ἁρπαγμὸν

Thus immediately, or by an eaſie inference doth the conſideration of this lifes ſhortneſs and uncertainty confer to that main part of wiſdom, rightly to value the things about which we are converſant; diſpoſing us conſequently to moderate our affections, and rightly to guide our actions about them; fitting us therefore for the performance of thoſe duties ſo often enjoined us; of not caring for, not truſting in, not minding (unduly that is, and immoderately) things below; of dying to this World, and taking up our croſs, or contentedly ſuffering (in ſubmiſſion to God's will) all loſs and inconvenience; as alſo to the placing our meditation and care; our love and deſire; our hope and confidence; our joy and ſatisfaction; our moſt earneſt pains and endeavours upon things divine, ſpiritual and eternal.

IV. I proceed to another general benefit of that general conſideration; which is that it may engage us to a good improvement of our time; the doing which is a very conſiderable piece of wiſdom. For if time be, (as *Theophraſtus* called it truely) *a thing of moſt precious value* (or expence) as it were a great folly to laviſh it away unprofitably; ſo to be frugal thereof, and careful to lay it out for the beſt advantage, eſpecially every Man having ſo little ſtore thereof, muſt be a ſpecial point of Prudence. *To be covetous of time* (*Seneca* tells us) *is a commendable avarice*; it being neceſſary for the accompliſhment of any worthy enterprize; there being nothing exellent, that can ſoon or eaſily be effected. Surely he that hath much and great buſineſs to diſpatch; and but a little time allowed for it, is concerned to husband it well; not to loſe it wholly in idleneſs; not to trifle it away in unneceſſary divertiſements; not to put himſelf upon other impertinent affairs; above all not to create obſtacles to himſelf, by purſuing matters of a tendency quite contrary to the ſucceſs of his main undertakings. 'Tis our caſe; we are obliged here to negotiate in buſineſs of infinite price and conſequence to us; no leſs than the ſalvation of our ſouls and eternal happineſs; and we ſee, that our time to drive it on and bring it to a happy iſſue is very ſcant and ſhort; ſhort in it ſelf; and very ſhort in reſpect to the nature of thoſe affairs; the great variety, and the great difficulty of them: The great father of *Phyſicians* did quicken the ſtudents of that faculty to diligence, by admoniſhing them (in the firſt place, ſetting it in the front of his famous *Aphoriſms*) that, *life is ſhort, and art is long.* And how much more ſo is the art of living well (that moſt excellent and moſt neceſſary art; for indeed vertue is not a gift of nature, but a work of art; an effect of labour and ſtudy) this, I ſay moſt

Πολυτελέστατον ἀγάλμα.

Nulla niſi temporis honeſta eſt avaritia. Sen.

Nonenim dat natura virtutem; ars eſt bonum fieri. Sen. Ep. 89.

moſt needful and uſeful art of living vertuouſly and piouſly; this art of ſpiritual Phyſick; (of preſerving and recovering our ſouls health) how much longer is it? how many rules are to be learnt? how many precepts to be obſerved in order thereto? We are bound to furniſh our minds with needful knowledge of God's will and our duty; we are to bend our unwilling wills to a ready compliance with them; we are to adorn our ſouls with diſpoſitions ſutable to the future ſtate (ſuch as may qualify us for the preſence of God, and converſation with the bleſſed ſpirits above) it is incumbent on us to mortify corrupt deſires, to reſtrain inordinate paſſions, to ſubdue natural propenſities, to extirpate vitious habits; in order to the effecting theſe things, to uſe all fit means; devotion toward God, ſtudy of his Law, reflexion upon our actions, with all ſuch ſpiritual inſtruments; the performing which duties, as it doth require great care and pains, ſo it needs much time; all this is not *dictum factum*, as ſoon done as ſaid; a few ſpare minutes will not ſuffice to accompliſh it. Natural inclination, that wild beaſt within us, will not ſo preſently be tamed, and made tractable by us. Ill habits cannot be removed without much exerciſe and attendance; as they were begot, ſo they muſt be deſtroyed, by a conſtant ſucceſſion, and frequency of acts. Fleſhly luſt is not to be killed with a ſtab or two; it will fight ſtoutly, and rebel often, an hold out long, before with our utmoſt endeavour we can obtain an entire victory over it. No vertue is acquired in an inſtant, but by degrees, ſtep by ſtep; from the ſeeds of right inſtruction and good reſolution it ſprings up, and grows forward by a continual progreſs of cuſtomary practice; 'tis a child of patience, a fruit of perſeverance (that ὑπομονὴ ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ, *enduring in doing well*, St. *Paul* ſpeaks of) and conſequently a work of time, for enduring implies a good ſpace of time. Having therefore ſo much to doe, and of ſo great concernment, and ſo little a portion of time for it, it behoves us to be careful in the improvement of what time is allowed us; to embrace all opportunities and advantages offered; to go the neareſt way, to uſe the beſt *compendiums* in the tranſaction of our buſineſs; not to be ſlothful and negligent, but active and intent about it; (for as time is diminiſhed, and in part loſt by ſloth or ſlackneſs; ſo it is enlarged, and, as it were, multiplied by induſtry; my day is two in reſpect of his, who doeth but half my work.) Not (alſo) to conſume our time in fruitleſs paſtimes, and curious entertainments of fancy; being idly buſie about impertinences and trifles (we call it ſport, but 'tis a ſerious damage to us;) not to immerſe our ſelves in multiplicities of needleſs care about ſecular matters, which may diſtract us, and bereave us of fit leiſure for our great employment; that which our *Saviour* calls περιβάζεσθαι περὶ πολλά, *to keep a great deal of doe* and ſtir (to be jumbled about as it were, and confounded) *about many things*; and, περισπᾶσθαι περὶ πολλὴν διακονίαν, *to be diſtracted* and perplexed *about much comberſome ſervice*; which St. *Paul* calls πραγματείαις, *to be implicated* and entangled (as in a net) *with the negotiations of this preſent life*; ſo that we ſhall not be expedite, or free to beſtir our ſelves about our more weighty affairs. The ſpending much time about thoſe things doth ſteal it from theſe; yea doth more than ſo, by diſcompoſing our minds ſo that we cannot well employ what time remains upon our ſpiritual concernments. But eſpecially we ſhould not proſtitute our time upon vitious projects and practices; doing which is not onely a prodigality of the preſent time, but an abridgment of the future; it not onely doth not promote or ſet forward our buſineſs, but brings it backward; and makes us more work than we had before;

Τί φθείρεις ἔνστιον ὕδωρ; Epict.

Rom. 2. 7.

Luke 10. 40.

1 Tim. 2. 4.

'tis

'tis a going in a way directly contrary to our journeys-end. The Scripture aptly resembles our life to a wayfaring, a condition of travel and pilgrimage; now he that hath a long journey to make, and but a little time of day to pass it in, must in reason strive to set out soon, and then to make good speed; must proceed on directly, making no stops or deflections (not calling in at every sign that invites him, not standing to gaze at every object seeming new or strange to him; not staying to talk with every Passenger that meets him; but rather avoiding all occasions of diversion and delay) lest he be surprised by the night, be left to wander in the dark, be excluded finally from the place whither he tends: So must we in our course towards Heaven and happiness, take care that we set out soon (procrastinating no time, but beginning instantly to insist in the ways of Piety and Vertue) then proceed on speedily, and persist constantly; no-where staying or loitering, shunning all impediments and avocations from our Progress; lest we never arrive near, or come too late unto the gate of Heaven. *St. Peter* tells us, that the end of all things doth approach, and thereupon advises us *to be sober, and to watch unto prayer*; for that the less our time is, the more intent and industrious it concerns us to be. And, St. *Paul* injoins us to *redeem the time, because the days are evil*; that is, since we can enjoy no true quiet or comfort here, we should improve our time to the best advantage for the future; he might have also adjoined, with the Patriarch *Jacob*, the paucity of the days to their badness; because *the days of our life are few and evil*, let us redeem the time; *Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble*: So few indeed they are, that 'tis fit we should lose none of them, but use them all in preparation toward that great change we are to make; that fatal passage out of this strait time into that boundless eternity. So, it seems, we have *Job*'s example of doing: *All the days* (says he) *of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.* I end this Point with that so comprehensive warning of our Saviour: *Take heed to your selves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon you unawares. Watch ye therefore and pray that ye may be counted worthy to escape —— and to stand before the son of man.*

1 Pet. 4. 7.
Eph. 5. 15. 16.
Gen. 47. 9.
Job 14. 1.
Job 14. 14.
Luke 21. 34.

V. I shall adjoin but one use more, to which this consideration may be subservient, which is, that it may help to beget and maintain in us (that which is the very heart and soul of all goodness) Sincerity. Sincerity in all kinds, in our thoughts, words and actions. To keep us from harbouring in our breasts such thoughts, as we would be afraid or ashamed to own: from speaking otherwise than we mean, than we intend to doe, than we are ready any-where openly to avow; from endeavouring to seem what we are not; from being one thing in our expressions and conversations with men; another in our hearts, or in our closets. From acting with oblique respects to private interests or passions, to humane favour or censure (in matters, I mean, where duty doth intervene, and where pure conscience ought to guide and govern us) from making professions and ostentations (void of substance, of truth, of knowledge, of good purpose) great semblances of peculiar sanctimony, integrity, scrupulosity, spirituality, refinedness, like those *Pharisees* so often therefore taxed in the Gospel; as also from palliating, as those men did, designs of ambition, avarice, envy, animosity, revenge, perverse humour, with pretences of zeal and conscience. We should indeed strive to be good

(and

(and that in all real strictness, aiming at utmost perfection) in outward act, and appearance, as well as in heart and reality; for the glory of
Rom. 12. 17. God and example of men (*providing things honest in the sight of all men*) but we must not shine with a false lustre, nor care to seem better than we are, nor intend to serve our selves in seeming to serve God; bartering spiritual commodities for our own glory or gain. For since the day approaches
Rom. 2. 16. when *God will judge τὰ κρυπτὰ ἀνθρώπων, the things men do so studiously conceal*;
Eccl. 12. 14. when *God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil*; since *we must all appear* (or rather
2 Cor. 5. 10. be all made apparent, be manifested and discovered) *at the tribunal of Christ*: since *there is nothing covered, which shall not be revealed, nor hid*
Οὐ γὰρ πεφανέρωται ἅπαξ, ἀλλὰ καὶ φανερωθῆναι. Chrysost. *that shall not be known; so that whatever is spoken in the ear in closets, shall be proclaimed on the house tops*: Since at length, and that within a very short
Luke 12. 2, 3. time (no man knows how soon) the whispers of every mouth (the closest murmurs of detraction, slander and sychophantry) shall become audible to every ear; the abstrusest thoughts of all hearts (the closest malice and envy) shall be disclosed in the most publick Theatre before innumerable spectatours; the truth of all pretences shall be throughly examined; the just merit of every Person, and every cause shall with a most exact scrutiny be scann'd openly in the face of all the World; to what purpose can it be to juggle or baffle for a time; for a few days (perhaps for a few minutes) to abuse, or to amuse those about us with crafty dissimulation or deceit? Is it worth the pains to devise plausible shifts, which shall instantly, we know, be detected and defeated; to bedaub foul designs with a fair varnish, which death will presently wipe off; to be dark and cloudy in our proceedings, when as a clear day (that will certainly dispel all darkness and scatter all mists) is breaking in upon us; to make vizors for our faces, and cloaks for our actions, whenas we must very shortly be exposed, perfectly naked and undisguised, in our true colours, to the general view of Angels and Men? Heaven sees at present what we think and doe, and our conscience cannot be wholly ignorant or insensible; nor can Earth it self be long unacquainted therewith. Is it not much better, and more easie (since it requires no pains or study) to act our selves, than to accommodate our selves to other unbeseeming and undue parts; to be upright in our intentions, constant in our discourses, plain in our dealings, following the single and uniform guidance of our reason and conscience, than to shuffle and shift, wandring after the various uncertain and inconstant opinions or humours of men? What matter is it, what cloaths we wear, what garb we appear in, during this posture of travel and sojourning here; what for the present we go for; how men esteem us, what they think of our actions? *St. Paul* at
1 Cor. 4. 3. least did not much stand upon it; for *with me*, said he, *'tis a very small thing* (ἐλάχιστον, the least thing that can come under consideration) *to be judged of you, or of humane day* (that is, of this present transitory, fallible, reversible judgment of men.) If we mean well and do righteously our conscience will at present satisfie us, and the divine (unerring and impartial) sentence will hereafter acquit us; no unjust or uncharitable censure shall prejudice us; if we entertain base designs, and deal unrighteously; as our conscience will accuse and vex us here, so God will shortly condemn and punish us; neither shall the most favourable conceit of men
1 Cor. 3. 13. stand us in stead. *Every man's work shall become manifest; for the day shall declare it; because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire* (that is, a severe and strict inquiry) *shall try every man's work, of what sort it is.* I cannot insist

insist more on this Point; I shall onely say, that considering the brevity and uncertainty of our present state, the greatest simplicity may justly be deemed the truest wisdom; that who deceives others doth cozen himself most; that the deepest policy (used to compass, or to conceal bad designs) will in the end appear the most downright folly.

I might add to the precedent discourses, that *Philosophy* it self hath commended this consideration as a proper and powerful instrument of vertue; reckoning the practice thereof a main part of wisdom; the greatest proficient therein in common esteem, *Socrates*, having defined Philosophy (or the study of wisdom) to be nothing else, but (μελέτη θανάτου) *the study of death*; intimating also (in *Plato*'s *Phædon*) that this study, the meditation of death and preparation of his mind to leave this World, had been the constant and chief employment of his life. That likewise, according to experience, nothing more avails to render the minds of men sober and well composed, than such spectacles of Mortality, as do impress this consideration upon them. For whom doth not the sight of a Coffin or of a Grave gaping to receive a friend perhaps, or an ancient Aquaintance; however a man in nature and state altogether like our selves; of the mournful looks and habits, of all the sad pomps and solemnities attending man unto his long home, by minding him of his own frail condition, affect with some serious, some honest, some wise thoughts? And if we be reasonable men we may every day supply the need of such occasions, by representing to our selves the necessity of our soon returning to the dust; dressing in thought our own Herses, and celebrating our own Funerals; by living under the continual apprehension and sense of our transitory and uncertain condition; dying daily, or becoming already dead unto this World. The doing which effectually being the gift of God, and an especial work of his Grace, let us of him humbly implore it, saying after the Holy *Prophet, Lord, so teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisedom.* Amen.

Τῶτο ἔχει ἡ τελειότης τῆς ἥθους τὸ πᾶν· οὗτον ἡμέρων ἐν τελευταίαν διεξάγειν. Anton. *lib.* 7.

SERMON XVI.

The Danger and mischief of delaying Repentance.

PSAL. CXIX. 60.

I made haste, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.

THIS Psalm (no less excellent in vertue, than large in bulk) containeth manifold reflexions upon the nature, the properties, the adjuncts and effects of God's Law, many sprightly ejaculations about it (conceived in different forms of speech; some in way of

petition, ſome of thanksgiving, ſome of reſolution, ſome of aſſertion or aphoriſm) many uſefull directions, many zealous exhortations to the obſervance of it; the which are not ranged in any ſtrict order, but, (like a variety of fair flowers and wholſome herbs in a wide field) do with a grateful confuſion lie diſperſed, as they freely did ſpring up in the heart, or were ſuggeſted by the devout ſpirit of him, who indited the *Pſalm*; whence no coherence of ſentences being deſigned, we may conſider any one of them abſolutely or ſingly by it ſelf,

Among them, that which I have picked out for the ſubject of my diſcourſe, implieth an excellent rule of practice, authoriſed by the *Pſalmiſt*'s example; it is propounded in way of devotion or immediate addreſs to God; unto whoſe infallible knowledge his conſcience maketh an appeal concerning his practice; not as boaſting thereof, but as praiſing God for it, unto whoſe gratious inſtruction and ſuccour he frequently doth aſcribe all his performances: But the manner of propounding I ſhall not inſiſt upon; the rule it ſelf is, that ſpeedily, without any procraſtination or delay, we ſhould apply our ſelves to the obſervance of God's Commandments; the practice of which rule it ſhall be my endeavour to recommend and preſs.

It is a common practice of men, that are engaged in bad courſes, which their own conſcience diſcerneth and diſapproveth, to adjourn the reformation of their lives to a farther time, ſo indulging themſelves in the preſent commiſſion of ſin, that yet they would ſeem to purpoſe, and promiſe themſelves hereafter to repent, and take up: Few reſolve to perſiſt finally in an evil way, or deſpair of being one day reclaimed, but immediately and effectually to ſet upon it, many deem unſeaſonable or needleſs; it will, they preſume, be ſoon enough to begin to morrow or next day, a month or a year hence, when they ſhall find more commodious opportunity, or ſhall prove better diſpoſed thereto; in the mean time with *Solomon*'s ſluggard, *Yet*, ſay they, *a little ſleep, a little ſlumber, a little folding of the hands*; let us but neglect this duty, let us but ſatisfie this appetite, let us but enjoy this bout of pleaſure; hereafter God willing we mean to be more careful, we hope that we ſhall become more ſober: So like bad debtours: when our conſcience dunneth us, we always mean, we always promiſe to pay; if ſhe will ſtay a while, ſhe ſhall, we tell her, be ſatisfied; or like vain ſpendthrifts, we ſee our eſtate fly, yet preſume that it will hold out, and at length we ſhall reſerve enough for our uſe. Εἰς αὔριον τὰ σπουδαῖα, *Let ſerious buſineſs ſtay till the morrow*, was a ſaying that coſt dear to him who ſaid it; yet we in our greateſt concerns follow him.

Recognoſce ſingulos, conſidera univerſos, nullius non vita ſpectat in craſtinum; non enim vivunt, ſed victuri ſunt. Sen *Ep.* 45.

Victuros agimus ſemper, nec vivimus unquam. Manil. 4.

Prov. 6. 10.

Plut. *in* Pelop.

But how fallacious, how dangerous and how miſchievous this manner of proceeding is; how much better and more adviſable it is, after the example propounded in our Text, ſpeedily to betake our ſelves unto the diſcharge of our debt and duty to God, the following conſiderations will plainly declare.

Non eſt credo mihi ſapientis dicere, vivam. Mart. *I.* 16.

1. We may conſider, that the obſervance of God's Commandments (an obſervance of them proceeding from an habitual diſpoſition of mind, in a conſtant tenour of practice) is our indiſpenſable duty, our main concernment, our only way to happineſs; the neceſſary condition of our attaining ſalvation; that alone which can procure God's love and favour toward us; that unto which all real bleſſings here, and all bliſs hereafter are inſeparably annexed: *Fear God and keep his Commandments, for this is the whole of man*; (the whole duty, the whole deſign, the whole perfe-

Eccl. 12. 13.

ction

ction, the sum of our wisdom, and our happiness.) *If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments: The righteous Lord loveth righteousness, his countenance doth behold the upright; God will render to every man according to his works*; these are Oracles indubitably clear, and infallibly certain; these are immoveable terms of justice between God and Man, which never will, never can be relaxed; being grounded on the immutable nature of God, and eternal reason of things; if God had not decreed, if he had not said these things, they would not assuredly be true; for it is a foul contradiction to reason, that a Man ever should please God without obeying him; 'tis a gross absurdity in nature, that a Man should be happy without being good; wherefore all the wit in the World cannot devise a way, all the authority upon Earth (yea, I dare say, even in Heaven it self) cannot establish a condition, beside faithful observance of God's Law, that can save, or make us happy; from it there can be no valid dispensation, without it there can be no effectual absolution, for it there can be no acceptable commutation; nor in defect thereof will any faith, any profession, any trick or pretence whatever avail, or signify any thing: Whatever expedient to supply its room superstition, mistake, craft, or presumption may recommend, we shall, relying thereon, be certainly deluded; If therefore we mean to be saved (and are we so wild as not to mean it?) if we do not renounce felicity (and do we not then renounce our wits?) to become vertuous, to proceed in a course of obedience, is a work that necessarily must be performed; and why then should we not instantly undertake it; wherefore do we demur or stick at it; how can we at all rest quiet, while an affair of so vast importance lieth upon our hands, or until our mind be freed of all uncertainty and suspence about it? Were a probable way suggested to us of acquiring great wealth, honour or pleasure, should we not quickly run about it, could we contentedly sleep, till we had brought the business to a sure or hopeless issue? and why with less expedition or urgency should we pursue the certain means of our present security and comfort, of our final salvation and happiness? in doing so, are we not strangely inconsistent with our selves?

Matt. 19. 27. Psal. 11. 7. Prov. 15. 9. Rom. 2. 6. Mat. 5. 18. Luke 16. 17. Psal. 119. 15.

Again, disobedience is the certain road to perdition; that which involveth us in guilt and condemnation, that which provoketh God's wrath and hatred against us, that which assuredly will throw us into a state of eternal sorrow and wretchedness: *The foolish shall not stand in God's sight, he hateth all the workers of iniquity; If ye do not repent, ye shall perish. The wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the people that forget God; The unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God; The wicked shall go into everlasting punishment*, these are denunciations no less sure than severe, from that mouth, which is never opened in vain; from the execution whereof there can be no shelter or refuge; And what wise man, what man in his right senses would for one minute stand obnoxious to them? Who that any wise tendereth his own welfare would move one step forward in so perillous and destructive a course? the farther in which he proceedeth, the more he discosteth from happiness, the nearer he approacheth to ruine.

Psal. 5. 5. Luke 13. 3. Psal. 9. 17. 1 Cor. 6. 9. Matt. 25. 46. 7. 21.

In other cases common sense prompteth men to proceed otherwise; for who, having rendred one his enemy, that far overmatcheth him, and at whose mercy he standeth, will not instantly sue to be reconciled? who being seised by a pernicious disease, will not haste to seek a cure? who being fallen into the jaws of a terrible danger, will not nimbly leap out thence? and such plainly is our case; while we persist in sin, we live in enmity and defiance with the Almighty, who can at his Pleasure crush us;

we lie under a fatal plague, which, if we do not ſeaſonably repent, will certainly deſtroy us; we incur the moſt dreadful of all hazards, abiding in the confines of death and deſtruction; God frowning at us, guilt holding us, Hell gaping for us: Every Sinner is (according to the *Wiſe-man's* Prov. 23. 34. expreſſion) *as he that lieth down in the midſt of the ſea, or as he that lieth upon the top of a maſt*; and he that is in ſuch a caſe, is he not mad or ſenſeleſs, if he will not forthwith labour to ſwim out thence, or make all ſpeed to get down into a ſafer place? can any man with comfort lodge in a condition ſo diſmally tickliſh?

2. We may conſider, that in order to our final welfare we have much work to diſpatch, the which requireth as earneſt care and painful induſtry, ſo a competent long time; which, if we do not preſently fall on, may be wanting, and thence our work be left undone, or imperfect: To conquer and correct bad inclinations, to render our ſenſual appetites obſequious to reaſon, to compoſe our paſſions into a right and ſteady order, to cleanſe our ſouls from vanity, from perverſeneſs, from ſloth, from all vitious diſtempers, and in their room to implant firm habits of vertue; to get a clear knowledge of our duty, with a ready diſpoſition to perform it; in fine, to ſeaſon our minds with holy affections, qualifying us for the preſence of God, and converſation with the bleſſed Spirits above; theſe are things that muſt be done, but cannot be done in a trice; it is not *dictum* Rom. 2. 7. *factum*, as ſoon done as ſaid; but ὑπομονὴ ἔργου ἀγαθοῦ, *a patient continuance in well-doing* is needful to atchieve it; for it no time can be redundant, the longeſt life can hardly be ſufficient: *Art is long, and life is ſhort*, may be an Aphoriſm in *Divinity* as well as in *Phyſick*; the art of living well, or preſerving our Soul's health, and curing its diſtempers, requireth no leſs time to compaſs it, than any other Art or Science.

Οὐ καθέδειαν ἡμῖν χαρίζεται βοήθειαν ὁ Θεὸς, ἀλλὰ πονεμάτων. Chryſ. ad Eph. λογ. κδ'.

Vertue is not a Muſhrome, that ſpringeth up of it ſelf in one Night when we are aſleep or regard it not: But a delicate Plant, that groweth ſlowly and tenderly, needing much pains to cultivate it, much care to guard it, much time to mature it, in our untoward ſoil, in this World's unkindly weather; happineſs is a thing too pretious to be purchaſed at an eaſie rate, Heaven is too high to be come at without much climbing, the crown of bliſs is a Prize too noble to be won without a long and a tough conflict. Neither is a vice a ſpirit, that will be conjured down by a charm, or with a *Preſto* driven away; it is not an adverſary, that can be knocked down at a blow, or diſpatched with a ſtab. Whoſoever ſhall pretend at any time eaſily with a celerity, by a kind of *Legerdemain*, or by any miſterious knack, a Man may be ſettled in vertue, or converted from vice, common experience abundantly will confute him; which ſheweth, that a habit otherwiſe (ſetting miracles aſide) cannot be produced or deſtroyed, than by a conſtant exerciſe of acts ſutable or oppoſite thereto; and that ſuch acts cannot be exerciſed without voiding all impediments and framing all Principles of action (ſuch as temper of body, judgment of mind, influence of cuſtome) to a compliance; that who by temper is peeviſh or cholerick, cannot without maſtering that temper become patient or meek; that who from vain opinions is proud, cannot without conſidering away thoſe opinions prove humble; that who by cuſtome is grown intemperate, cannot without weaning himſelf from that cuſtome come to be ſober; that who from the concurrence of a ſorry nature, fond conceits, mean breeding and ſcurvy uſage is covetous; cannot without draining all thoſe ſources of his fault, be turned into liberal. The change of our mind is one of the greateſt alterations in nature, which cannot

O quam iſtud parum putant, quibus tam facile videtur! Quint. 12. 1.

cannot be compaſſed in any way, or within any time we pleaſe; but it muſt proceed on leiſurely and regularly, in ſuch order, by ſuch ſteps, as the nature of things doth permit; it muſt be wrought by a reſolute and laborious perſeverance; by a watchful application of mind in voiding Prejudices, in waiting for advantages, in attending to all we do; by forcible wreſting our nature from its bent, and ſwimming againſt the current of impetuous deſires; by a patient diſentangling our ſelves from practices moſt agreeable and familiar to us; by a wary fencing with temptations, by long ſtruggling with manifold oppoſitions and difficulties; whence the Holy Scripture termeth our practice a warfare, wherein we are to fight many a bloody battel with moſt redoubtable foes; a combat, which muſt be managed with our beſt skill, and utmoſt might; a race, which we muſt paſs through with inceſſant activity and ſwiftneſs.

If therefore we mean to be good or to be happy, it behoveth us to loſe no time; to be preſently up at our great task; to ſnatch all occaſions, to embrace all means incident of reforming our hearts and lives. As thoſe, who have a long journey to go, do take care to ſet out early and in their way make good ſpeed, leſt the night overtake them before they reach their home; ſo it being a great way from hence to Heaven, ſeeing we muſt paſs over ſo many obſtacles, through ſo many Paths of duty before we arrive thither, it is expedient to ſet forward as ſoon as can be, and to proceed with all expedition; the longer we ſtay, the more time we ſhall need, and the leſs we ſhall have.

Ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἰομεν, ἐπὶ γὰρ μέμβλωκε μάλιστα Ἦμαρ, ἀτὰρ τὰ χαι τοι πολὺ ἔσπερος ῥίγιον ἔσαι. Hom. Od. ρ.

3. We may conſider, that no future time which we can fix upon will be more convenient than the preſent is for our reformation. Let us pitch on what time we pleaſe, we ſhall be as unwilling and unfit to begin as we are now; we ſhall find in our ſelves the ſame indiſpoſitions, the ſame averſeneſs, or the ſame liſtleſneſs toward it as now: There will occur the like hardſhips to deter us, and the like Pleaſures to allure us from our duty; objects will then be as preſent and will ſtrike as ſmartly upon our ſenſes; the caſe will appear juſt the ſame, and the ſame Pretences for delay will obtrude themſelves; ſo that we ſhall be as apt then as now to prorogue the buſineſs. We ſhall ſay then, to morrow I will mend; and when that morrow cometh, it will be ſtill to morrow, and ſo the morrow will prove endleſs. If like the ſimple Ruſtick, (who ſtay'd by the River ſide waiting till it had done running, that ſo he might paſs dry-foot over the chanel) we do conceit, that the ſources of ſin (bad inclinations within, and ſtrong temptations abroad) will of themſelves be ſpent or fail, we ſhall find our ſelves deluded. If ever we come to take up, we muſt have a beginning with ſome difficulty and trouble; we muſt courageouſly break through the preſent with all its enchantments; we muſt undauntedly plunge into the cold ſtream; we muſt rouſe our ſelves from our bed of ſloth; we muſt ſhake off that brutiſh improvidence which detaineth us, and why ſhould we not eſſay it now? there is the ſame reaſon now that ever we can have; yea, far more reaſon now; for if that we now begin, hereafter at any determinate time, ſome of the work will be done, what remaineth will be ſhorter and eaſier to us. Nay farther,

Cras hoc fiet; idem cras fiet, &c.
Perſ. *Sat.* 5.

Qui non eſt hodie, cras minus aptus erit.
Ovid. *de Rom. I.* Epict. 4. 12.

——*qui recte vivendi prorogat horam,*
Ruſticus expectat dum defluat amnis, at ille
Labitur, & labetur in omne volubilis ævum.
Hor. *Ep. I.* 2.

Εἰ μὲν λυσιτελὴς ἡ ὑπέρθεσις ἐστιν, ἡ παντελὴς ἀπόσασις αὐτῆς ὄφελ λυσιτελεσέρα. Epict. 4. 12.

For the ſame reaſon we put it off, we ſhould put it away. If it be good at all, it is good at preſent.

4. We

Παρὰ τὸ σήμερον ἁμαρτὼν εἰς πολλὰ χρόνον ἀνάγκη σοι τὰ πρόσω ἔχειν βῆμα. 4. 12.

4. We may consider, that the more we defer, the more difficult and painful our work must needs prove; every day will both enlarge our task, and diminish our ability to perform it: Sin is never at a stay; if we do not retreat from it, we shall advance in it; and the farther on we go, the more we have to come back; every step we take forward, (even before we can return hither, into the state wherein we are at present) must be repeated; all the web we spin must be unravelled; we must vomit up all we take in; which to do we shall find very tedious and grievous.

Vice as it groweth in age, so it improveth in stature and strength; from a puny Child it soon waxeth a lusty Stripling, then riseth to be a sturdy Man, and after a-while becometh a massy Giant, whom we shall scarce dare to encounter, whom we shall be very hardly able to vanquish; especially seeing that as it groweth taller and stouter, so we shall dwindle and prove more impotent; for it feedeth upon our vitals, and thriveth by our decay; it waxeth mighty by stripping us of our best forces; by enfeebling our reason, by perverting our will, by corrupting our temper, by debasing our courage, by seducing all our appetites and passions to a treacherous compliance with it self; every day our mind groweth more blind, our will more resty, our spirit more faint, our appetites more fierce, our passions more headstrong and untameable: The power and empire of sin do strangely by degrees encroach, and continually get ground upon us, till it hath quite subdued and enthralled us; first we learn to bear it, then we come to like it, by and by we contract a friendship with it, then we dote upon it, at last we become enslaved to it in a bondage, which we shall hardly be able, or willing to shake off; when not onely our necks are fitted to the yoke, our hands are manacled, and our feet shackled thereby; but our heads and hearts do conspire in a base submission thereto: When vice hath made such impression on us, when this pernicious weed hath taken so deep root in our mind, will and affection, it will demand an extremely toilsome labour to extirpate it.

Falsis opinionibus tanto quisque inseritur, quanto magis in eis, familiariusque volutatur. Aug. *Ep.* 117.

Indeed by continuance in sin, the chief means (afforded by nature, or by grace) of restraining, or reducing us from it, are either cut off, or enervated and rendred ineffectual.

Μέγιστον ἐμφυτὸν ἀρετῆς βούσημα ἡ αἰδώς, Greg. Naz. *Or.* 26.

——*nam quis*
Peccandi finem posuit sibi, quando recepit
Ejectum semel attrita de fronte ruborem
Juv. *Sat.* 18.

Natural modesty, while it lasteth, is a curb from doing ill; Men in their first deflexions from vertue are bashful and shy; out of regard to other Mens opinion, and tenderness of their own honour they are afraid, or ashamed to transgress plain rules of duty; but in process this disposition weareth out; by little and little they arrive to that character of the degenerate *Jews*, whom the *Prophets* call *impudent children*, having *a brow of brass*, and *faces harder than a rock*; so that they commit sin with open face, and in broad day, without any mask, without a blush; they despise their own reputation, and defy all censure of others; they outface and outbrave the World, till at length with prodigious insolence they come to boast of wickedness, and *glory in their shame*, as an instance of high courage, and special gallantry.

Ezek. 2. 4. 3. 7. Isa. 48. 4. Jer. 5. 3. Prov. 21. 29. Phil. 3. 19.

Conscience is a check to beginners in sin, reclaiming them from it, and rating them for it; but this in long standers becometh useless, either failing to discharge its office, or assaying it to no purpose having often been slighted, it will be weary of chiding or if it be not wholly dumb, we shall be deaf to it reproof: As those who live by cataracts or downfall

Ψυχὴ ἅπαξ ἁμαρτίας γνωσικὸς ἢ μὴ ἀναλγήτως διατεθεῖσα πολλὰ παρέχει τῷ νοσήματι τὰ σφοδρήλια, &c. Chrys. *Tom. Orat.* 64.

of Water are by continual noise so deafened as not to hear or mind it, so shall we in time grow senseless, not regarding the loudest Peals and Ratlings of our conscience.

The Heart of a raw Novice in impiety is somewhat tender and soft, so that remorse can pierce and sting it; his neck is yeilding and sensible, so that the yoke of sin doth gall it; but in stout Proficients the heart becometh hard and stony, the neck stiff and brawny; (*an iron sinew*, as the *Prophet* termeth it) so that they do not feel or resent any thing; but are like those of whom St. *Paul* speaketh; ὅτινες ἀπηλγηκότες, who *being past feeling all sorrow or smart, have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.* (Ezek. 2. 4. 3. 7. Neh. 9. 29. 2 Chron. 36. 13. Dan. 5. 20. Isa. 48. 4. *Quo quis pejus se habet, minus sentit.* Sen. Ep. 53. Eph. 4. 19.

When first we nibble at the Bait, or enter into bad courses, our reason doth contest and remonstrate against it, faithfully representing to us the folly, the uglines, the baseness, the manifold ill consequences of sinning; but that by continuance is muffled so as not to discern, or muzled so as not to declare; yea, often is so debauched as to excuse, to avow and maintain, yea, to applaud and extol our miscarriages.

For a time a Man retaineth some courage, and a hope that he may repent; but progress in sin dispiriteth and casteth into despair; whether God be placable, whether himself be corrigible; an apprehension concerning the length of the way, or the difficulty of the work discourageth, and despondency rendreth him heartless and careless to attempt it. There is no Man that hath heard of God, who hath not at first some dread of offending him, and some dissatisfaction in transgressing his will; it appearing to his mind (not yet utterly blinded and depraved) a desperate thing to brave his irresistible Power, an absurd thing to thwart his infallible Wisdom, a detestable thing to abuse his immense Goodness; but obstinacy in sin doth quash this conscientious awe; so that at length *God is not in all his thoughts, the fear of God is not before his eyes*; The Wrath of the Almighty seemeth a Bugbear, the fiercest menaces of Religion sound but as Rattles to him. Psal. 10. 4. 36. 1.

As for the gentle Whispers and Touches of Divine Grace, the monitory Dispensations of Providence, the good advices and wholsome reproofs of Friends, with the like means of reclaiming sinners; these to Persons *settled on their lees*, or fixed in bad custome, are but as gusts of Wind brushing an old Oak, or as Waves dashing on a Rock, without at all shaking or stirring it. Jer. 48. 11. Zeph. 1. 12.

Now when any Person is come to this pass, it must be hugely difficult to reduce him; to retrieve a defloured Modesty, to quicken a jaded Conscience, to supple a callous Heart, to resettle a baffled Reason, to rear a dejected Courage, to recover a Soul miserably benummed and broken, to its former vigour and integrity, can be no easie matter.

The diseases of our Soul no less than those of our Body, when once they are inveterate, they are become more incurable; the longer we forbear to apply due remedy, the more hard their cure will prove; if we let them proceed far, we must e'er we can be rid of them, undergo a course of Physick very tedious and offensive to us; many a rough Purge, many a sore Phlebotomy, many an irksome sweat we must endure. Yea farther,

——*frustra medicina paratur,*
Cum mala per longas invaluere moras.
Ovid.

Ῥᾷον δ' ἂν ἀρχῆς μὴ ἐνδῦναι κακίαν,
ἢ φεύγουσαν διαφυγεῖν, ἢ φευξαμένην
ἀνακόψαι. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 26.

5. We may consider, that by delaying to amend, to do it may become quite impossible; it may be so in the nature of the thing, it may be so by the will of God: The thing may become naturally impossible; for vice by

by custom may pass into nature, and prove so congeneal, as if it were born with us; so that we shall propend to it as a stone falleth down, or as a spark flieth upward: By soaking in Voluptuousness we may be so transformed into Brutes, by sleeping in malice so converted into Fiends, that we necessarily shall act like creatures of that kind, into which we are degenerated; and then in no-wise without a downright Miracle are we capable of being reformed. *How long*, saith *Solomon*, *wilt thou sleep, O Sluggard, when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep?* We may be so often called on, and 'tis not easie to awaken us, when we are got into a spiritual slumber; but when we are *dead in trespasses and sins*, so that all breath of holy affection is stopt, and no spiritual pulse from our heart doth appear; that all sense of duty is lost, all appetite to good doth fail, no strength or activity to move in a good course doth exert it self, that our good complexion is dissolved, and all our finer spirits are dissipated; that our mind is quite crazed, and all its Powers are shattered or spoiled, when thus, I say, we are spiritually dead, how can we raise our selves, what beneath omnipotency can effect it? as a stick, when once 'tis dry and stiff, you may break it, but you can never bend it into a streighter posture, so doth the Man become incorrigible, who is settled and stiffned in vice. The stain of habitual sin may sink in so deep, and so throughly tincture all our Soul, that we may be like those People, of whom the *Prophet* saith, *Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? then may ye also, good, that are accustomed to doe evil:* Such an impossibility may arise from nature: one greater and more insuperable may come from God.

To an effectual repentance the succour of divine grace is necessary; but that is arbitrarily dispensed: *the spirit bloweth where it listeth*, yet it listeth wisely, with regard both to the past behaviour, and present capacities of Men; so that to such who have abused it, and to such who will not treat it well, it shall not be imparted: And can we be well assured, can we reasonably hope, that after we by our presumptuous delays have put off God and dallied with his grace; after that he long in vain hath *waited to be gracious*; after that he hath endured so many neglects, and so many repulses from us; after that we frequently have slighted his open invitations, and smothered his kindly motions in us; in short, after we so unworthily have misused his goodness and patience, that he farther will vouchsafe his grace to us? when we have forfeited it, when we have rejected it, when we have spurned and driven it away, can we hope to recover it?

There is a time, a season, a day allotted to us: *our day* it is termed, *day of salvation, the season of our visitation, an acceptable time*; wherein God freely doth exhibit grace, and presenteth his mercy to us; if we let this day slip, *the night cometh when no man can work*; when *the things belonging to our peace will be hidden from our eyes*; when (as the *Prophet* expresseth it) we shall *grope for the wall like the blind, and stumble at noon day as in the night, and be in desolate places as dead men*; after that day is spent and that comfortable light is set, a dismal night of darkness, of cold, of disconsolateness will succeed; when God being *weary of bearing* with Men doth utterly desert them, and *delivereth them over to a reprobate mind*; when subtracting his gratious direction and assistence, *he giveth them over to their own hearts lusts, and to walk in their own counsels*; when they are brought to complain with those in the *Prophet*, *O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?* when like

Phara-

Pharaoh they survive only as objects of God's justice, or occasions to glorify his power; when like *Esau*, they cannot find a place of repentance, *although they seek it carefully with tears*; when as to the foolish loitering Virgins, *the door* of mercy *is shut upon them*; when the *master of the house doth rise and shut the door*, &c. when that menace of divine wisedom cometh to be executed; *They shall call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me; for that they hated knowledge, and did not chuse the fear of the Lord*: And if neglecting our season, and present means, we once fall into this state, then is our case most deplorable; we are dead Men irreversibly doomed, and onely for a few moments reprieved from the stroak of final vengeance; *we are vessels of wrath fitted* (or made up) *for destruction*; by a fatal blindness and obduration sealed up to ruine; we are like the *terra damnata, that earth* (in the *Apostle,*) *which drinking up the rain, that cometh oft upon it, and bearing thorns and briers, is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing*, and *whose end is to be burned.* Wherefore according to the advice of the *Prophet, Seek ye the Lord, when he may be found, call ye upon him, while he is near.*

Heb. 5. 17. Heb. 13. 17. Matt. 25. 12. Luke 13. 25. Prov. 1. 28. Rom. 9. 22. Ἠρτισμένα εἰς ἀπώλειαν. Isa. 55. 6.

It is true, that God is ever ready upon our true conversion to receive us into favour, that his arms are always open to embrace a sincere Penitent; that he hath declared, *whenever a wicked man turneth from his wickedness, and doeth that which is right, he shall save his soul alive*; that if *we do wash our selves, make us clean, put away the evil of our doings, and cease to do evil*, then *although our sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be like crimson they shall be as wool*; that if we *rend our hearts, and turn unto the Lord, he is gracious and merciful, and will repent of the evil*; that *God is good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all that call upon him*; that whenever a prodigal son with humble confession and hearty contrition for his sin doth *arise and go to his father*, he will embrace him tenderly, and entertain him kindly; that even a profane Apostate, and a bloody Oppressour (as *Manasses*) a lewd Strumpet (as *Magdalene*) a notable Thief (as he upon the Cross) a timorous Renouncer (as St. *Peter*) a furious Persecutor (as St. *Paul*) a stupid Idolater (as all the *Heathen* World, when the *Gospel* came to them, was) the most heinous Sinner that ever hath been, or can be imagined to be, if he be disposed to repent, is capable of mercy; those declarations and promises are infallibly true, those instances peremptorily do evince, that repentance is never superannuated; that if we can turn at all, we shall not turn too late; that *panitentia nunquam sera, modo seria*, is an irrefragable rule; yet nevertheless delay is very unsafe; for what assurance can we have, that God hereafter will enable us to perform those conditions of bewailing our sins, and forsaking them? have we not cause rather to fear that he will chastise our presumption by with-holding his Grace? for although God faileth not to yeild competent aids to Persons who have not *despised his goodness and long-suffering that leadeth them to repentance*; yet he that wilfully or wantonly loitereth away the time, and squandereth the means allowed him; who refuseth to come when God calleth, yea woeth and courteth him to repentance, how can he pretend to find such favour?

Isa. 1. 18. Ezek. 18. 27. Joel 2. 13. Psal. 86. 5. Luke 15. 18. Vid. Chrys. ad Theod. 2. Quia finis hominis semper incertus, ideo semper capax est veniæ.

Rom. 2. 4.

We might add, that supposing God in superabundance of mercy might be presumed never to with-hold his grace; yet seeing his grace doth not work by irresistible compulsion; seeing the worse qualified we are, the more apt we shall be to cross and defeat its operation; seeing that we cannot hope that hereafter we shall be more fit than now to comply with it: Yea seeing we may be sure, that after our hearts are hardned by per-

severance in sin, we shall be more indisposed thereto; we by delay of repentance do not only venture the forfeiture of divine grace, but the danger of abusing it, which heinously will aggravate our guilt, and hugely augment our punishment.

Heb. 3. 13. We should do well therefore most seriously to regard the *Apostle*'s admonition; *Exhort one another to day, while it is called to day, lest any of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin*: Now that we find our selves invited to repent, now that we apprehend so much reason for it; now that we feel our hearts somewhat enclined thereto; now that we have time in our hands, and are not barr'd from hopes of mercy; now that it is not extremely difficult, or not absolutely impossible, let us in God's name lay hold on the occasion, let us speedily and earnestly set upon the work. Farther yet,

6. We should consider, that we are mortal and frail, and thence any designs of future reformation may be clipt off, or intercepted by death; which is always creeping toward us, and may for all we can tell be very near at hand. You say you will repent to morrow; but are you sure you shall have a morrow to repent in? have you an hour in your hand, or one minute at your disposal? have you a lease to shew for any term of life; can you claim or reckon upon the least portion of time without his leave, who bestoweth life, and dealeth out time, and ordereth all things as he pleaseth? Can you any wise descry the just *measure of your days*, or *the bounds of your appointed time* without a special revelation from him, *in whose hands is your breath*; and *with whom* alone *the number of your months is* registred? *Boast not thy self of to morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth*, saith the *Wise-man*: boast not of it, that is, do not pretend it to be at thy disposal, presume not upon any thing that may befal therein; for whilst thou presumest thereon, may it not be said unto thee, as to the rich Projector in the *Gospel*, * *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be required of thee.* Doth not, secluding hidden decrees, every Man's life hang upon a thread very slender and frail? is it not subject to many diseases lurking within, and to a thousand accidents flying about us? how many, that might have promised themselves as fair scope as we can, have been unexpectedly snapt away? How many have been cropt in the flower of their age and vigour of their strength? Doth not every day present experiments of sudden death? Do we not continually see that observation of the *Preacher* verified, *Man knoweth not his time*; *as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds are caught in the snare, so are the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it cometh suddenly upon them*? Old men are ready to drop of themselves, and young men are easily brushed or shaken down; the former visibly stand upon the brink of Eternity, the latter walk upon a bottomless Quag, into which unaware they may slump; who then can anywise be secure? We are all therefore highly concerned to use our life while we have it; to catch the first opportunity, lest all opportunity forsake us; to cut off our sinning, lest our selves be cut off before it: And that the rather, because by lavishing, or misemploying our present time we may lose the future, provoking God to bereave us of it; for as prolongation of time is a reward of Piety; as to observance of the Commandments it is promised, *Length of days, and long life, and peace shall be added unto thee*; so being immaturely snatched hence is the punishment awarded

Qui pœnitenti veniam spospondit, peccanti crastinum diem non promisit. Greg. in Evang. Hom. IX.

Job 12. 10. 14. 5. 7. 1. Psal. 39. 4. 90. 12. Dan. 5. 23. Prov. 27. 1.

Οὐκ οἶδας τί τέξεται ἡ ὅτι ἔσαι· μὴ ἀπαγγέλλε τὰ μὴ σά. Basil. M. exh. ad Bapt.

* Luke 12. 10.

Eccles 9. 12.

Τί γὰρ οἶδας ἄνθρωπε ἁμαρτήσαι, εἰ μὴ ἐκ τῆς τοῦ βίου, ἵνα ἐν μετανοήσῃς, &c.

Ὅπερ δοῦλος ἢ ξένος ἐν τῷ βίῳ ὑπάρχει, ἐν ἀμαρτίᾳ τελευτήσαντι μετάνοια οὐκ ἔσαι, &c. Const. Ap. 2. 13.

Prov. 3. 2.

awarded to impious practice; ſo it is threatned that *Evil men ſhall be cut off*; Pſal. 37. 9.
that *bloody and deceitful men ſhall not live out half their days*; that *God will* Pſal. 55. 23.
wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy ſcalp of ſuch an one as goeth on Pſal. 68. 21.
ſtill in his wickedneſs: the very being unmindful of their duty is the cauſe, why men are thus ſurpriſed; for, *If*, ſaith God, *thou doſt not watch, I* Rev. 3. 3.
ſhall come upon thee as a thief, and thou ſhalt not know when I come upon thee. 16. 5.
And *If* (ſaith our Lord) *that ſervant doth ſay in his heart, my Lord delay-* Luke 12. 45.
eth his coming, &c. *The Lord of that ſervant will come in a day, when he look-* 46.
eth not for him, &c.

If then it be certain, that we muſt render a ſtrict accompt of all our doings here; if by reaſon of our frail nature and ſlippery ſtate, it be uncertain when we ſhall be ſummoned thereto; if our negligence may abridge and accelerate the term, is it not very reaſonable to obſerve thoſe advices of our Lord; *Watch, for ye do not know the day, nor the hour, when* Matt. 25. 13.
the ſon of man cometh; *Take heed to your ſelves, leſt at any time your heart be* 24. 42.
overcharged with ſurfeiting, and drunkenneſs, and cares of this life, and ſo Mark 13. 33.
that day come upon you unawares. Let your loins be girded about, and your Luke 12. 15,
lamps burning, and ye your ſelves like men, that wait for your Lord: And to 35.
take the counſel of the *Wiſe-man*, *Make no tarrying to turn unto the Lord,* Eccluſ 5. 7.
and put not off from day to day; for ſuddenly ſhall the wrath of the Lord come forth, and in thy ſecurity ſhalt thou be deſtroyed, and periſh in the day of vengeance.

Theſe conſiderations plainly do ſhew how very fooliſh, how extremely dangerous and deſtructive the procraſtinating our reformation of life is: there are ſome others of good moment, which we ſhall reſerve.

SERMON XVII.

The Danger and miſchief of delaying Repentance.

PSAL. CXIX. 60.

I made haſte, and delayed not to keep thy Commandments.

I Proceed to the Conſiderations which yet remain to be ſpoken to.

1. We may conſider the cauſes of delay in this caſe (as in all caſes of moment) to be bad and unworthy of a Man: What can they be but either ſtupidity, that we do not apprehend the importance of the affair; or improvidence that we do not attend to the danger of perſiſting in ſin; or negligence that we do not mind our concernments; or ſloth that

Αργίας αφέφασις ἢ ἀναΣολή, Simpl.

keepeth us from rowſing and beſtirring our ſelves in purſuance of what appeareth expedient; or faint-heartedneſs and cowardice, that we dare not attempt to croſs our appetite, or our fancy? all which diſpoſitions are very baſe and ſhameful: It is the prerogative of humane nature to be ſagacious in eſtimating the worth, and provident in deſcrying the conſequences of things; whereas other creatures, by impulſe of ſence, do onely fix their regard on preſent appearances; which peculiar excellency by ſtupidity and improvidence we forfeit, degenerating into brutes; and negligence of that, which we diſcern mainly to concern us is a quality ſomewhat beneath thoſe, depreſſing us below beaſts, which cannot be charged with ſuch a fault; ſloth is no leſs deſpicable, rendring a man fit for nothing; nor is there any thing commonly more reproachful than want of courage: ſo bad are the cauſes of delay.

Animal hoc providum, ſagax, Cic. *de leg.* 1. Cic. *de offic.* 1.

2. And the effects are no leſs unhappy, being diſappointment, damage, trouble and ſorrow: As expedition (catching advantages and opportunities, keeping the ſpirit up in its heat and vigour, making forcible impreſſions where ever it lighteth, driving on the current of ſucceſs) doth ſubdue buſineſs, and atchieve great exploits (as by practiſing his Motto *to defer nothing*, *Alexander* did accompliſh thoſe mighty feats which make ſuch a clatter in ſtory; and *Cæſar* more by the rapid quickneſs and forwardneſs of undertaking, than by the greatneſs of courage, and skilfulneſs of conduct, did work out thoſe enterpriſes, which purchaſed to his Name ſo much glory and renown) ſo delay and ſlowneſs do ſpoil all buſineſs, do keep off ſucceſs at diſtance from us, thereby opportunity is loſt, and advantages ſlip away; our courage doth flag, and our ſpirit languiſheth; our endeavours ſtrike faintly, and are eaſily repelled; whence diſappointment neceſſarily doth ſpring, attended with vexation.

Μηδὲν ἀναΣαλλόμενος. *Succeſſus urgere ſuos, inſtare, &c.* Luc. 1.

Periſque in rebus tarditas & procraſtinatio odioſa eſt. Cic. *Philip.* 6.

Ἀτὰρ δ' ἀμβολερὸς ἀνὴρ ἄτην παλαίει. Heſ.

Dum deliberamus quando incipiendum eſt, incipere jam ſerum eſt. Quint. 12. 7.

3. Again, we may conſider, that to ſet upon our duty is a great ſtep toward the performance of it; if we can reſolve well, and a little puſh forward, we are in a fair way to diſpatch; *to begin* (they ſay) *is to have half done*; to ſet out, is a good part of the journey; to riſe betimes, is oftner harder than to doe all the day's work; entring the Town, is almoſt the ſame with taking it; it is ſo in all buſineſs, it is chiefly ſo in moral practice: For if we can find in our hearts to take our leave of ſin, if we can diſengage our ſelves from the witcheries of preſent allurement, if we can but get over the threſhold, of vertuous converſation, we ſhall find the reſt beyond expectation ſmooth and expedite; we ſhall diſcover ſuch beauty in vertue, we ſhall taſt ſo much ſweetneſs in obedience as greatly will encourage us to proceed therein.

Dimidium facti qui cœpit habet. Hor. *Ep.* 1. 2.

Μόνον ἀρχὴν δῶσὶς τῷ πράγματι, &c. Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Orat. p.* 68.

Τὸ δυσχερὲς καὶ δυσκατόρθωτον τῶν ἔργων, τὸ δυσπόλιτον ἔσπλουν ἐσόδου καὶ ἀφορμὴν ἀρετῆς ἀ' ἁμαρτίας. *Ib. p.* 79.

Honeſtas, quæ principio anxia habetur, ubi contigerit, voluptati luxuriæque habetur. Vict. *in* Sept. Sev.

4. Again, we may conſider, that our time it ſelf is a gift, or a talent committed to us, for the improvement whereof we are reſponſible no leſs than for our Wealth, our Power, our Credit, our Parts, and other ſuch advantages, wherewith for the ſerving of God, and furthering our own ſalvation we are inſtructed: *To redeem the time* is a Precept; and of all Precepts the moſt neceſſary to be obſerved, for that without redeeming (that is embracing and well employing) time we can do nothing well; no good action can be performed, no good reward can be procured by us: Well may we be adviſed to take our beſt care in husbanding it, ſeeing juſtly of all

Eph. 5. 16. Col. 4. 5.

all things it may be reckoned most pretious; its price being inestimable, and its loss irreparable; for all the World cannot purchase one Moment of it more than is allowed us, neither can it, when once gone, by any means be recovered: So much indeed as we save thereof, so much we preserve of our selves; and so far as we lose it, so far in effect we slay our selves, or deprive our selves of life; yea by mispending it we do worse than so; for a dead sleep, or a cessation from being, is not so bad as doing ill; all that while we live backward, or decline toward a state much worse than annihilation it self. Farther Πολυτελέστατον ἀνάλωμα.

5. Consider, that of all time the present is ever the best for the purpose of amending our life: It is the onely sure time, that which we have in our hands, and may call our own; whereas the past time is irrevocably gone from us; and the future may never come to us: It is absolutely (reckoning from our becoming sensible of things, and accomptable for our actions) the best, as to our capacity of improving it; *Omnia quæ ventura sunt in incerto jacent; protinus vive.* Sen. *de vit. brev.* 9.

Optima quæque dies miseris mortalibus ævi
Prima fugit. Verg. *Georg.* 3.

Our best days do first pass away, was truly said; the nearer to its source our life is, the purer it is from stain, the freer from clogs, the more susceptive of good impressions, the more vivid and brisk in its activity; the farther we goon, especially in a bad course, the nearer we verge to the dregs of our life; the more dry, the more stiff, the more sluggish we grow, delay therefore doth ever steal away the flower of our age, leaving us the bran and refuse thereof. Again,

6. If at any time we do reflect upon the time that hath already slipped away unprofitably from us, it will seem more than enough, and (if we consider well) it will be grievous to us to lose more; the morrow will seem too late to commence a good life; ἀρκετὸς ὁ παρελήλυθὼς χρόνος, *The time past of our life* (saith *St. Peter*) *may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles*, or to have continued in ill courses; more indeed it might than suffice; it should be abundantly too much to have imbezilled so large a portion of our pretious and irreparable time: After we have slept in neglect of our duty, ὥρα ἤδη ὑμᾶς ἐξ ὕπνου ἐγερθῆναι, *it is* (as St. *Paul* saith) *now high time to awake*, unto a vigilant observance thereof: this we shall the rather doe, if we consider, that *Sera nimis vita est crastina, vive hodie.* Matt. 1. 16. 1 Pet. 4. 3. Rom. 13. 11.

7. For ill living now we shall come hereafter to be sorry, if not with a wholsome contrition, yet with a painful regret; we shall certainly one day repent, if not of our sin, yet of our sinning; if not so as to correct for the future, yet so as to condemn our selves for what is past: the consideration of our having sacrilegiously robb'd our Maker of the time due to his service; of our having injuriously defrauded our souls of the opportunities granted to secure their welfare; of our having profusely cast away our most pretious hours of life upon vanity and folly, will sometime twitch us sorely. There is no man who doth not with a sorrowful eye review an ill-past life; who would not gladly recal his mispent time; *O mihi præteritos!* O that God would restore my past years to me, is every such Man's Prayer, although it never was heard, never could be granted unto any. And what is more inconsistent with wisdom, than to engage our selves upon making such ineffectual and fruitless wishes? What is more disagreeable to reason, than to do that, for which we must be forced to confess and call our selves fools? What Man of sense for a flash of transitory Pleasure, for a puff of vain repute, for a few scraps of dirty Pelf would plunge himself into such a gulf of anguish?

8. On

Ille sapit quisquis, Posthume, vixit heri. Mart. 5. 60.

Ampliat ætatis spatium sibi vir bonus, hoc est,
Vivere bis, vita posse priore frui. Mart. 10. 23.

8. On the contrary, if laying hold on occasion, we set our selves to do well, reflexion thereon will yield great satisfaction and pleasure to us; we shall be glad that we have done, and that our task is over; we shall *enjoy our former life*; Our time which is so past will not yet be lost unto us; but rather it will be most securely ours, laid up beyond the reach of danger, in the repository of a good conscience.

Rom. 2.

9. Again, all our time of continuance in sin we do *treasure up wrath*, or accumulate guilt; and the larger our guilt is, the forer must be our repentance; the more bitter the sorrow, the more low the humbling, the more earnest the deprecation requisite to obtain pardon: the broader and deeper the stain is, the more washing is needful to get it out; if we sin much and long, we must grieve answerably, or we shall be no fit objects of mercy.

Quam magna deliquimus, tam granditer desleamus, &c. Cypr. *de Lapsi. Or.* 5.

10. And whenever the sin is pardoned, yet indelible marks and monuments thereof will abide. We shall eternally be obliged to cry *peccavi*; although the punishment may be remitted, the desert of it cannot be removed; a scar from it will stick in our flesh; which ever will deform us; a tang of it will stay in our memory, which always will be disgustful; we shall never reflect on our miscarriages without some confusion and horrour; incessantly we shall be liable to that question of St. *Paul, What fruit had ye of those things, whereof ye are now ashamed?* If therefore we could reasonable presume, yea if we could certainly foresee, that we should hereafter in time repent, yet it were unadvisable to persist in sin, seeing it being once committed, can never be reversed; never expunged from the registers of time, never dashed out from the tables of our mind and memory; but will perpetually rest as matter of doleful consideration, and of tragical story to us. *Then shalt thou remember thy ways, and be ashamed. That thou mayst remember and be confounded, and never open thy mouth any more because of thy shame, when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God: Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loath your selves in your own sight, for your iniquities, and for your abominations.*

Pœna potest demi, culpa perennis erit. Ovid.

Ἡ συγχώρησις ἐμένετο τῷ ἁμαρτημάτων τῷ θεῷ, καὶ ἡ μνήμη τῆς συγχωρηθέντων ἁμαρτημάτων ἐκ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἐζήτει τῷ Παύλῳ. Chrys. *Tom.* 8. *p.* 97.

Rom. 6. 21.

Ezek. 16. 61.

Ezek. 16. 63.

Ezek. 36. 31. 20. 43.

11. Again, so much time as we spend in disobedience, so much of reward we do forfeit; for commensurate to our works shall our rewards be; the fewer our good works are in the course of our present life, the smaller shall be the measures of joy, of glory, of felicity dispensed to us hereafter; the later consequently we repent, the less we shall be happy: *One star* (saith the *Apostle*) *differeth from another in glory*; and of all stars, those in the celestial sphere will shine brightest, who did soon rise here, and continued long by the lustre of their good works to glorify their heavenly Father; for *the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.* While therefore we let our interest lie dead by lingring, or run behind by sinful practice, we are very bad husbands for our soul; our spiritual estate doth thereby hugely suffer; every minute contracteth a damage that runneth through millions of ages, and which therefore will amount to an immense sum: And who for all the pleasures here would forego one degree of blissful joy hereafter; who for all earthly splendours would exchange one spark of celestial glory; who for all the treasures below would let slip one gem out of his heavenly crown?

1 Cor. 15. 41.

Prov. 4. 18.

12. Far-

12. Farther, let us conſider that whatever our age, whatever our condition or caſe be, the advice not to procraſtinate our obedience is very ſutable and uſeful.

Art thou young? then it is moſt proper to enter upon living well. For when we ſet out, we ſhould be put in a right way; when we begin to be Men, we ſhould begin to uſe our reaſon well; life and vertue ſhould be of the ſame ſtanding; what is more ugly than a Child, that hath learnt little, having learnt to do ill; than naughtineſs ſpringing up in that ſtate of innocence? the foundation of good life is to be laid in that age, upon which the reſt of our life is built; for this is the manner of our proceeding; the preſent dependeth always upon what is paſt; our practice is guided by notions that we had ſucked in, is ſwayed by inclinations that we got before; whence uſually our firſt judgments of things, and our firſt propenſions do ſtretch their influence upon the whole future life. *Train up a child in the way he ſhould go, and when he is old he will not depart from it,* ſaith the *Wiſe-man.* *Sub pædagogo ceperis licet, ſerum eſt.* Matt. 8. 44. Prov. 22. 6.

That ageas it is moſt liable to be corrupted by vice, ſo it is moſt capable of being imbued with vertue; then nature is ſoft and pliable, ſo as eaſily to be moulded into any ſhape, ready to admit any ſtamp impreſſed thereon; then the mind is a pure table, in which good principles may be fairly engraven, without raſing out any former ill prejudices; then the heart being a ſoil free of weeds, the ſeeds of goodneſs being caſt therein will undiſturbedly grow and thrive; then the complexion being tender will eaſily be ſet into a right poſture; Our ſoul is then a Veſſel empty and ſweet; good liquor therefore may be inſtilled, which will both fit it, and ſeaſon it with a durable tincture; the extream curioſity and huge credulity of that age, as they greedily will ſwallow any, ſo will they admit good inſtruction. If we do then imbibe falſe conceptions, or have bad impreſſions made on our minds, it will be hard afterwards to expel, or to correct them. Paſſion is then very fluid and moveable, but not being impetuouſly determined any way, may eaſily be derived into the right chanel. Then the quickneſs of our wit, the briskneſs of our fancy, the freſhneſs of our memory, the vigour of our affections, the luſty and active mettle of our ſpirits being applied to vertuous ſtudies and endeavours, will produce moſt noble fruits; the beauty of which will adorn us, the ſweetneſs will pleaſe us, ſo as to leave on our minds a perpetual reliſh and ſatisfaction in goodneſs. Then being leſs encombred with the cares, leſs intangled in the perplexities, leſs expoſed to the temptations of the World and ſecular affairs, we can more eaſily ſet forth, we may proceed more expeditely in good courſes. Then being void of that ſtinging remorſe, which doth adhere to reflexions upon paſt follies, and miſpent time, with more courage and alacrity we may proſecute good undertakings; then beginning ſo ſoon to embrace vertue, we ſhall have advantage with more leiſure, and more eaſe to poliſh and perfect it through our enſuing courſe of life; ſetting out ſo early, in the very morning of our age, without much ſtraining, marching on ſoftly and fairly, we may go through our journey to happineſs.

Natura tenaciſſimi ſumus eorum quæ rudibus annis percepimus, &c. Quint. l. 1. *Difficulter eradicatur quod rudes animi perbiberunt.* Hier. *ad* Lætam.

Ut corpora ad quoſdam membrorum flexus formari niſi tenera non poſſunt, ſic animos ad plerasque duritias robur ipſum facit. Quint *ib.*

Quo ſemel eſt imbuta recens ſervabit odorem Teſta diu.

Hor. *Ep.* 1. 2.

Ἥδη γὰρ ὅτι χαλεπὸν ἡ νεότης, ὅτι δὲ εἰκῇ ὃν ὅτι δεξαπάτητον, ὅτι δὲ ὀλίγον, ἡ ἀφοδεύτερα δεῖ χαλινοῦ. Chryſ. *ad Pſ.* 4.

Our actions then are the firſt fruits of our life, which therefore are fit and due ſacrifices to our Maker; which if we do withdraw, we ſhall have

have nothing left ſo worthy or acceptable to preſent unto him; will it be ſeemly to offer him the dregs and refuſe of our age; ſhall we not be aſhamed to bring a crazy temper of body and ſoul, dry bones and decayed ſenſes; a dull fancy, a treacherous memory, a ſluggiſh ſpirit before him? ſhall we then when we are fit for little begin to undertake his ſervice? with our decrepit limbs and waſted ſtrength ſhall we ſet our ſelves to *run the ways of his commandments*?

As it is uncomfortable to think of being parſimonious, when our ſtock is almoſt gone; ſo it is to become thrifty of our life, when it comes near the bottom. Δεινὸν ἐπὶ πυθμένι φειδώ.

If we keep innocency, ſpend our youth well, it will yeild unexpreſſible comfort to us; it will ſave us much ſorrow, it will prevent many
Pſal. 37. 38. inconveniences to us: If we have ſpent it ill, it will yeild us great diſpleaſure, it will coſt us much pains; we ſhall be forced ſadly to bewail our folly and vanity therein; it will be bitter to ſee, that we muſt unlive our former life, and undoe all we have done; that we muſt renounce the Principles we have avowed, we muſt root out the habits we have planted, we muſt forſake the Paths which we have beaten and ſo long trode in, if ever we will be happy; it will be grievous to us, when we come
Pſal. 25. 7. with penitential regret to deprecate, *Lord remember not the ſins of my youth*;
Job 20. 11. 13. 26. we ſhall feel ſore pain, when *our bones are full of the ſins of our youth*, and we come *to poſſeſs the iniquities thereof*.

Lam. 3. 27. *It is* therefore *good* (as the *Prophet* ſaith) *that a man bear the yoke in his youth*, when his neck is tender; it is excellent advice which the *Preacher* giveth, *Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, and the years draw nigh, when thou ſhalt ſay I have no pleaſure in them.*

Fingit equum tenera docilem cervice Magiſter
Ire viam, quam monſtrat eques.—Hor. Ep. 12. 1.

Eth. 1. 3. *Ariſtotle* ſaith, that young men are not *fit hearers of moral doctrine*, becauſe (ſaith he) *they are unexperienced in affairs of life*; and *becauſe they are apt to follow their paſſions, which indiſpoſe to hear with fruit or profit*; but his concluſion is falſe, and his reaſons may be well turned againſt him; for becauſe young men want experience, therefore is there no bad prejudice, no contrary habit to obſtruct their embracing ſound doctrine; becauſe their paſſions are vehement and ſtrong, therefore being rightly ordered, and ſet upon good objects they with great force will carry them to vertuous practice; that indeed is the beſt time to regulate and tame Paſſions; as Horſes muſt be broken when they are Colts, Dogs muſt be made when they are Whelps, elſe they will never be brought to any thing. The *Poet* therefore adviſed better than the *Philoſopher*

Τῆς πολιτικῆς οὐκ ἔστιν οἰκείως ἀκροατὴς ὁ νέος· ἄπειρος γὰρ τῶν κατὰ τὸν βίον πραξέων· ἐπὶ τοῖς πάθεσιν ἀκολουθητικὸς ἂν ματαίως ἀκούσεται καὶ ἀνωφελῶς.

Hor. Ep. 1. 2. —*nunc adhibe puro*
Pectore verba puer, nunc te melioribus offer;

Eph. 6. 4. and St. *Paul* plainly doth confute him, when he biddeth Parents to *educate their children in the nurture and admonition of the* Lord; when he chargeth
Tit. 2. 6. *Titus*, that he *exhort young men to be ſober-minded*; when he commendeth
2 Tim. 2. 22. 2 Tim. 3. 15. *Timothy*, for that he had ἀπὸ βρέφους *from his infancy known the Holy Scriptures*; So doth the *Pſalmiſt*, when he ſaith, *Wherewith ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? by taking heed according to thy word.* And *Solomon*, when he de-
Prov. 1. 4. clareth that his moral Precepts did ſerve *to give ſubtilty to the ſimple, to the*
Prov. 22. 6, 15. *young man knowledge and diſcretion*; when he biddeth us to *train up a child in the way he ſhould go*; St. *Peter* doth intimate the ſame, when he biddeth
1 Pet. 2. 2. us, *as new born babes to deſire the ſincere milk of the word*; and our Saviour

when

when he said, *Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of God*; that is, the more Simplicity and Innocence a Man is endued with, the more apt he is to embrace and comply with the Evangelical Doctrine: *Aristotle* therefore was out, when he would exclude young Men from the Schools of Vertue. It is observable that he contradicteth himself; for Οὐ μικρὸν διαφέρει τὸ ἔτως ἢ ἔτως, οὐδὲ ὃν νέων ἐνίζεσθαι, ἀλλὰ πάμπολυ, μᾶλλον δὲ τὸ πᾶν. *It is* (saith he) *of no small concernment to be from youth accustomed thus or thus; yea, 'tis very much, or rather all*: And how shall a young Man be accustomed to do well, if he be not allowed to learn what is to be done? Luk. 18. 16. Eth. 2. 2.

Again, are we old? it is then high time to begin; we have then less time to spare from our most important Business; we stand then in most imminent Danger, upon the Edge of Perdition, and should therefore be nimble to skip out thence; our Forces being diminished, our Quickness and Industry should be encreased; the later we set out, the more speed it behoveth us to make. If we stay, we shall grow continually more indisposed and unfit to amend; it will be too late, when utter Decrepitness and Dotage have seized upon us; and our Body doth survive our Soul. When so much of our Time, of our Parts, of our Strength are fled, we should husband the rest to best advantage, and make the best satisfaction we can unto God, and unto our Souls with the Remainder.

Quod facere solent qui serius exeunt—calcar adamus. Sen. *Ep.* 68. 76. 19.

Apoc. 3. 2. Στήριζον τὰ λοιπὰ, ἃ μέλλει ἀποθανεῖν

——*non omnia grandior ætas*
Quæ fugiamus habet—— Ovid.

This Age hath some peculiar Advantages, which we should embrace; the Froth of Humours is then boiled out, the Fervours of Lust are slacked, Passions are allayed, Appetites are flatted; so that then Inclinations to sin are not so violent, nor doth the Enjoyment thereof so much gratifie.

Ἡ μὲν γὰρ νέότης πολλάγει περισείσε μανιωδῶς, κυμάτων ἀγρίων, καὶ πνεύματων χείμωνι παντοίων· ἡ δὲ πολιὰ ὥσπερ εἰς λιμένα ἀκύμαντον τὰς ἡμῶν ἐκάστων ὁρμίζει ψυχὰς, πιέζουσα τῇ ὥρᾳ τὸ ἡλίκιας ἐντεῦθεν ἀσφάλειαν. Chrys. *Tom* 6. *Orat.* 38.

Long Experience then hath discovered the Vanity of all Worldly things, and the Mischief of ill Courses; so that we can then hardly admire any thing, or be fond of enjoying what we have found unprofitable or hurtful.

Age is excused from Compliance with the Fashions, and thence much exempted from Temptations of the World; so that it may be good without Obstacle or Opposition.

It is proper thereto to be grave and serious, and consequently to be vertuous; for Gravity without Vertue and Seriousness about vain things are ridiculous.

Nothing doth so adorn this Age as Goodness, nothing doth so disgrace it as Wickedness; *The hoary head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness*; but it is a Mark of Infamy, if it be observed proceeding in a course of Iniquity, it signifieth that Experience hath not improved it, it argueth incorrigible Folly, or rather incurable Madness therein. Prov. 16. 31.

There is indeed no Care, no Employment proper for old Men but to prepare for their Dissolution; to be bidding adieu to the World with its vain Pomps and mischievous Pleasures; to be packing up their Goods, to be casting their Accompts, to be fitting themselves to abide in that State into which they are tumbling, to appear at that Bar, before which suddenly Nature will set them. As a Ship which hath long been tost'd and weather-beaten, which is shattered in its Timber, and hath lost much of its Rigging, should do nothing in that case but work toward the Port, where to find its Safety and Ease; so should a Man, who having past many storms and Agitations of the World is grievously battered and torn with

In freto vitiamus, moriamur in portu. Sen. *Ep.* 19.

Age, strive only to die well, to get safe into the Harbour of eternal Rest.

In fine, *Epicurus* himself said well, that *no man is either immature or over-ripe in regard to his Soul's health*; we can never set upon it too soon, we should never think it too late to begin; to live well is always the best thing we can do, and therefore we should at any time endeavour it; there are common Reasons for all Ages, there are special Reasons for each Age, which most strongly and most clearly do urge it; it is most seasonable for young Men, it is most necessary for old Men, it is most advisable for all Men *.

Οὔτ' ἄωρος εἷς ἔστιν, οὔτε πάρωρος πρὸς τὸ ζῆν ψυχῇ γεγάνων. Epic. ad Monœc.

* *Quare juventus, imo omnis ætas (neque enim rectæ voluntati serum est tempus ullum) totis mentibus huc tendamus, in hoc elaboremus; forsan & consummare contingat.* Quint. 12. 1.

Again, be our Condition what it will, this Advice is reasonable: Are we in Health? we owe God Thanks for that excellent Gift, and the best Gratitude we can express is the improving it for his Service and to our own Good; we should not lose the Advantage of a Season so fit for our Obedience and Repentance; while the Forces of our Body and Mind are entire, while we are not discomposed by Pain or Faintness, we should strive to dispatch this needful Work, for which Infirmity may disable us.

Are we sick? it is then time to consider our Frailty, and the best we can to obviate the worst Consequences thereof: It is then very fit, when we do feel the sad Effects of Sin, to endeavour the Prevention of worse Mischiefs that may follow; it is seasonable, when we lie under God's correcting Hand to submit unto him, to deprecate his Wrath, to seek Reconciliation with him by all kinds of Obedience suitable to that State; with serious Resolutions to amend hereafter, if it shall please God to restore us; it is most adviseable, when we are in the Borders of Death, to provide for that State which lieth just beyond it.

Are we rich and prosperous? 'tis expedient then presently to amend, lest our Wealth do soon corrupt us with Pride, with Luxury, with Sloth, with Stupidity; lest our Prosperity becometh an inevitable Snare, an irrecoverable Bane unto us. Prov. 1. 32.

Are we poor or afflicted? 'tis then also needful to repent quickly; that we may have a comfortable Support for our Soul, and a certain Succour in our Distress; that we may get a Treasure to supply our Want, a joy to drown our Sorrow; a Buoy to keep our Hearts from sinking into Desperation and Disconsolateness. This Condition is a Medicine, which God administreth for our Soul's Health; if it do not work presently so as to do us good, it will prove both grievous and hurtful to us.

13. Lastly, we may consider, that abating all the rueful Consequences of abiding in Sin, abstracting from the desperate Hazards it exposeth us to in regard to the future Life, it is most reasonable to abandon it, betaking ourselves to a vertuous Course of Practice. For Vertue in it self is far more eligible than Vice, to keep God's Commandments hath much greater Convenience than to break them; the Life of a good Man in all considerable respects is highly to be preferred above the Life of a bad Man: for what is Vertue, but a way of living that advanceth our Nature into a Similitude with God's most excellent and happy Nature; that promoteth our true Benefit and Interest; that procureth and preserveth Health, Ease, Safety, Liberty, Peace, comfortable Subsistence, fair Repute, Tranquillity of Mind, all kinds of Convenience to us? to what Ends did our most benign and most wise Maker

Est virtus nihil aliud quàm in se perfecta, & ad summum perducta natura, Cic. de Leg. 1.

ker deſign and ſuit his Law, but to the furthering our good, and ſecuring us from Miſchief, as not only himſelf hath declared, but Reaſon ſheweth, and Experience doth atteſt? What is Vice but a ſort of practice which debaſeth and diſparageth us, which plungeth us into grievous Evils, which bringeth Diſtemper of Body and Soul, Diſtreſs of Fortune, Danger, Trouble, Reproach, Regret, and numberleſs Inconveniencies upon us; which for no other reaſon, than becauſe it ſo hurteth and grieveth us, was by our loving Creator interdicted to us? Vertue is moſt noble and worthy, moſt lovely, moſt profitable, moſt pleaſant, moſt creditable; Vice is moſt ſordid and baſe, ugly, hurtful, bitter, diſgraceful in its ſelf, and in its conſequences. If we compare them together, we ſhall find, that Vertue doth always preſerve our Health, but Vice commonly doth impair it; that Vertue improveth our Eſtate, Vice waſteth it; that Vertue adorneth our Reputation, Vice blemiſheth it; that Vertue ſtrengtheneth our parts, Vice weakeneth them; that Vertue maintaineth our Freedom, Vice enſlaveth us; that Vertue keepeth our Mind in Order and Peace, Vice diſcompoſeth and diſquieteth it; Vertue breedeth Satisfaction and Joy, Vice ſpawneth Diſpleaſure and Anguiſh of Conſcience: To enter therefore into a vertuous courſe of Life, what is it but to embrace Happineſs; to continue in vicious Practice, what is it but to ſtick in Miſery?

Deut. 10. 13. Mic. 6. 8. Neh. 9. 13. Rom. 7. 12. Pſal. 19. 9. 119. 107.

By entring into good Life, we enter into the Favour and Friendſhip of God, engaging his infinite Power and Wiſdom for our Protection, our Succour, our Direction and Guidance; enjoying the ſweet Effluxes of his Mercy and Bounty; we therewith become Friends to the holy Angels, and bleſſed Saints; to all good Men, being united in a holy and happy Conſortſhip of Judgment, of Charity, of Hope, of Devotion with them; we become Friends to all the World, which we oblige by good Wiſhes, and good Deeds, and by the Influence of good Example: we become Friends to our ſelves, whom we thereby enrich and adorn with the beſt Goods; whom we gratifie and pleaſe with the choiceſt Delights: but perſiſting in ſin, we continue to affront, wrong, and diſpleaſe our Maker, to be diſloyall towards our Sovereign Lord; to be ingrateful towards our chief Benefactour, to diſoblige the beſt Friend we have, to provoke a moſt juſt and ſevere Judge, to cope with Omnipotency, to contradict Infallibility, to enrage the greateſt Patience, to abuſe immenſe Goodneſs: We thereby become Enemies to all the World, to God, whom we injure and diſhonour; to the Friends of God, whom we deſert and oppoſe; to the Creatures, which we abuſe to our Pride, Luſt and Vanity; to our Neighbours, whom we corrupt or ſeduce; to our ſelves, whom we bereave of the beſt Goods, and betray to the worſt Evils.

Beginning to live ſoberly, we begin to live like Men, following the Conduct of Reaſon; beginning to live in Charity, we commence the Life of Angels, enjoying in our ſelves moſt ſweet Content, and procuring great Benefit to others; but going on in ſinful Voluptuouſneſs, we proceed to live like Beaſts, wholly guided by Senſe, and ſwayed by Appetite; being pertinacious in Malice, we continue to be like Fiends, working torment in our ſelves, and Miſchief to our Neighbours.

Embracing Vertue we become wiſe and ſober Men, worthy and honourable, beneficial and uſeful to the World; but continuing in Vice, we continue to be fooliſh and vain, to be vile and deſpicable, to be worthleſs and uſeleſs.

By our Delay to amend, what do we gain? what, but a little flaſhy and tranſient Pleaſure inſtead of a ſolid and durable Peace; but a little counterfeit Profit inſtead of real Wealth; but a little Smoak of deceitful

Opinion instead of unquestionable sound Honour; Shadows of imaginary Goods instead of those which are most substantial and true, a good Mind, the Love of God, the assured Welfare of our Souls. But this Field of Discourse is too spacious; I shall only therefore for Conclusion say, that speedily applying our selves to Obedience, and breaking off our Sins by Repentance, is in effect nothing else but from a present Hell in Trouble, and the Danger of a final Hell in Torment to be translated into a double Heaven; one of joyful Tranquillity here, another of blissful Rest hereafter; unto the which Almighty God in his Mercy bring us all, through Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom for ever be all Glory and Praise. *Amen.*

1 Thes. 5. 23. *The very God of peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.* Amen.

SERMON XVIII.

Of Industry in general.

ECCLES. IX. 10.

Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.

Rom. 12. 11. IN St. *Paul's* Epistle to the *Romans*, among divers excellent Rules of Life, prescribed by that great Master, this is one, Τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροί. *Be not slothful in business*, or to Business; And in the 2d Epistle to the *Corinthians*, among other principal Vertues, or worthy Accomplishments, for *abounding* wherein the *Apostle* commendeth those Christians, he rank-

Πᾶσα σπουδή. 2 Cor. 8. 7. eth *all diligence*, or industry exercised in all Affairs and Duties incumbent on them: this is that Vertue, the Practice whereof in this moral Precept or Advice the *Royal Preacher* doth recommend unto us; being indeed an eminent Vertue, of very general Use, and powerful Influence upon the Management of all our Affairs, or in the Conduct of our whole Life.

Industry, I say, in general, touching all Matters incident, which *our hand findeth to do*, that is, which Dispensation of Providence doth offer, or which choice of Reason embraceth, for employing our active Powers of Soul and Body, the *Wise-man* doth recommend; and to pressing the Observance of his Advice (waving all curious Remarks either *Critical* or *Logical* upon the Words) I shall presently apply my Discourse, proposing divers Considerations apt to excite us thereto; only first, let me briefly describe it, for our better Apprehension of its true Notion and Nature.

By Industry we understand a serious and steady Application of Mind, joined with a vigorous Exercise of our active Faculties in prosecution of any reasonable, honest, useful Design, in order to the Accomplishment, or Attainment of some considerable Good; as for instance, a *Merchant* is industrious

dustrious who continueth intent and active in driving on his Trade for acquiring Wealth; a *Soldier* is industrious, who is watchful for occasion, and earnest in Action towards obtaining the Victory; and a *Scholar* is industrious, who doth assiduously bend his Mind to study for getting Knowledge.

Industry doth not consist merely in Action; for that is incessant in all Persons, our Mind being a restless thing never abiding in a total Cessation from Thought or from Design (being like a Ship in the Sea, if not steered to some good purpose by reason, yet tossed by the Waves of Fancy, or driven by the Winds of Temptation somewhither.) But the direction of our Mind to some good End, without roving or flinching, in a streight and steady course, drawing after it our active Powers in execution thereof, doth constitute Industry; the which therefore usually is attended with Labour and Pain; for our Mind (which naturally doth affect Variety and Liberty, being apt to loath familiar Objects, and to be weary of any Constraint) is not easily kept in a constant Attention to the same thing; And the Spirits imployed in Thought are prone to flutter and fly away, so that it is hard to fix them: And the corporeal Instruments of Action being strained to a high pitch, or detained in a Tone will soon feel a Lassitude, somewhat offensive to Nature; whence Labour or Pain is commonly reckoned an Ingredient of Industry; and Laboriousness is a Name signifying it; upon which Account this Vertue (as involving Labour) deserveth a peculiar Commendation; it being then most laudable to follow the Dictates of Reason, when so doing is attended with Difficulty and Trouble.

Ἡ δὲ ψυχὴ φύσιν ἔχουσα τὴν κινεῖσθαι διαπαντὸς, ἐκ ἀνέχεται ἠρεμεῖν, ἔμπεφυκὸς τὸ ζῶον τοῦτο ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεὸς, &c. Chrys. in Act. Or. 35.

Such in general I conceive to be the nature of Industry; to the practice whereof the following Considerations may induce.

1. We may consider that Industry doth befit the Constitution and Frame of our Nature; all the Faculties of our Soul, and Organs of our Body being adapted in a Congruity and Tendency thereto: Our Hands are suited for Work, our Feet for Travel, our Senses to watch for occasion of pursuing Good, and eschewing Evil, our Reason to plod and contrive Ways of imploying the other Parts and Powers; all these, I say, are formed for Action; and that not in a loose and gadding way; or in a slack and remiss degree, but in regard to determinate Ends, with Vigour requisite to attain them; and especially our Appetites do prompt to Industry, as inclining to things not attainable without it; according to that Aphorism of the *Wiseman*, Ἐπιθυμίαι ὀκνηρὸν ἀποκτείνουσιν —— *The Desire of the slothful killeth him, for his hands refuse to labour*; that is, he is apt to desire things which he cannot attain without Pains; and not enduring them he for want thereof doth feel a deadly Smart and Anguish: Wherefore in not being industrious we defeat the Intent of our Maker; we pervert his Work and Gifts; we forfeit the Use and Benefit of our Faculties; we are bad Husbands of Natures Stock. Prov. 21. 25. 13. 4.

2. In consequence hereto Industry doth preserve and perfect our Nature; keeping it in good tune and temper; improving and advancing it toward its best state. The Labour of our Mind in attentive Meditation and Study doth render it capable and patient of thinking upon any Object or Occasion; doth polish and refine it by use, doth enlarge it by Accession of Habits; doth quicken and rowse our Spirits, dilating and diffusing them into their proper Chanels: The very Labour of our Body doth keep the Organs of Action sound and clean, discussing Fogs and superfluous Humours, opening Passages, distributing Nourishment, exciting vital Heat: Barring the use of it, no good Constitution of Soul or Body can subsist; but a foul Rust,

Rust, a dull Numbness, a restless Listlessness, a heavy Unweildiness must seize on us; our Spirits will be stifled and choaked, our Hearts will grow faint and languid, our Parts will flag and decay; the Vigour of our Mind, and the Health of our Body will be much impaired.

Πάντα γὰρ ἡ ἀργία ἐλαττοῖ, καὶ τὰ μέλη σώματος αὐτὰ, &c. Chryf. in Act. Orat. 35.

Πρῶτον μὲν γὰρ τοιάτε τὸ σῶμα ἔκλυτον, &c. Ibid.

It is with us as with other things in nature, which by Motion are preserved in their native Purity and Perfection, in their Sweetness, in their Lustre, Rest corrupting, debasing and defiling them; If the Water runneth it holdeth clear, sweet and fresh; but Stagnation turneth it into a noisome Puddle: If the Air be fanned by Winds, it is pure and wholsome, but from being shut up it groweth thick and putrid; If Metals be employed, they abide smooth and splendid; but lay them up, and they soon contract Rust; If the Earth be belaboured with Culture, it yieldeth Corn; but lying neglected, it will be overgrown with Brakes and Thistles; and the better its Soil is the ranker Weeds it will produce; all nature is upheld in its Being, Order and State by constant Agitation; every Creature is incessantly employed in Action conformable to its designed End and Use; In like manner the Preservation and Improvement of our Faculties depends on their constant Exercise.

Ποῖον ἵππον χρήσιμον, ὁ ἠρεμῶν, ἢ ὁ ἐργαζόμενος; πότε ναῦς, ἢ πλέουσα ἢ ἡ ἀργοῦσα; ποῖον ὕδωρ, τὸ ἑστὸς, ἢ τὸ ἐσῶς; ποῖος ἀὴρ, ὁ κεκινημένος, ἢ ὁ ἐργαζόμενος, &c. Chryf. ibid.

Neglectis urenda filix innascitur agris. Hor. Ser. 1. 3.

Plut. περὶ παιδ. p. 3.

3. As we naturally were composed, so by Divine Appointment we were originally designed for Industry; God did not intend that Man should live idly, even in his best State; or should enjoy Happiness without taking pains; but did provide Work enough even in Paradise it self; for *The Lord God* (saith the *Text*) *took man, and put him into the Garden of* Eden *to dress it, and to keep it*, so that had we continu'd happy, we must have been ever busie, by our Industry sustaining our Life, and securing our Pleasure; otherwise Weeds might have overgrown Paradise, and that of *Solomon* might have been applicable to *Adam*, *I went by the field of the slothful, and by the vineyard of the man void of understanding, and loe it was all grown over with thorns, and nettles had covered the face thereof.*

Gen. 2. 15.

Prov. 24. 30, 31.

4. By our Transgression and Fall the necessity of Industry (together with a Difficulty of obtaining Good, and avoiding Evil) was encreased to us; being ordained both as a just Punishment for our Offences, and as an Expedient Remedy of our Needs: For thereupon *the Ground was cursed to bring forth thorns and thistles to us*; and it was our Doom pronounced by God's own Mouth, *In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return unto the ground*; so that now Labour is fatally natural to us; now *Man* (as *Job* saith) *is born to labour as the sparks fly upward* (or, *as the Vultur's chickens soar aloft*) according to the *Greek* Interpreters.)

Gen. 3. 17—

Job 5. 7. Ἀλλ' ἀνθρώπῳ πόνῳ γεγάασι νεοσσοὶ

ὑψοῦ πέτονται. LXX. Interp. *Now* great Travel (*as the Son of* Sirach *saith*) is created for every Man; (ἀσχολία μεγάλη ἔκτισται παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ, &c. Ecclus 40. 1.) and an heavy Yoke is upon the Sons of Adam, &c.

5. Accordingly our Condition and Circumstances in the World are so ordered, as to require Industry; so that without it we cannot support our Life in any Comfort or Convenience; whence St. *Paul*'s Charge upon the *Thessalonians*, that *If any one would not work, neither should he eat*, is in a manner a general Law imposed on Mankind by the Exigency of our State, according to that of *Solomon*; *The idle soul shall suffer hunger*, and, *The sluggard who will not plow by reason of the cold, shall beg in harvest, and have nothing.*

2 Thes. 3. 10.

Prov. 19. 15.

Prov. 20. 4.

Of all our many Necessities, none can be supplied without Pains, wherein all Men are obliged to bear a share; Every Man is to work for his Food, for his Apparel, for all his Accommodations, either immediately and directly,

rectly, or by Commutation and Equivalence; for the *Gentleman* himself cannot (at least worthily and inculpably) obtain them otherwise, than by redeeming them from the Plowman, and the Artificer by Compensation of other Cares and Pains conducible to publick Good.

The wise *Poet* did observe well, when he said,

——*Pater ipse colendi*
Haud facilem esse viam voluit. Virg. Geor. 1.

——*curis acuens mortalia corda;*
Nec torpere gravi passus sua regna veterno. (Virg. *Ibid.*

and St. *Chrysostome* doth propose the same Observation, that God to whet our Mind, and keep us from moping, would not that we should easily come by the Fruits of the Earth, without employing much Art and many Pains; in order thereto there must be Skill used in observing Seasons, and preparing the Ground; there must be Labour spent in manuring, in delving and plowing, in sowing, in weeding, in fencing it; there must be Pains taken in reaping, in gathering, in laying up, in threshing, and dressing the Fruit e'er we can enjoy it: So much Industry is needful to get Bread; and if we list to fare more daintily, we must either hunt for it, using Craft and Toil to catch it out of the Woods, the Water, the Air; or we must carefully wait on those Creatures, of which we would serve our selves, feeding them that they may feed us; such Industry is required to preserve Mankind from starving. And to guard it from other Inconveniences, Mischiefs and Dangers surrounding us, it is no less requisite: for to shelter us from Impressions of Weather, we must spin, we must weave, we must build; and in order thereto we must scrape into the Bowels of the Earth to find our Tools, we must sweat at the Anvil to forge them for our Use; we must frame Arms to defend our Safety, and our Store from the Assaults of wild Beasts, or of more dangerous Neighbours, wild Men. To furnish Accommodations for our Curiosity and Pleasure, or to provide for the Convenience and Ornament of our Life, still greater measures of Industry are demanded; to satisfie those Intents, a thousand Contrivances of Art, a thousand ways of Trade and Business do serve, without which they are not attainable. In whatever Condition any Man is in what State soever he be placed, whatsoever Calling or way of Life he doth embrace, some peculiar Business is thence imposed on him, which he cannot with any Advantage or good Success, with any Grace, with any Comfort to himself, or Satisfaction to others, manage without competent Industry; nothing will go on of it self without our Care to direct it, and our Pains to hold it, and forward it in the right Course: All which things shew, that Divine Wisdom did intend that we should live in the Exercise of Industry, or not well without it; having so many Needs to be supplied, so many Desires to be appeased thereby; being exposed to so many Troubles and Difficulties, from which we cannot extricate our selves without it. But farther yet,

Διὰ τοῦτο εἰς ἀνάγκην κατέστησεν ἐργασίας ὁ Θεὸς, &c. Chrysost. *in* Act. *Hom.* 35.

6. Let us consider that Industry hath annexed thereto, by Divine Appointment and Promise, the fairest Fruits, and the richest Rewards: All good things (being either such in themselves, or made such by Humane Esteem) are the Fruits of Industry; ordered to sprout from it, under the Protection and Influence of God's Blessing, which commonly doth attend it.

All good things indeed are the Gift of God, and freely dispensed by his Hand; but he doth not give them absolutely without Condition, nor miraculously without Concurrence of ordinary means: By supporting our active Powers, and supplying needful Aid to our Endeavours; by directing and upholding us in the course of our Action; by preventing or removing Ps. 37. 3. 23. Prov. 3. 6.

Ob-

Dii laboribus omnia vendunt.

Obstacles that might cross us; by granting that final Success which dependeth on his Pleasure, he doth confer them on us; Our Hand commonly is God's Hand by which he worketh good, and reacheth out Benefits to us; governing and wielding it as he pleaseth.

Judg. 6. 36. 7. 7. 2 Kings 5. 2. Josh. 1. 7, 9.

God indeed could not well proceed otherwise in dispensing his Favours to us; not well, I say; that is, not without subverting the Method of things which himself hath established; not without slighting and voiding his own first Bounty, or rendring the common Gifts of Nature (our Reason, our Senses, our active Powers) vain and useless; not without making us uncapable of any Praise, or any Reward, which suppose Works atchieved by our earnest Endeavour; not without depriving us of that sweetest Content, which springeth from enjoying the fruit of our Labour.

Καὶ τὸν ἔμελλες λαμβάνειν ἢ μισθὸν, εἰ τὸ πᾶν ἔμελλεν ἔσεσθαι τοῦ Θεοῦ. Chryf. *in* Eph. Orat. 2.

Hence it is, that whatever in holy Scripture is called the Gift of God, is otherwhile affirmed to be the effect of Industry; it being the useful Condition upon which, and the Instrument whereby divine Providence conveyeth good things to us: What God said to *Joshua*, doth imply the general Method of his Proceeding, *Only, be thou strong and courageous —— that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest.*

Περὶ ἐκείνα μᾶλλον ἡ ψυχὴ διάκειται ἅπερ ὧν ἔκαμε διὰ τοῦτο κόπους ἀνέμιξεν ἀρετῇ οἰκειῶσαι αὐτῇ ταῦτα βούλεται. Chryf. *in* Joh. Or. 36.

Διὰ τοῦτο τὸ πᾶν ἑαυτοῦ ἐποίησεν, ἀλλ' ἀρκεῖ περὶ ἡμῖν εἶναι ἵνα τὸ πρόσωπον λάβῃ πρόφασιν τοῦ δικαίως ἡμᾶς στεφανῶν. Chryf. Tom. Or. 28.

Josh. 1. 7.

Hence whatever we are directed to pray for, we are also exhorted to work for; declaring thereby, that we are serious in our Devotion, and do not mock God, asking that of him, which we deem not worth our Pains to acquire. It was well said of *Cato* in *Salust*, *Vigilando, agendo, consulendo, prosperè omnia cedunt, ubi socordiæ te atque ignaviæ tradideris nequicquam Deos implores, irati infestique sunt.* We are bid to pray even for our daily Bread, yet we may starve if we do not work for it; and in St. *Paul*'s Judgment deserve to do so.

Αὐτὸς πὴν δρῶν εἶπε τοὺς θεοὺς κάλει. Cato *apud* Sal. *in bello Catil.*

Τὸν χεῖρα ποιήσοντα δεῖ τὰ τύχαι ἐπικαλεῖν. Plut. *Apoph.* Lac.

Hence we are bound to thank God for all those things, for the want of which we must thank our selves, and condemn our own Sloth.

Hence, although we should cast our Care on God, and relie on his Providence, being sollicitous for nothing; yet we must not so trust him, as to tempt him, by neglecting the means which he doth offer, of relieving our selves; to be presumptuously slothful being no less blameable, than to be distrustfully careful.

Hence God in all such Cases, when we do need any good thing, is said to be our Helper and Succourer to the obtaining it; which doth imply that we must co-operate with him; and join our Forces to those, which He doth afford; so that as we can do nothing without him, so he will do nothing without us; yea, so that sometime we are said also to help God; *Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord; to the help of the Lord against the mighty.* If ever God doth perform all without Human Labour conspiring, it is only in behalf of those who are ready to do their best, but unable to do any thing, being overpowered by the insuperable Difficulty of things; But He never doth act Miracles, or controul Nature, he never doth stretch forth his Arm, or interpose special Power in favour of wilful and affected Sluggards.

Judg. 5. 13.

Psal. 72. 12. 22. 11. 2 Cor. 12. 10. 2 Chron. 14. 11. 1 Sam. 14. 6.

In fine, it is very plain both in common Experience, declaring the course of Providence, and in Holy Scripture, expressing God's Intention, that Almighty God doth hold forth all good things as the Prizes and Recompences of our vigilant Care, and painful Endeavour; as by surveying Particulars we may clearly discern. No-

Nothing is more grateful to Men, than *prosperous Success* in their Undertakings, whereby they attain their Ends, satisfie their Desires, save their Pains, and come off with Credit; this commonly is the Effect of Industry (which commandeth Fortune, to which all things submit and serve) and scarce ever is found without it; An industrious Person, who as such is not apt to attempt things impossible or unpracticable, can hardly fail of compassing his Designs, because he will apply all means requisite, and bend all his Forces thereto; striving to break through all Difficulties, and to subdue all Oppositions thwarting his Purposes: But nothing of worth or Weight, can be atchieved with half a Mind, with a faint Heart, with a lame Endeavour; Any Enterprize undertaken without Resolution, managed without Care, prosecuted without Vigour, will easily be dashed and prove abortive, ending in Disappointment, Damage, Disgrace, and Dissatisfaction: So the *Wise-man* doth assure us: *The soul* (saith he) *of the slugard desireth and hath nothing, but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat*; the one pineth away with ineffectual and fruitless Desires; the other thriveth upon Satisfaction in prosperous Success.

Τῆς ἐπιμελείας πάντα δῆλα γίγνεται. Antiph.

Quodcunque imperavit sibi animus, obtinuit, &c. Sen. *de* Ir. 2. 12.

Prov. 13. 4. 21. 25.

Plentiful Accommodations for our Sustenance and Convenience all Men will agree to be very desirable; and these are indeed the Blessings of him, who *visiteth the earth and enricheth it*; who *crowneth the year with his goodness*, and, *whose clouds drop fatness*; but they are so dispensed by Heaven, that Industry must concur therewith in deriving them to us, and Sloth will debar us of them; for *He* (saith the Holy Oracle) *that tilleth his land, shall be satisfied with bread; and the thoughts of the diligent alone tend to plenteousness*; but *The sluggard shall beg in harvest, and have nothing*; and *The idle soul shall suffer hunger.*

Prov. 15. 30.

Pf. 65. 9, 11. Gen. 21. 28.

Prov. 21. 11. Prov. 21. 5. (deest in LXX) Prov. 20. 4. Prov. 19. 15.

Wealth is that, which generally Men of all things are wont to affect and covet with most ardent Desire, as the great Store-house of their Needs and Conveniences, the sure Bulwark of their State and Dignity; the universal Instrument of compassing their Designs and Pleasures; And most evident it is, that in the natural course of things, Industry is the way to acquire it, to secure it, to improve and enlarge it; the which Course pursued innocently and modestly, God will be so far from obstructing, that he will further and bless it; for that indeed it would be a Flaw in Providence, if honest Industry, using the means it affordeth, should fail of procuring a Competency; which joined with a pious Contentedness in St. *Paul's* Computation, is *great wealth.* Wherefore although *Solomon* telleth us, that *the blessing of the Lord is that which maketh rich*; yet doth he not forget or contradict himself, when he also doth affirm, that *The hand of the diligent maketh rich*; and that *He who gathereth by labour shall encrease*; because God blesseth the Industrious, and by his own Hand, as the most proper Instrument, maketh him rich; when the Preacher said, *There is a man to whom God hath given riches and wealth*, he knew well enough what Man it was, to whom God giveth them; and that Sluggards were not fit Objects of that Liberality: For he had observed it to be their Doom to be poor and beggarly, their Nature to waste and embezil an Estate; He could assure us, that *Drowsiness shall cloath a man with rags*; He could pronound it as a certain Observation, that *He who is slothful in his work, is brother to a great waster*; or that want of Industry in our Business will no less impair our Estate, than Prodigality it self; He could more than once warn the Slothful, that if he did *sleep on*, or persist in his sluggish way, Indigency would surprize and seize on him with an insupportable Violence: (saith he) *shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man.*

1 Tim. 6. 6. Prov. 15. 16.

Prov. 10. 22. 22. 4. 2 Chron. 29. 12.

Eccles. 5. 19. Prov. 10. 4. 13, 11. Eccles. 6. 1, 2.

S. *Paul* exhorteth to *work with our hands* ἵνα μηδενὸς χρείαν ἔχητε. 1 Thes. 4. 12.

Prov. 23. 21. Prov. 18. 9. Prov. 10. 4. Prov. 6. 11. 24. 32.

Another Darling of Humane Affection (and a Jewel indeed of considerable worth and use in our Life) is *Honour*, or Reputation among Men: This also plainly, after the common Reason and Course of things, is purchased and preserved by Industry: For he that aspireth to worthy things, and assayeth laudable Designs, pursuing them steadily with serious Application of Heart, and resolute Activity will rarely fail of good Success, and consequently will not miss Honour, which ever doth crown Victory; And if he should hap to fail in his Design, yet he will not lose his Credit; for having meant well, and done his best, all will be ready to excuse, many to commend him: The very Qualities which Industry doth exercise, and the Effects which it doth produce, to beget Honour; as being ornaments of our Person and State. God himself (from whom *honour cometh*, and whose special Prerogative it is to bestow it, he, as King of the World, being the Fountain of Honour) will be concerned to dignifie an industrious Management of his Gifts with that natural and proper Recompence thereof; conducting him who fairly treadeth in the Path of Honour, that he shall safely arrive unto it. It is therefore a Matter of easie Observation which the wise *Prince* doth prompt us to mark; *Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings, he shall not stand before mean men*; that is, Diligence, as it is the fairest, so it is the surest way to the best Preferment; as it qualifieth a Man for Employment, and rendereth him useful to the World, so it will procure worthy Employment for him, and attract the World to him; as the same great Author again doth assert. *The hand*, saith he, *of the diligent shall bear rule*; Yea, so honourable a thing is Industry it self; that an Exercise thereof in the meanest Rank is productive of Esteem; as the *Wise-man* again doth observe and tell us; *He that waiteth on his master* (that is, with Diligence attendeth on the Business committed to him) *shall be honoured*.

1 Chron. 29. 11. Dan. 5. 18. Eccles. 5. 19. Prov. 22. 29. Prov. 12. 24. Prov. 27. 18. Ὃς φυλάσσει τὴν ἑαυτοῦ κύριον, τιμηθήσεται.

No industrious Man is contemptible; for he is ever looked upon as being in a way of thriving, of working himself out from any straits, of advancing himself into a better Condition. But without Industry we cannot expect any thing but Disrespect, Shame and Reproach, which are the certain Portion of the Slothful; he not having the Heart to enterprize or the Resolution and Patience to atchieve any thing deserving Regard, or apt to procure it; he wanting all the Ornaments and good Fruits that grow from Industry; he being only fit for a sordid and servile Condition; whence *the slothful* (saith *Solomon*) *shall be under tribute*; and, *He that sleepeth in harvest, is a son that causeth shame*; He causeth it to his Relations by his beggarly Accoutrements, he causeth it much more to himself by his despicable Faultiness, and by the disgraceful Consequences of it.

Prov. 12. 24. Δόλιοι δὲ ἔσονται ὑπὸ φόρον. Prov. 10. 5.

Another yet more precious Good, far surpassing all external Advantages of our State; the which in the Judgment of him who (together with it having a full possession of all secular Prosperity, Wealth, Dignity and Power) was best able to prize it, *is better than rubies, and incomparably doth excel all things that may be desired*, as ennobling, enriching and embelishing our better part: *Wisdom*, I mean, or a good Comprehension, and right Judgment about Matters of highest importance to us, is the Prize of Industry, and not to be gained without it; Nature conferreth little thereto, Fortune contributeth much less; it cannot be bought at any rate; *It cannot* (saith *Job*) *be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof; it cannot be valued with the Gold of Ophir, with the precious Onyx or the Sapphire*; it is the Off-spring of watchful Observation and Experience, of serious Meditation and Study; of careful Reflexion on things, marking, comparing and weighing their Nature, their Worth, their

Prov. 8. 11. 3. 14. 15. 4. 7. Job 28. 18. Nec rude quid prosit video ingenium. Hor. de Art. Job 28. 15--

their Tendencies and Conſequences; theſe are needful to the getting of Wiſdom, becauſe Truth, which it ſeeketh, commonly doth not lie in the Surface, obvious to a ſuperficial Glance, nor only dependeth on a ſimple Conſideration of few things; but is lodged deep in the Bowels of things, and under a knotty Complication of various Matters; ſo that we muſt dig to come at it, and labour in unfolding it: Nor is it an eaſie Task to void the Prejudices ſpringing from Inclination or Temper, from Education or Cuſtom, from Paſſion and Intereſt, which cloud the Mind, and obſtruct the Attainment of Wiſdom.

If we will have it, we muſt get it as *Solomon* himſelf did, that great Maſter of it. How was that? *I gave*, ſaith he, *my heart to know wiſdom.* He who made it his Option and Choice before all things; who ſo earneſtly and ſo happily did pray for it; upon whom it is ſo expreſly ſaid, that God in a ſpecial manner, and plentiful meaſure did beſtow it; who avereth God to be the ſole Donor of it (for, *The Lord*, ſaith he, *giveth wiſdom, out of his mouth cometh knowledge and underſtanding*) yet even he, did firſt give his Heart to it, before it was given into his Heart: He did not only gape for it to receive it by mere Infuſion; but he worked and ſtudied hard for it. He was indeed a great Student, an inquiſitive Searcher into Nature, a curious Obſerver of the World, a profound Conſiderer and Comparer of things; and by that induſtrious Courſe, promoted by Divine Bleſſing, he did arrive to that great Stock of ſo renowned a Wiſdom.

Eccleſ. 1. 17. 2. 3. 1 Kings 3. 9. 4. 29. Sap. 8. 21. 9. 17. Eccleſ. 2. 26. Jam. 1. 5. Prov. 2. 6.

And the ſame Method it is which he preſcribeth to us for getting it; exhorting us, that we *incline our ear unto wiſdom, and apply our heart to underſtanding*; that we *cry after knowledge, and lift up our voice for underſtanding*; that we *ſeek her as ſilver, and ſearch for her, as for hid treaſures*; in following which Courſe he doth aſſure us of good Succeſs; for *then* (ſaith he) *ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God*, which is *the head* or chief part of *Wiſdom*; And *Bleſſed* (ſaith he again, in the Perſon and Place of Wiſdom it ſelf) *is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the poſts of my doors; for he that findeth me, findeth life, and ſhall obtain favour of the Lord*; It is the way, he ſuppoſeth of finding Wiſdom, to watch aſſiduouſly, to wait diligently upon the means of attaining her; and how infallible the Acquiſt of her is thereby, ſhe doth again by his Mouth thus acquaint us; *I love them that love me, and thoſe that ſeek me early ſhall find me*; and *She* (ſaith his *Imitatour*) *is eaſily ſeen of them that love her, and found of ſuch as ſeek her; whoſo ſeeketh her early, ſhall have no great travel, for he ſhall find her ſitting at his doors.*

Prov. 22. 3, 4. 1. 5. Prov. 2. 5. Prov. 8. 34. Prov. 8. 17. Sap. 6. 12, 13, 14.

This indeed is the only way; Idleneſs is not capable of ſo rich and noble a Purchaſe; a ſlothful Perſon may be conceited (yea needs muſt be ſo) but he can never be wiſe; *A ſluggard* (ſaith *Solomon*) *is wiſer in his own conceit, than ſeven men that can render a reaſon*; this Conceit of Wiſdom is a natural Iſſue of his Ignorance; and 'tis indeed no ſmall part of his Folly, that he doth not perceive it; being no leſs ſtupid in reflection on his own mind, than in conſidering other matters; Being always in a ſlumber, he will often fall into ſuch pleaſant Dreams; and no wonder that he ſhould preſume upon abundance of Knowledge, who not liſting to take any Pains in the Search or Diſcuſſion of things, doth ſnatch the firſt Appearances, doth embrace every Suggeſtion of his Fancy, every Conceit, gratifying his Humour for Truth.

Prov. 26. 16.

What ſhould I ſpeak of *Learning*, or the Knowledge of various things, tranſcending vulgar Apprehenſion? who knoweth not that we cannot otherwiſe reach any part of that than by aſſiduous Study and Contempla-

tion? who doth not find that all the power in the World is not able to command, nor all the Wealth of the *Indies* to purchase one Notion? who can be ignorant, that no Wit alone, or Strength of Parts can suffice, without great Industry to frame any Science, to learn any one Tongue, to know the History of Nature, or of Providence: It is certainly by *Horace*'s Method,

Quì cupit optatam cursu contingere metam, Multa tulit, fecitque puer, sudavit & alsit. Hor. *de Art.*

Multa tulit, fecitque puer,——

by much Exercise and Endurance of Pains, that any one can arrive to the Mark of being learned or skilful in any sort of knowledge.

Τῇ μὲν κακίᾳ ἡδονὴ, τῇ δ' ἀρετῇ συγκεκλήρωται πόνος. Chrys. *in* Joh *Or.* 26. Κακίᾳ μὲν γὰρ οὐτοδιδακτόν· ἀρετὴ δὲ σὺν πόνῳ κτᾶται. Syn. *de Provid.* 2.

But farther yet, *Vertue*, the noblest Endowment, and richest Possession whereof Man is capable; the Glory of our Nature, the Beauty of our Soul, the goodliest Ornament, and the firmest Support of our Life; that also is the Fruit and Blessing of Industry; that of all things most indispensibly doth need and require it. It doth not grow in us by Nature, nor befal us by Fortune; for Nature is so far from producing it, that it yieldeth mighty Obstacles and Resistances to its Birth, there being in the best Dispositions much Averseness from good, and great Pronceness to Evil; Fortune doth not further its Acquists, but casteth in Rubs and Hindrances thereto, every Condition presenting its Allurements, or its Affrightments from it; all things within us, and about us conspire to render its Production, and its Practice laborious.

Psal. 127. 3.

It is ('tis true) a Gift of Heaven, and cannot be obtained without a special Influence of Divine Grace, but it is given as Children are (of whom it is said, *Lo children are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward*) not without sore Travel and Labour of the Mother, not without grievous Difficulty and Pangs in the Birth: In our Conversion to embrace Vertue God doth guide us; but to what? to sit still? No, to walk, to run in his Ways: Grace doth move us, but whereto? to do nothing? No, but to stir, and act vigorously; *The holy Spirit doth help our infirmities*; but how could it help them, if we did not conjoin our best (though weak) Endeavours with its Operations? to what doth it συναντιλαμβάνειν, or *co-help* us, but *to strive against sin, to work righteousness*, to perform Duty with earnest Intention of Mind, and laborious Activity? *God* (saith St. *Chrysostome*) *hath parted vertue with us, and neither hath left all to be in us, lest we should be elated to pride, nor himself hath taken all, lest we should decline to sloth* *.

Rom. 8. 26. συναντιλαμβάνεται. Heb. 12. 4. Rom. 2. 10. Acts 10. 35.

Ἐμείσατο περὶ ἡμᾶς ἡ ἀρετὴν ὁ Θεὸς, ἵνα μὴ εἰς ὑπόνοιαν ἐμπεσόντες ὑπερηφανίας, τὰ πᾶν ἑαυτοῖς ἀναθῶμεν· ἀλλ' ἵνα μὴ εἰς ῥᾳθυμίαν ὑποκλίνωμεν. Chrys. *Hom.* 5. *Or.* 28.

* Οὐδὲ γὰρ περὶ τὰ καλὰ ἡμῖν ἀνθρώπων ἐγχείρησις δίκαια τὰ ἀνωθεν βεβαιωθήσεται· ἐδὲ ἡ ἄνωθεν χάρις δίδοται μὴ σπουδάζοντα παρεγγένοιτ' ἄν, ἀλλ' ἑκάτερα συγκεκραδὸς πρέπει, σπουδάζειν ἀνθρωπίνως, καὶ τῷ διὰ πίστεως ἄνωθεν καθήκουσαν συμμαχίαν εἰς τελείωσιν ἀρετῆς. Bas. *Const. Mon. cap.* 15.

Indeed the very Nature and Essence of Vertue doth consist in the most difficult and painful Efforts of Soul; in the extirpating rooted Prejudices and Notions from our Understanding; in bending a stiff Will, and rectifying crooked Inclinations; in over-ruling a rebellious Temper; in curbing eager and importunate Appetites; in taming wild Passions; in withstanding violent Temptations; in surmounting many Difficulties, and sustaining many Troubles; in strugling with various unruly Lusts within, and encountring many stout Enemies abroad, which assault our Reason, and *war against our soul*: In such Exercises its very Being lieth; its Birth, its Growth, its Subsistence dependeth on them; so that from any Discontinuance or Remission of them it would soon decay, languish away, and perish.

What

What Attention, what Circumspection, and Vigilancy of Mind, what Intention of Spirit, what force of Resolution, what Command and Care over our selves doth it require, to keep our Hearts from vain Thoughts, and evil Desires; to guard our Tongue from wanton, unjust, uncharitable Discourse; to order our Steps uprightly and steadily in all the Paths of Duty? καὶ τί ἂν ὄφελος πρὸς τὴν ἀρετῆς; *and what* (as St. *Chrysostome* asketh) *of all things belonging to vertue is not laborious?* It is no small Task to know it, wherein it consisteth, and what is demanded of us; it is a far more painful thing to conform our Practice unto its Rules and Dictates. Chryſ. *in* Joh. *Or.* 36.

If travelling in a rough Way; if climbing up a steep Hill; if combating stern Foes, and fighting sharp Battles; if crossing the Grain of our Nature and Desires; if continually holding a strict Rein over all our Parts and Powers, be things of Labour and Trouble, then greatly such is the Practice of Vertue.

Τῆς ἀρετῆς ἱδρῶτα θεοὶ προπάροιθεν ἔθηκαν
Ἀθάνατοι, μακρὸς δὲ καὶ ὄρθιος οἶμος ἐπ' αὐτὴν,
Καὶ τρηχύς —

Hes. Ἔργ. α.

Indeed each Vertue hath its peculiar Difficulty, needing much Labour to master it: *Faith* is called ἔργον πίστεως; *the work of faith*, and it is no such easie Work, as may be imagined, to bring our Hearts into a thorough Perswasion about Truths crossing our sensual Conceits, and controuling our peevish Humours; unto a perfect Submission of our Understanding, and Resignation of our Will to whatever God teacheth or prescribeth; to a firm Resolution of adhering to that Profession, which exacteth of us so much Pains, and exposeth us to so many Troubles. 1 Thes. 1. 3. 2 Thes. 1. 11. John 6. 29.

Charity is also a laborious Exercise of many good Works, and he that will practise it, must in divers ways labour hardly; He must labour in voiding from his Soul many Dispositions deeply radicated therein by Nature, Opinion and Custom, (Envy, Frowardness, Stubbornness, perverse and vain Selfishness, from whence Wrath, Revenge, Spite and Malice do spring forth:) He must labour in effectual Performance of all good Offices, and in catching all Occasions of doing good; He must exert that κόπον ἀγάπης, that *labour of love*, whereof St. *Paul* doth speak; He must (as that holy *Apostle* directeth, not only in Precept, but by his own Practice) work with his own Hands, that he may supply the Wants of his Neighbour. Gal. 6. 10. 1 Thes. 1. 3. Heb. 6. 10. Eph. 4. 28. Act. 20. 35.

Hope it self (which one would think, when grounded well, should be a no less easie than pleasant Duty) doth need much Labour to preserve it safe, streight and stable, among the many Waves and Billows of Temptation assaying to shake and subvert it; whence a *patience of hope* is recommended to us; and we so often are exhorted to hold it fast, to keep it sure, firm and unshaken to the end. Ἀκλινῆ. Heb. 10. 23. Heb. 6. 19. 1 Thes. 1. 3. Heb. 10. 36. Heb. 6. 11. Ἐνδείκνυσθαι σπουδήν. Heb. 3. 6, 14. 2 Pet. 1. 10.

Temperance also surely demandeth no small Pains; it being no slight Business to check our greedy Appetites, to shun the Enticements of Pleasure, to escape the Snares of Company and Example, to support the Ill-Will and Reproaches of those Zealots and Bigots for Vice; who cannot tolerate any Non-conformity to their Extravagancies; but (as St. *Peter* doth express it) *think it strange, if others do not run with them to the same excess of riot, speaking ill of them for it.* Πάντες ἐξ ἑνὸς στόματος ὑμνοῦσιν ὡς καλὸν μὲν ἡ σωφροσύνη τε καὶ δικαιοσύνη, χαλεπὸν μέντοι καὶ πονηρόν. Plat. *de Rep.* 2. 1 Pet. 4. 4.

What should I speak of *Meekness*, of *Patience*, of *Humility*, of *Contentedness*? Is it not manifest how laborious those Vertues are, and what Pains are necessary in the obtaining, in the Exercise of them? what Pains, I say, they require in the Voidance of fond Conceits, in the Suppression of froward Humours, in the quelling fierce Passions, in the brooking grievous Crosses and Adversities, in the bearing heinous Injuries and Affronts?

Thus

Thus doth all Vertue require much Industry, and it therefore necessarily must it self be a great Vertue, which is the Mother, the Nurse, the Guardian of all Vertues; yea, which indeed is an Ingredient and constitutive Part of every Vertue; for if Vertue were easily obtainable or practicable without a good measure of Pains, how could it be Vertue? what Excellency could it have, what Praise could it claim, what Reward could it expect? God hath indeed made the best things not easily obtainable, hath set them high out of our Reach, to exercise our Industry in getting them, that we might raise up our selves to them, that being obtained, they may the more deserve our Esteem, and his Reward.

Lastly, the Sovereign Good, the last Scope of our Actions, the Top and Sum of our Desires; *Happiness* it self, or *Eternal Life* in perfect Rest, Joy and Glory; although it be the supreme Gift of God, and special *Boon* of divine Grace (τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ Θεοῦ, *But* saith St. *Paul*, *the gift of God's grace is eternal life*) yet it also by God himself is declared to be the Result and Reward of Industry; for we are commanded *to work out our salvation with fear and trembling*; and to *give diligence in making our calling and election sure*, by vertuous Practice, and *God* (saith St. *Paul*) *will render to every man according to his works, to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek Glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life*; and, in the Close of God's Book it is proclaimed, as a Truth of greatest Moment, and special Point of God's Will, *Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life.* It is plainly Industry, which climbeth the holy *Mount*; it is Industry which taketh *the Kingdom of Heaven by force*; it is Industry, which *so runneth as to obtain* the Prize; which so fighteth as *to receive the Crown*; which so *watcheth* as to secure our everlasting Interest to us.

Rom. 6. 23. Eph. 2. 8.
Phil. 2. 12.
2 Pet. 1. 10.
Rom. 2. 6, 7. 10. 6, 22.
Apoc. 22.
Heb. 12. 22.
Mat. 11. 12.
1 Cor. 9. 24.
Jac. 1. 12.
Mat. 24. 42. 25. 13.

Thus do the choicest good Things, of which we are capable, spring from Industry, or depend upon it; and no considerable Good can be attained without it; thus all the Gifts of God are by it conveyed to us, or are rendred in effect beneficial to us; for the Gifts of Nature are but Capacities which it improveth; the Gifts of Fortune or Providence are but Instruments, which it imployeth to our Use; the Gifts of Grace are the Supports and Succours of it; and the very Gift of Glory is its Fruit and Recompence.

Luc. 12. 37.
Apoc. 3. 3.

There are farther several other material Considerations, and weighty Motives to the Practice of this Duty; which Meditation hath suggested to me; but these in regard to your Patience, must suffice at present; the other (together with an Application proper to our Condition and Calling) being reserved to another Occasion.

SER-

SERMON XIX.

Of Induſtry in general.

ECCLES. IX. 10.

Whatſoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might.

Induſtry, which the Divine *Preacher* in this *Text* recommendeth to us, is a Vertue of a very diffuſive Nature and Influence; ſtretching it ſelf through all our Affairs, and twiſting it ſelf with every Concern we have; ſo that no Buſineſs can be well managed, no Deſign accompliſhed, no Good obtained without it: It therefore behoveth us to conceive a high Opinion of it, and to inure our Souls to the Practice of it, upon all Occaſions: In furtherance of which Purpoſes I formerly not long ſince, did propound ſeveral Motives and Inducements; and now proceeding on, ſhall repreſent divers other Conſiderations ſerviceable to the ſame End.

1. We may conſider that Induſtry is productive of Eaſe it ſelf, and preventive of Trouble: It was no leſs ſolidly, than acutely and ſmartly adviſed by the Philoſopher *Crates*: *Whether* (ſaid he) *labour be to be choſen, labour; or whether it be to be eſchewed, labour, that thou mayeſt not labour; for by not labouring, labour is not eſcaped, but is rather purſued*; and St. *Chryſoſtome* doth upon the ſame Conſideration urge Induſtry, becauſe *Sloth* (ſaith he) *is wont to ſpoil us, and to yield us much pain*; No Man can cozen Nature, eſcaping the Labour to which he was born; but rather attempting it, will delude himſelf, then finding moſt, when he ſhunneth all Labour.

Εἰς δ' αἱρετὸν ὁ πόνος, πόνει· εἴτε φευκτὸν, πόνει, ἵνα μὴ πονῇς· διὰ γὰρ τὸ μὴ πονεῖν οὐ φεύγεται πόνος, τῷ δ' ἐναντίῳ διώκεται, Crates, *Ep.* 4.

Ἡ ἀργία διαφθείρειν ἡμᾶς εἰωθε, καὶ πολὺν παρέχει τὸν πόνον. Chryſ. *in Joh. Orat.* 36.

Sloth indeed doth affect Eaſe and Quiet; but by affecting them doth loſe them; It hateth Labour and Trouble, but by hating them, doth incur them; It is a ſelf-deſtroying Vice, not ſuffering thoſe who cheriſh it, to be idle, but creating much Work, and multiplying Pains unto them; engaging them into divers Neceſſities and Streights, which they cannot ſupport with Eaſe, and out of which without extream Trouble they cannot extricate themſelves: Of this the *Preacher* doth afford us a plain Inſtance; *By much ſlothfulneſs* (ſaith he) *the building decayeth, and through idleneſs of the hands the houſe droppeth through*; A little Care taken at firſt about repairing the Houſe, would have ſaved its Decay and Ruin; and conſequently the vaſt Charge and Trouble, becoming needful to re-edifie it: And the like doth happen in moſt other Caſes and Occurrences of Life: Idleneſs commonly doth let ſlip Opportunities and Advantages, which cannot with Eaſe be retrieved; it letteth things fall into a bad Caſe, out of which they can hardly be recovered. Eccleſ. 10. 18.

The

The certain Consequences of it (Disgrace, Penury, want of Experience; disobliging and losing Friends, with all the like Mischiefs) cannot be supported without much Disquiet; and they disable a Man from redressing the Inconveniences into which he is plunged.

But Industry by a little voluntary Labour taken in due Place and Season, doth save much necessary Labour afterward, and by moderate Care doth prevent intolerable Distress; and the Fruits of it (Wealth, Reputation, Skill and Dexterity in Affairs, Friendships, all Advantages of Fortune) do enable a Man to pass his Life with great Ease, Comfort and Delight.

2. Industry doth beget Ease by procuring good Habits, and Facility of acting things expedient for us to do. By taking Pains to day we shall need less Pains to Morrow; and by continuing the Exercise, within a while we shall need no Pains at all, but perform the most difficult Tasks of Duty, or of Benefit to us with perfect Ease, yea commonly with great Pleasure. What sluggish People account hard and irksome (as to rise early, to hold close to Study, or Business, to bear some Hardship) will be natural and sweet; as proceeding from another Nature, raised in us by Use.

Industry doth breed Assurance and Courage, needful for the undertaking and Prosecution of all necessary Business, or for the Performance of all Duties incumbent on us.

No Man can quite decline Business, or disengage himself from Duty, without infinite Damage and Mischief accruing to himself; but these an industrious Man (confiding in this efficacious Quality) will set upon with Alacrity, and Dispatch with Facility, his Diligence voiding Obstacles and smoothing the way to him; whenas Idleness finding some Difficulties, and fansying more, soon dishearteneth, and causeth a Man to desist from Action, rather chusing to crouch under the Burthen, than by Endeavour to carry it through, to discharge himself thereof: Whence as to an Industrious Man things seeming difficult will prove easie, so to a slothful Person the easiest things will appear impossible; according to Solomon's Observation: *The way* (saith he) *of * a slothful man is an hedge of thorns, but the way of the upright is made plain*; whereas a slothful Man, being apt to neglect his Obligations, is opposed to an upright Man, who hath a conscionable regard to them, and is willing to take Pains in the Discharge of them: So it is declared, that to the one the way is rough and thorny, to the other beaten and expedite.

* Ἐγώ. Prov. 15. 19. *Ὁδὸς ἀνδρῶν ἐστρωμένη, αἱ δὲ τρίβοι ἀνδρείων τετριμμέναι.

And again, *The slothful man* (saith he) *doth say, there is a Lion without, I shall be slain in the streets*; he is very apt to conceit, or to pretend imaginary Difficulties and Hazards, and thence to be deterred from going about his Business, or doing his Duty. This Consideration of S. *Chrysostome* doth propose, exciting to an earnest Pursuit of Vertue; because *There is* (saith he) *nothing so easie which our great sloth doth not represent very grievous and burthensome; nothing so painful and difficult, which Diligence and willingness do not shew to be very easie.*

Prov. 22. 13. 26. 13. Πεφασίζεται ὁ λέγει ὀκνηρὸς, Λέων ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ, ἐν τῇ πλατείαις φονεύτ.

Οὐδὲν ἔτως ἐστὶ ῥᾴδιον, ὁ μὴ σφοδρὰ καρὸ καὶ ἐπιχαδὲς ὁ πολὺς δείκνυσιν ὀκνος ἡμῶν· ὥσπερ ὀλίγονον καὶ ἡ συγχρὲς ὁ μὴ λίαν εὔχολον ἡ κατεδὴ καὶ ἡ ῥᾳθυμία. Chrys. Tom. 6. Or. 15. p. 144.

Τὰ μὲν ῥᾴδια τὸς ἀμελοῦντας φύγει, τὰ δὲ χαλεπὰ ὀπιμελείαις ἁλίσκεσθαι. Plut. de Educ.

3. We may consider that Industry will sweeten all our Enjoyments, and season them with a grateful Relish; for as no Man can well enjoy himself, or find sound Content in any thing, while Business or Duty lie unfinished on his Hand; so when he hath done his best toward the Dispatch of his Work, he will then comfortably take his Ease, and enjoy his Pleasure; then his Food doth taste savourily, then his Divertisements and Recreations have

have a lively Gustfulness, then his Sleep is very sound and pleasant, according to that of the *Preacher*, *The sleep of a labouring man is sweet.* Eccles. 5. 12. Τῷ δὲλε.

4. Especially those Accommodations prove most delightful, which our Industry hath procured to us; we looking on them with a special Tenderness of Affection, as on the Children of our Endeavour; we being sensible at what Costs of Care and Pain we did purchase them. If a Man getteth Wealth by Fraud or Violence, if he riseth to Preferment by Flattery, Detraction, or any bad Arts, he can never taste any good Savour, or find sound Comfort in them; Aud from what cometh merely by chance, as there is no Commendation due, so much Satisfaction will not arise: 'Tis the *Wise-man's* Observation, *The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting*, and therefore it cannot be very grateful to him; but (addeth he) *the substance of a diligent man is precious*; that is, what a Man compasseth by honest Industry, that he is apt highly to prize; he triumpheth in it, and (in St. *Paul's* Sense innocently) boasteth of it; he feeleth a solid Pleasure, and a pure Complacency therein; the manner of getting it doth more please him than the thing it self; as true Hunters do love the Sport more than the Quarry, and generous Warriours more rejoice in the Victory than in the Spoil; For *our soul* (as St. *Chrysostome* discourseth) *is more affected with those things, for which it hath laboured; for which Reason* (addeth he) *God hath mix'd Labours with Vertue it self, that he might endear it to us.* Yea, farther,

Cui sit conditio dulcis sine pulvere palmæ? Hor. *Ep. l.* 1.

Prov. 12. 27.

1 Cor. 9. 15.

Πεεὶ ἐκεῖνα μᾶλλον ἡ ψυχὴ διαπέπονθε, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔκαμε· διὰ τοῦτο καὶ πόνους ἐνέμιξεν ἀρετῇ ὁ θεὸς, ἵνα αὐτῇ ταῦτα ἐγλιμβάνωμεν. Chrys. in Joh. Orat. 36.

5. The very Exercise of Industry immediately in it self is delightful, and hath an innate Satisfaction which tempereth all Annoyances, and even ingratiateth the Pains going with it.

The very Settlement of our Mind on fit Objects, or its Acquiescence in determinate Action, conducing to a good End, whereby we are freed of Doubt, Distraction, and fastidious Littlesness, doth minister Content.

The Reflexion upon our having embraced a wise Choice, our Proceeding in a fair Way, our being in chace of a good Purpose, doth breed Complacence.

To consider that we are spending our time accomptably, and improving our Talents to good Advantage (to the Service of God, the Benefit of our Neighbour, the bettering of our own State) is very chearing and comfortable.

And whereas *In all Labour* (as the *Wise-man* telleth us) *there is profit*, the Foresight of that Profit affordeth Pleasure, the foretasting the good Fruits of our Industry is very delicious. Prov. 14. 23.

Hope indeed doth ever wait on Industry: And what is more delightful than Hope? This is the Incentive, the Support, the Condiment of all honest Labour; in Virtue whereof the Husbandman toileth, the Merchant trudgeth, the Scholar ploddeth, the Soldier dareth with Alacrity and Courage, not resenting any Pains, not regarding any Hazards which attend their Undertakings: This the holy *Apostles* tell us did enable them with Joy to sustain all their painful Work, and hazardous Warfare; enjoining us also as to *work with fear*, so to *rejoice in hope*.

1 Cor. 9. 10.
——*ipsa operis difficultate lætus spem segetis de labore metitur, Apud* Aug. *Ep.* 142.
Rom. 12. 12. 5. 2. Heb. 3. 6.
1 Tim. 4. 10. Col. 1. 5.
2 Cor. 3. 12. 1 John 3. 3.
1 Pet. 1. 3. Tit. 2. 13.

In fine, Industry doth free us from great Displeasure, by redeeming us from the Molestations of Idleness, which is the most tedious and irksome thing in the World, racking our Soul with anxious Suspence, and perplexing Distraction; starving it for want of satisfactory Entertainment, or causing it to feed on its own Heart by doleful Considerations; infesting it

Otio qui nescit uti plus habet negotii, &c.——
Otioso in otio animus nescit quid quidem velit, &c. Ennius *apud* Agel. 19. 10.

with Crowds of frivolous melancholick, troublesome stinging Thoughts; galling it with a Sense of our squandring away precious time, of our slipping fair Opportunities, of our not using the Abilities and Advantages granted us, to any Profit or Fruit: Whence St. *Chrysostome* saith very truly, that *there is nothing more unpleasant, more painful, more miserable than a Man that hath nothing to do: Is not this* (saith he) *worse than ten thousand Chains, to hang in suspence, and be continually gaping, looking on those who are present?* Indeed the strictest Imprisonment is far more tolerable, than being under Restraint by a lazy Humour from profitable Employment: This enchaineth a Man, hand and foot, with more than Iron Fetters: This is beyond any Imprisonment; It is the very Entombment of a Man, quite in Effect sequestring him from the World, or debarring him from any valuable Concerns therein. And if Liberty be ἐξουσία αὐτοπραγίας, *a power of doing what one liketh best*; then is he, who by his Sloth is disabled from doing any thing wherein he can find any reasonable Satisfaction, the veriest Slave that can be; from which Slavery Industry freeing us, and disposing us to perform chearfully whatever is convenient, thereby doeth us a great Pleasure. Farther,

Καὶ τί ἀνιαρότερον γένοιτ' ἂν ἀνθρώπου ἀδέν ἔχοντος ποιεῖν; τί μοχθηρότερον; τὸ παλαιωρίας ἐστὶν; μυρίων ἐ χείρων τὸ δεσμῶν, χαστμάζῃ καὶ κεχηνέναι διαπαντὸς ὅπῃ τὰ ἀρρᾶς κρεμάμενον, ὁρῶντα τοὺς παρόντας. Chrys. in Act. Or. 35.

Otium est vivi hominis sepultura.

6. Let us consider, that Industry doth afford a lasting Comfort, deposited in the Memory and Conscience of him that practiseth it. It will ever upon his reviewing the Passages of his Life, be sweet to him to behold in them Testimonies and Monuments of his Diligence; it will please him to consider, that he hath lived to purpose, having done somewhat considerable! that he hath made an advantageous use of his time; that he hath well husbanded the Talents committed to him; that he hath accomplish'd (in some measure) the Intents of God's Bounty, and made some Return for his excellent Gifts. What Comfort indeed can any Man have, yea, how sore Remorse must he feel in reflecting upon a Life spent in unfruitful and unprofitable Idleness? How can he otherwise than bewail his Folly and Baseness in having lived (or rather having only been) in vain; as the Shadow and Appearance of a Man; in having lavished his Days, in having buried his Talents, in having imbezilled his Faculties of Nature, and his Advantages from Providence; in having defeated the good Will of God, and endeavour'd no Requital to the munificent Goodness of his Maker, of his Preserver, his benign Lord and Master, his gracious Saviour and Redeemer? how without Confusion, can he in his Mind revolve, that he hath no-wise benefited the World, and profited his Neighbour, or obliged his Friends, or rendred to his Country, (to the Society, or Community of which he is a Member) amends for all the Safety and Quiet, the Support, the Convenience, and the Pleasure he hath enjoyed under its Protection, and in its Bosom? that he hath not born a competent Share in the common Burthens, or paid a due Contribution of his Care and Labour to the publick Welfare? How can such a Man look inward upon himself with a favourable Eye, or pardon himself for so loathsome Defaults?

Diu fuit, non diu vixit.

Matth. 25. 26.

7. Let us consider, that Industry doth argue a generous and ingenuous Complection of Soul.

It implieth a Mind not content with mean and vulgar things (such as Nature dealeth to all, or Fortune scattereth about) but aspiring to things of high worth, and pursuing them in a brave Way, with adventurous Courage, by its own Forces, through Difficulties and Obstacles.

It signifieth in a Man a Heart, not enduring to owe the Sustenance or Convenience of his Life to the Labour or the Liberality of others; to pilfer a Live-

a Livelihood from the World; to reap the Benefit of other Mens Care and Toil, without rendring a full Compensation, or out-doing his private Obligations by considerable Service and Beneficence to the Publick.

A noble Heart will disdain to subsist like a Drone upon the Hony gathered by others Labour; like a Vermin to filch its Food out of the publick Granary; or like a Shark to prey on the lesser Fry; but will one way or other earn his Subsistence: For he that doth not earn, can hardly own his Bread, as St. *Paul* implieth, when he saith, *Them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.* 2 Thess. 3. 12. Τὸν ἑαυτῶν ἄρτον.

Of this generous Ingenuity we have a notable Instance in that great *Apostle* himself; which he doth often represent as a Pattern to us, professing much Complacence therein; He with all Right and Reason might have challenged a comfortable Subsistence from his Disciples, in recompence for the incomparable Benefits he did confer on them, and of the excessive Pains he did endure for their Good; this he knew well, but yet did rather chuse to support himself by his own Labour, than any wise to seem burthensome or troublesome to them: *These hands* (said he) *have ministred to my necessities, and to them that are with me; I have shewed you all things, that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of our Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive.* This was the Practice of him, who was in *Labours most abundant*; and such is the *Genius* of every Man, who upon Principles of Conscience, Reason and Honour, is industrious. Of him it may be said, as of *Solomon*'s good Housewife, *She seeketh wool and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands; she is like the merchants ship, she bringeth her food from afar; she looketh well to her houshold, and eateth not the bread of idleness.* 1 Cor. 9. 15. 2 Thess. 3. 9. 1 Cor. 9. 11. 1 Thess. 2. 6. Acts 20. 34, 35. 18 3. 1 Thess. 2. 9. 2 Thess. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 4. 12. 2 Cor. 11. 9. 2 Cor. 11. 23. Prov. 31. 13, 14, 27.

Sloth is a base Quality, the Argument of a Mind wretchedly degenerate and mean; which is content to grovel in a despicable State; which aimeth at no worthy thing, nor pursueth any thing in a laudable way; which disposeth a Man to live *gratis* (precariously) and ingratefully on the publick Stock, as an insignificant Cypher among Men, as a Burthen of the Earth, as a Wen of any Society; sucking aliment from it, but yielding no Benefit or Ornament thereto.

8. Industry is a Fence to Innocence and Vertue; a Bar to all kind of Sin and Vice, guarding the Avenues of our Heart keeping off the Occasions and Temptations to vicious Practice. When a Man is engaged in honest Employment, and seriously intent thereon, his Mind is prepossessed and filled, so that there is no room or vacancy for ill thoughts, or base Designs to creep in; his Senses do not lie open to ensnaring Objects; he wants Leisure and Opportunity of granting Audience to the Sollicitations of sinful Pleasure; and is apt to answer them with a *non vacat*; the Devil can hardly find Advantage of tempting him, at least many Devils cannot get Access to him, according to that Observation in *Cassian*, *A working Monk is assaulted by one Devil, but an idle one is boiled by numberless bad Spirits.* The Case of Men ordinarily is like to that of *Ægysthus*

——*ne nil ageretur, amavit,*

rather than do nothing, he was ready to do ill; he not having Business to employ his Thoughts, wanton Desires did insinuate themselves into his heart, and transported him to that disastrous Wickedness, which supplied matter to so many Tragedies: And the like Instance the *Sacred History* suggested in King *David*, who *walking* ('tis said) *on the roof of his house,*

Semper te diabolus inveniat occupatum. Bern. *form. hom. v. cap.* 7.

Operans monachus uno dæmone pulsatur, otiosus verò innumeris Spiritibus devastatur, Cass. *de Instit.* 10. 23.

Ovid *de Remed.*

2 Sam. 11. 2.

his Mind then roving, and being untacked from honeſt Cares, that Temptation ſeized on him, whereby he was plunged into that woful Miſdemeanour, which did create to him ſo much Sorrow, did make ſuch a ſpot in his Life, and leave ſuch a Blur on his Memory, whence yet we may draw ſome Benefit, taking it as a profitable Document and Warning, how Idleneſs doth expoſe the beſt Men to Danger.

Idleneſs is indeed the Nurſery of Sins, which as naturally grow up therein as Weeds in a neglected Field, or Inſects in a ſtanding Puddle;

Eccles. 33. 27. *Idleneſs teacheth much evil.* It is the general Trap, whereby every Tempter aſſayeth to catch our Soul: For the Mind being looſe from Care, Satan is ready to ſtep in with his Suggeſtions, the World preſenteth its Allurements, fleſhly Deſires riſe up; proud, froward, wanton Cogitations ſlip in; ill Company doth entice, ill Example is regarded, every Temptation doth object and impreſs it ſelf with great Advantage and Force; Men in ſuch a caſe being apt to cloſe and comply with Temptations, even to divert their Mind, and entertain themſelves, to cure their Liſtleſneſs, to paſs their time, committing Sin, for want of better Occupation. Hence in Places, where there is leaſt Work, the worſt Sins do moſt prevail; and Idleneſs therefore was by the Prophet reckoned one of the three great Sins of *Sodom*, Parents of the reſt: *Behold* (ſaith *Ezekiel*) *this was the iniquity of thy ſiſter Sodom; pride, fulneſs of bread, and abundance of idleneſs was in her:* Hence it ſeldom doth happen in any way of Life, that a Sluggard and a Rake-hell do not go together, or that he who is idle, is not alſo diſſolute.

——ſi non
Intendes animum ſtudiis, & rebus honeſtis,
Invidia vel amore vigil torquebere——
Hor. *Ep.* 1. 2.

Ezek. 16. 49.

9. Particularly Induſtry doth prevent the Sins of vain Curioſity, Pragmaticalneſs, troubleſome Impertinency, and the like Peſts of common Life, into which Perſons not diligently following their own Buſineſs, will aſſuredly fall. *We hear* (ſaith St. *Paul* to the *Theſſalonians*) *that there are ſome who walk among you diſorderly, working not at all, but are buſie-bodies;* 'tis no wonder, if they did *not work at all*, that they ſhould *walk diſorderly*; or that quite neglecting their own Concerns, they ſhould περεργάζεσθαι, *overwork*, or be too buſie in matters not belonging to them, intruding themſelves into the Affairs of their Neighbours: For there is a natural Connection between theſe things, ſince every Man muſt be thinking, muſt be doing, muſt be ſaying ſomewhat, to ſpend his Leiſure, to uphold Converſation, to pleaſe himſelf and gratifie others, to appear ſomebody among his Companions: to avoid the Shame of being quite out of Employment: Wherefore not having the Heart to mind his own Affairs, he will take the Boldneſs to meddle with the Concerns of other Men: If he cannot have the Subſtance, he will ſet up an Idol of Buſineſs, and ſeem very active in his Impertinency. In order thereto, being curiouſly inquiſitive, and prying into the Diſcourſe, Actions and Affairs of all Men. This Men are apt to do in their own Defence: and beſides, Idleneſs doth put Men into a looſe, gariſh, wanton Humour, diſpoſing them without Heed or Regard to meddle with any thing, to prattle at any rate. In fine, whoever hath no Work at home, will be gadding to ſeek Entertainment abroad, like thoſe Goſſips of whom St. *Paul* ſaith, *They learn to be idle, wandring about from houſe to houſe; and not only idle, but tatlers alſo, and buſie bodies, ſpeaking things which they ought not:* If indeed we conſider, all the frivolous and petulant Diſcourſe, the impertinent Chattings, the raſh Cenſures, the ſpiteful Detractions which are ſo rife in the World, and ſo much Poiſon all Converſation, we ſhall find the main Root of them to be a want of Induſtry

2 Theſſ. 3. 11.
Μηδὲν ἐργαζομένους, ἀλλὰ περιεργαζομένους, Working nothing, but overworking.

1 Tim. 5. 13.

dustry in Men, or of diligent Attendance on their own Matters; which would so much take up their Spirit and time, that they would have little Heart or Leisure to search into, or comment upon other Mens Actions and Concerns.

10. Let us consider that Industry is needful in every Condition and Station, in every Calling and way of Life, in all relations, for our good Behaviour, and right Discharge of our Duty in them. Without it we cannot in any state act decently, or usefully, either to the Benefit and Satisfaction of others, or to our own Advantage and Comfort.

Are we rich? then is Industry requisite for keeping and securing our Wealth, for managing it wisely, for employing it to its proper Uses, and best Advantages; (in the service of God, in Beneficence to our Neighbour, in advancing publick Good) so that we may render a good Accompt to him who hath entrusted us with the Stewardship thereof: Industry is very needful to guard us from the Temptations and Mischiefs to which Wealth doth expose us, that it do not prove a treacherous Snare, an unweildy Burthen, a destructive Poison and Plague to us, throwing us into Pride and Vanity, into Luxury, into Stupidity, into distracting Solicitude, into a base worldly and earthly temper of Heart, into a prophane Oblivion of God, and of our own Souls.

Are we in conspicuous Rank of Dignity, or in Honour and Repute among Men? then is Industry requisite to keep us fast in that State, to hold us from tumbling from that Pinacle down into extream Disgrace; for then all Eyes are upon us, strictly observing what we do, and ready to pass Censure on our Actions; so that great Diligence is necessary to approve our selves, and shun Obloquy. Nothing is more brittle than Honour, every little thing hitting on it, is able to break it, and therefore without exceeding Care we cannot preserve it; Nothing is more variable or fickle than the Opinions of Men (wherein Honour consisteth) it is therefore no easie matter to fix or detain them in the same Place. *Vitrea fama* Hor. Eccl. 10. 1.

Honour cannot live without Food or Fuel; it must be nourished by worthy Actions; without a continual Supply of them, it will decay, languish, and pine away: Industry therefore is required to keep it; and no less is necessary to use it well, in a due Subordination to God's Honour, and Reference to his Service, that instead of an Ornament and Convenience, it do not prove a baneful Mischief to us; puffing up our Minds with vain Conceits and Complacencies, inclining us to Arrogance and Contempt of others, tempting us by assuming to our selves to rob God of his due Glory; to decline which Evils great Care is requisite; we must have a steady Balast, and we must hold the Rudder warily, when we carry so great Sail.

On the other hand, are we poor and low in the World; or do we lie under Disgrace? then do we much need Industry to shun Extremities of Want and Ignominy; that we be not swallow'd up and overwhelm'd by Need or Contempt; to support us under our Pressures, to keep up our Spirits from Dejection and Disconsolateness; to preserve us from impious Discontentedness and Impatience: Industry is the only Remedy of that Condition, enabling us to get out of it, retrieving a Competence of Wealth or Credit; or disposing us to bear it handsomely, and with Comfort; so as not to become forlorn or abject Wretches.

It is so needful to every Condition; and it is so for all Vocations; for,

Is a Man a Governour, or a Superiour in any Capacity? Then what is he but a publick Servant doom'd to continual Labour, hired for the Wages of Respect and Pomp to wait on his People; in providing for their Needs, protecting their Safety, preserving their Peace and Welfare; where

is

is he but on a Stage, whereon he cannot well act his part, without vigilant Attendance to his Charge, and constant Activity in performing all the Functions thereof? He is engag'd in great Obligations and Necessities of using extream Diligence, both in regard to himself and others. *Homer*'s Description of a Prince is a good one; *One who hath much People and many Cares committed to him:*

Ὦ λαοὶ τ' ὀπιτετράφαται, καὶ τόσα μέμηλε.

He must watchfully look to his own Steps, who is to guide others by his Authority and his Example. All his Actions require special Conduct, not only his own Credit and Interest, but the common Welfare depending thereon. He must heedfully advise what to do, he must diligently execute what he resolveth on. He hath the most ticklish things that can be (the Rights and Interests, the Opinions and Humours of Men) to manage. He hath his own Affections to curb and guide, that they be not perverted by any sinister Respects, not swayed by any unjust Partiality, not corrupted by Flattery or Fear. He will find, that to wield Power innocently, to brandish the Sword of Justice discreetly and worthily, for the Maintenance of Right, and Encouragement of Vertue, for the Suppression of Injury, and Correction of Vice is a matter of no small Skill or slight Care.

Industry is indeed a Quality most proper for Persons of high Rank and Dignity, or of great Power and Authority; who have special Opportunities to employ it in weighty Affairs to great Advantage; whose Undertakings being of vast moment do need answerable Efforts to move and guide them: The Industry of a Mechanick, or a Rustick, acting in a low and narrow Sphere can effect no great Matter, and therefore it self need not to be great; but the Industry of a Prince, of a Nobleman, of a Gentleman may have a large and potent Influence, so as to render a Nation, a County, a Town, happy, prosperous, glorious, flourishing in Peace, in Plenty, in Vertue; it therefore for atchieving such Purposes need be, and should be proportionably great; a small Power not being able to move a great Weight, nor a weak Cause to produce a mighty Effect. Wherefore *Cicero* recommending *Pompey* for a publick Charge, doth reckon these to be the *Imperatoriæ virtutes*, Qualities befitting a *Prince* or *General*, wherein he did excel, *labour in businesse, Valour in Dangers, Industry in acting, Nimblenes in Performance, Counsel in providing.*—— And *Alexander the Great*, reflecting on his Friends degenerating into Sloth and Luxury, told them, that *it was a most slavish thing to luxuriate, and a most royal thing to labour.*

Labor in negotio, fortitudo in periculis, industria in agendo, celeritas in conficiendo, consilium in providendo, &c. Cic. *pro lege Manil.*

Δειλικώτατόν ἐστι τὸ τρυφᾶν, βασιλικώτατον δὲ πονεῖν, Plut. *in* Alex. *p.* 1262.

And for those who move in a lower Orb of Subjection or Service, I need not shew how needful Industry is for them: Who knoweth not that to be a good Subject, doth exact a careful Regard to the Commands of Superiours, and a painful Diligence in observing them? that to make a good Servant, Fidelity and Diligence must concur; whereof the first doth suppose the last, it being a part of Honesty in a Servant to be diligent; whence δοῦλε πονηρὲ καὶ ὀκνηρὲ, *O thou wicked and slothful Servant*, were in the Gospel well coupled; and the first Epithet was grounded on the second, he being therefore wicked, because he had been slothful.

Mat. 25. 25.

Neither can a Man be a true Friend, or a good Neighbour, or any-wise a good Relative, without Industry disposing him to undergo Pains, in performing good Offices, whenever Need doth require, or Occasion invite.

In fine, it is palpable, that there is no Calling of any sort, from the Sceptre to the Spade, the Management whereof with any good Success, any Credit, any Satisfaction doth not demand much Work of the Head, or of the Hand, or of both. If

If Wit or Wisdom be the Head, if Honesty be the Heart, Industry is the Right Hand of every Vocation; without which the shrewdest Insight and the best Intention can execute nothing.

A Sluggard is qualified for no Office, no Calling, no Station among Men, he is a mere No-body; taking up room, pestering and clogging the World.

11. It also may deserve our Consideration, that it is Industry, whereto the publick State of the World, and of each Commonweal therein is indebted for its being, in all Conveniencies and Embellishments belonging to Life, advanc'd above rude and sordid Barbarism; yea whereto Mankind doth owe all that good Learning, that Morality, those Improvements of Soul, which elevate us beyond Brutes.

To industrious Study is to be ascribed the Invention and Perfection of all those Arts whereby Human Life is civilized, and the World cultivated with numberless Accommodations, Ornaments and Beauties.

All the comely, the stately, the pleasant, and useful Works, which we do view with Delight, or enjoy with Comfort, Industry did contrive them, Industry did frame them.

Industry reared those magnificent Fabricks, and those commodious Houses; it formed those goodly Pictures and Statues; it raised those convenient Causeys, those Bridges, those Aqueducts; it planted those fine Gardens with various Flowers and Fruits; it cloathed those pleasant Fields with Corn and Grass, it built those Ships, whereby we plough the Seas, reaping the Commodities of foreign Regions. It hath subjected all Creatures to our Command and Service, enabling us to subdue the fiercest, to catch the wildest, to render the gentler sort most tractable and useful to us. It taught us from the Wool of the Sheep, from the Hair of the Goat, from the Labours of the Silk-worm to weave us Cloaths to keep us warm, to make us fine and gay. It helpeth us from the inmost Bowels of the Earth to fetch divers needful Tools and Utensils.

It collected Mankind into Cities, and compacted them into orderly Societies, and devised wholsome Laws under shelter whereof we enjoy Safety and Peace, Wealth and Plenty, mutual Succour and Defence, sweet Conversation and beneficial Commerce.

It by Meditation did invent all those Sciences whereby our Minds are enriched and enabled, our Manners are refined and polished, our Curiosity is satisfied, our Life is benefited.

Ut varias usus meditando extunderet artes Paulatim, &c. Virg. *Georg.* I.

What is there, which we admire, or wherein we delight, that pleaseth our Mind, or gratifieth our Sense, for the which we are not beholden to Industry?

Doth any Country flourish in Wealth, in Grandeur, in Prosperity? it must be imputed to Industry, to the Industry of its Governours setling good Order, to the Industry of its People following profitable Occupations: So did *Cato*, in that notable *Oration* of his in *Sallust*, tell the *Roman* Senate, that it was not by the Force of their Arms, but by the Industry of their Ancestors that Commonwealth did arise to such a Pitch of Greatness. When Sloth creepeth in, then all things corrupt and decay; then the publick State doth sink into Disorder, Penury, and a disgraceful Condition.

Cato *apud* Sal. *in bello Catil.*

12. Industry is commended to us by all sorts of Example, deserving our Regard and Imitation. All Nature is a Copy thereof, and the whole World a Glass, wherein we may behold this Duty represented to us.

We may easily observe every Creature about us incessantly working toward the End for which it was designed, indefatigably exercising the Powers with which it is endued; diligently observing the Laws of its Cre-

Creation. Even Beings void of Reason, of Sense, of Life it self do suggest unto us Resemblances of Industry; they being set in continual Action toward the effecting reasonable Purposes, conducing to the Preservation of their own Beings, or to the Furtherance of common Good.

The Heavens do rowl about with unwearied Motion, the Sun and Stars do perpetually dart their Influences; the Earth is ever labouring in the Birth and Nourishment of Plants; the Plants are drawing Sap, and sprouting out Fruits and Seeds (to feed us, and propagate themselves;) the Rivers are running, the Seas are tossing, the Winds are blustering to keep the Elements sweet, in which we live.

Prov. 6. 6. *Solomon* sendeth us to the *Ant*, and biddeth us to *consider her ways* (which *provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest*) many such Instructers we may find in Nature; the like industrious Providence we may observe in every living Creature; we may see this running about, that swimming, another flying in Purveyance of its Food and Support.

If we look up higher to rational and intelligent Natures, still more noble and apposite Patterns do object themselves to us.

Here below every Field, every Shop, every Street, the Hall, the Exchange, the Court it self (all full of Business, and Fraught with the Fruits of Industry) do mind us how necessary Industry is to us.

If we consult History, we shall there find, that the best Men have been most industrious; that all great Persons, renowned for heroical Goodness (the worthy *Patriarchs*, the holy *Prophets*, the blessed *Apostles*) were for this most commendable, that neglecting their private Ease, they did undertake difficult Enterprizes, they did undergo painful Labours for the benefit of Mankind, they did pass their Days, like St. *Paul*, ἐν κόποις

2 Cor. 11. 27. καὶ μόχθοις: in *labours* and *toilsome pains* for those Purposes.

Our great Example, the Life of our blessed Lord himself, what was it but one continual Exercise of Labour? His Mind did ever stand bent in

Acts 10. 38. careful Attention, studying to do good; his Body was ever moving in wearisome Travel to the same Divine intent.

If we yet soar farther in our Meditation to the superiour Regions we shall there find the blessed Inhabitants of Heaven, the Courtiers and Ministers of God, very busie and active; They do vigilantly wait on God's

Σῷ ὑ θρόνῳ πυρόεντι παρεστᾶσιν πολύμοχθοι Ἄγγελοι. Orph. Throne in readiness to receive and to dispatch his Commands; they are ever on the Wing, and fly about like Lightning *to do his pleasure*. They are attentive to our Needs, and ever ready to protect, to assist, to relieve

Ps. 103. 21, 22. Psal. 34. 8. 91. 11. us! Especially, they are diligent Guardians, and Succourers of good Men; *officious spirits, sent forth to minister for the heirs of salvation*; so even the

Heb. 1. 14. Seat of perfect Rest is no Place of Idleness.

Yea, God himself, although immoveably and infinitely happy, is yet immensely careful, and everlastingly busie: He rested once from that great Work of Creation; but yet *my father* (saith our Lord) *worketh still*; and he never will rest from his Works of Providence, and of Grace. His Eyes continue watchful over the World, and his Hands stretched out in upholding it. He hath a singular Regard to every Creature, supplying the Needs of each, and *satisfying the desires of all*.

Gen. 2. 2. John 5. 17.

Psal. 121. 3. 127. 1. Zech. 4. 10. 2 Chron. 16. 9.

O tu bone omnipotens, qui sic curas unumquemque nostrum tanquam solum cures, & sic omnes tanquam singulos. Aug. Conf. 4. 11.

Psal. 145. 15, 16. (Prov. 5. 21. 15. 3. Psal. 34. 15. Gen. 31. 49. Jer. 31. 18. And shall we alone be idle, while all things are so busie? shall we keep our Hands in our Bosom, or stretch our selves on our Beds of Laziness, while all the World about us is hard at work, in pursuing the Designs of its Creation? Shall we be wanting to our selves, while so many things la-

labour for our Benefit? Shall not such a Cloud of Examples stir us to some Industry, not to comply with so universal a Practice, to cross all the World, to disagree with every Creature, is it not very monstrous and extravagant?

I should close all this Discourse with that, at which, in pitching on this Subject I chiefly did aim, an Application exhortatory to our selves, urging the Practice of this Vertue by Considerations peculiar to us as Scholars, and derived from the Nature of our Calling; but the doing this, requiring a larger Discourse than the time now will allow. I shall reserve it to another Occasion; adding only one Consideration more.

13. Lastly, if we consider, we shall find the Root and Source of all the Inconveniences, the Mischiefs, the Wants, of which we are so apt to complain, to be our Sloth; and that there is hardly any of them, which commonly we might not easily prevent or remove by Industry: Why is any Man a Beggar, why contemptible, why ignorant, why vicious, why miserable? why, but for this one Reason, because he is slothful! because he will not labour to rid himself of those Evils? What could we want, if we would but take the Pains to seek it, either by our Industry, or by our Devotion? for where the first will not do, the second cannot fail, to procure any good thing from him, who giveth *to all men liberally*, and hath promised to supply the Defect of our Ability by his free Bounty; so that if we join these two Industries (industrious Action, and industrious Prayer) there is nothing in the World so good, or so great, of which, if we are capable, we may not assuredly become Masters: And even for Industry it self, especially in the Performance of all our Duties towards God, let us industriously pray: Even so, *The God of peace sanctifie us wholly; and make us perfect in every good work to do his will, working in us that which is well pleasing in his sight; through our blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, to whom for ever be all glory and praise.* Amen.

Jac. 1. 5. Δόσις ἁπλῶς πᾶσι διδόντος. Jam. 5. 16. Πολὺ ἰσχύει δέησις δικαίου ἐνεργουμένη. Eph. 6. 18. Rom. 12. 12. Col. 4. 2. 1 Thess. 5. 23. Heb. 13. 20.

SERMON XX.

Of Industry in our general Calling, as *Christians.*

ROM. XII. 11.

Not slothful in Business.

INdustry is a very eminent Vertue, being an Ingredient (or the Parent) of all other Vertues, of constant use upon all Occasions, and having Influence upon all our Affairs. Τῇ σπουδῇ μὴ ὀκνηροί. *Solicitudine non pigri.* Vulg.

For it is our Nature framed; all our Powers of Soul and Body being fitted for it, tending to it, requiring it for their Preservation and Perfection.

We were designed for it in our first happy state; and upon our lapse thence were farther doomed to it, as the sole Remedy of our Needs and the Inconveniences to which we became exposed. For,

Without it we cannot well sustain or secure our Life in the Enjoyment of any Comfort or Convenience; we must work to earn our Food, our Cloathing, our Shelter; and to supply every Indigency of Accommodations, which our Nature doth crave.

To it God hath annexed the best and most desirable Rewards; Success to our Undertakings, Wealth, Honour, Wisdom, Vertue, Salvation; all which as they flow from God's Bounty, and depend on his Blessing; so from them they are usually convey'd to us through our Industry, as the ordinary Chanel and Instrument of attaining them.

It is requisite to us, even for procuring Ease, and preventing a Necessity of immoderate Labour.

It is in it self sweet and satisfactory; as freeing our Mind from Distraction, and wrecking Irresolution; as feeding us with good Hope, and yielding a Foretaste of its good Fruits.

It furnisheth us with Courage to attempt, and Resolution to atchieve things needful, worthy of us, and profitable to us.

It is attended with a good Conscience, and chearful Reflections of having well spent our time, and employed our Talents to good Advantage.

It sweeteneth our Enjoyments, and seasoneth our Attainments with a delightful Relish.

It is the Guard of Innocence, and barreth our Temptations to Vice, to Wantonness, to vain Curiosity and Pragmaticalness.

It argueth an ingenuous and generous Disposition of Soul; aspiring to worthy things, and pursuing them in the fairest Way; disdaining to enjoy the common Benefits, or the Fruits of other Men's Labour without deserving them from the World, and requiting it for them.

It is necessary for every Condition and Station, for every Calling, for every Relation; no Man without it being able to deport himself well in any State, to manage any Business, to discharge any sort of Duty.

To it the World is indebted for all the Culture, which advanceth it above rude and sordid Barbarism; for whatever in common Life is stately, or comely, or useful, Industry hath contrived it, Industry hath composed and framed it.

It is recommended to us by all sort of Patterns considerable; for all Nature is continually busie and active in Tendency toward its proper Designs; Heaven and Earth do work in unceasant Motion; Every living Creature is employed in progging for its Sustenance; The blessed Spirits are always on the Wing in dispatching the Commands of God, and ministring Succour to us; God himself is ever watchful, and ever busie in preserving the World, and providing for the needs of every Creature.

The Lives of our *Blessed Saviour*, of all the *Patriarchs*, the *Prophets*, the *Apostles*, the *Saints* in this respect have been more exemplary; no Vertue being more conspicuous in their Practice than Industry in performing the hard Duties, and painful Tasks imposed on them for the Service of God, and the Benefit of Mankind.

Such is the Vertue upon which I have formerly discoursed in general and at large, but shall now more specially consider, according to St. *Paul's* Prescription; in reference to its most proper Matter, *Business*, explaining and pressing it accordingly.

Pe

Be not *slothful in business* (that is in discharge of it) or *to business* (that is to undertake it) this is the Rule; the Nature and Needfulness whereof we shall declare.

By σπουδὴ (*Business*) we may understand any Object of our Care and Endeavours which doth require them, and may deserve them; which by reason of its Difficulty cannot well be accomplished or attained without them; and which is productive of some Fruit or Recompence answerable to them; the which hath *operæ causam*, a need of Labour, and *operæ pretium*, some Effect worth our Pains; if it be not such it is not a due matter of vertuous and laudable Industry.

There are many things, about which Men with great Earnestness employ themselves, called Business, but not deserving that Name: There are divers spurious kinds of Industry, which may not pretend to Commendation, but rather do merit Blame; according to that of St. *Chrysostom*, *Labour which hath no Profit, cannot obtain any Praise.*

πόνου ἀδὲν κέρδους ἔχων· ἐγκαμεῖ παντὸς ἀποσέρηται. Chrysost. *Tom.* 5. *Orat.* 64.

There is a κενοσπουδία, a vain Industry, and a κακοσπουδία, a naughty Industry, both agreeing with genuine vertuous Industry in the Act, as implying careful and painful Activity, but discording from it in Object and Design; and consequently in worth, and moral Esteem.

Aliud agere, to be impertinently busie, doing that which conduceth to no good purpose, is in some respect worse than to do nothing, or to forbear all Action; For 'tis a positive Abuse of our Faculties, and trifling with God's Gifts; 'tis a throwing away Labour and Care, things valuable in themselves; 'tis often a running out of the way, which is worse than standing still; 'tis a debasing our Reason, and declining from our Manhood, nothing being more foolish or childish, than to be solicitous and serious about Trifles: For who are more busie and active than Children, who are fuller of Thoughts and Designs, or more eager in Prosecution of them than they? But all is about ridiculous Toys, the Shadows of Business, suggested to them by Apish Curiosity, and Imitation. Of such Industry we may understand that of the *Preacher*, *The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of them*; for that a Man soon will be weary of that Labour, which yieldeth no Profit, or beneficial Return.

Ἀλλὰ γὰρ ἀδενὶ φιλοπόνῳ τὸ κενόσπουδον ὁρίζομεν ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις ὄντα πολλάκις, ἢ τῷ τὸ ὠφελοῦν ἀνωφελῆ ποιεῖν καὶ διαφορᾶς, τὸ ἕνεκά τοῦ συμφερόντων καὶ λυσιτελῶν, Plut. *de commun. not* p. 1949.

Σπουδάζειν καὶ πονεῖν παιδιᾶς χάριν ἠλίθιον φαίνεται καὶ λίαν παιδικόν. Aristt. *Eth.* 10. 6.

Ἡ δὲ μικρῶν σπουδὴ μέμψιν φέρει. Plut. *ibid.*

Vid. de glor. Ath. p. 621.

Οἱ σπουδάζοντες ἐν τοῖς γελοίοις, ἐν τοῖς σπουδαίοις ἔσονται καταγέλαστοι. Cat. Maj. *apud* Plut. *in Apoph.*

But there is another Industry worse than that, when Men are very busie in devising and compassing Mischiefs; an Industry whereof the Devil affordeth a great Instance; for the cursed Fiend is very diligent, ever watching for Occasions to supplant us, ever plotting *Methods* and Means to do harm, ever driving on his mischievous Designs with unwearied Activity; *going to and fro in the earth*; *running about as a roaring Lion*, looking for Prey, and *seeking whom he may devour*. Ecclef. 10. 15. Luke 22. 31. 2 Cor. 2. 11. Job 1. 7. 1 Pet. 5. 8.

And his wicked Brood are commonly like him, being *workers of iniquity*, οἱ πονηροὶ, *painful Men*, οἱ πανοῦργοι, Men that will do all things; who will spare no Pains, nor leave any Stone unturned, for satisfying their lusts, and accomplishing their bad Designs. Ἐργάται τῆς ἀδικίας. Luke 13. 27. Phil. 6. 8.

So indeed it is, that as no great Good, so neither can any great Mischief be effected without much Pains: And if we consider either the Characters or the Practices of those, who have been famous Mischief-doers, the Pests of Mankind, and Disturbers of the World, we shall find to have been no Sluggards. *Catiline*, *Marius*, *Sylla*, *Cæsar*, &c.

Isa. 59. 5. These two sorts of vain and bad Industry the Prophet *Isaiah* seemeth to describe in those Words; *They hatch cockatrice eggs, and weave the spiders web*; of which Expressions one may denote mischievous, the other frivolous Diligence in Contrivance or Execution of naughty or vain Designs; and to them both that of the Prophet *Hosea* may be referred; *They have sowed the wind and they shall reap the whirlwind*; Guilt, Remorse, and Punishment being the Consequences of both. And of them both common Experience doth afford very frequent and obvious Instances, a great part of Human Life being taken up with them. For,

Hos. 8. 7. Eccles. 34. 2. Prov. 22. 8. Hos. 10. 13.

How assiduously intent and eager may we observe Men to be at Sports? how soon will they rise to go forth to them? with what Constancy and Patience will they toil in them all the Day? how indefatigable are they in riding or running about after a Dog or a Hawk, to catch a poor Beast or silly Bird?

Συνείρουσι καὶ εἱ φιλόκυβοι νύκτας ἡμέρας ἄσιτοι καὶ ἄποτοι, καὶ ἡδονῆς ἡδονὴ πείσει. Lib. Orat. 31.

How long will Men sit poring on their Games, dispensing with their Food and Sleep for it?

How long and serious Attention will Men yield to a wanton Play? how many Hours will they contentedly sit thereat? what Study will Men employ on Jests and impertinent Wit? how earnest will they be to satisfie their vain Curiosity?

τῷ γὰρ ὄντι παίζοντα δεῖ παίζειν. Plut.

How in such Cases do Men forget what they are doing, that Sport should be Sport, not Work; to divert and relax us, not to employ and busie us; to take off our Minds a little, not wholly to take them up; not to exhaust or tire our Spirits, but to refresh and chear them, that they may become more fit for grave and serious Occupations?

Jer. 2. 13.

How painful will others be *in hewing them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that will hold no water*; that is, in immoderate Pursuit of worldly Designs? how studiously will they plod, how restlessly will they trudge, what Carking and Drudgery will they endure in driving on Projects of Ambition and Avarice? What will not they gladly do or suffer, to get a little Preferment, or a little Profit? It was a common Practice of old, and sure the World is not greatly mended since the *Psalmist* did thus reflect, *Surely every man walketh in a vain shew, surely they are disquieted in vain; he heapeth up riches, and cannot tell who shall gather them.*

Psal. 39. 6.

Isa. 5. 11.

How many vigilant, and stout Pursuers are there of Sensuality, and riotous Excess; such as those of whom the Prophet speaketh, *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink, that continue until night, till wine inflame them?*

Ἐννοήσωμεν πῶς ὁ διάβολος ἐπιτρέχει, πῶς ὀξύνεται, πῶς ἐμμένει, &c. Chrys. ad pop. 16.

How busie (O Shame, O Misery; how fiercely busie) are some in accomplishing Designs of Malice and Revenge? how intent are some to overreach, to circumvent, to supplant their Neighbour? how sore Pains will some take to seduce, corrupt or debauch others? how active will some be in sowing Strifes, in raising Factions, in fomenting Disorders in the World? how many industrious Slaves hath the Devil, who will spare no pains about any kind of Work, which he putteth them to? how many like those of whom the *Wise-man* saith, *Their feet run to evil*, and are *swift in running to mischief; they sleep not except they have done mischief, and their sleep is taken away, unless they cause some to fall.*

Prov. 6. 8. 1. 16.

Isa. 55. 2.

Now with all these Labourers we may well expostulate in the Words of the Prophet; *Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not?*

Such

Such Labours are unworthy of Men, much less do they beseem Christians.

It becometh us not as rational Creatures to employ the excellent Gifts of our Nature, and noble Faculties of our high-born Soul, the Forces of our Mind, the Advantages of our Fortune, our precious time, our very Care and Labour vainly or unprofitably upon any thing base or mean; being that our Reason is capable of atchieving great and worthy things, we much debase it by stooping to regard Toys, we do extreamly abuse it by working Mischief.

Much more doth it misbecome us as Christians (that is, Persons devoted to so high a Calling, who have so worthy Employments assigned to us, so glorious Hopes, so rich Encouragements proposed to us for our Work) to spend our Thoughts and Endeavours on things impertinent to our great Design, or mainly thwarting it. Eph. 1. 18.

The proper Matter and Object of our Industry (those false ones being excluded) is true Business; or that which is incumbent on a Man to do, either in way of Duty, being required by God, or by Dictate of Reason, as conducing to some good Purpose; so that in Effect it will turn to account, and finally in Advantageous Return will pay him for his Labour of Mind or Body; that which the *Wise-man* did intend, when he advised, *Whatever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might*; whatever thy Hand findeth, that is, whatever by Divine Appointment (by the Command or Providence of God) or which upon rational Deliberation, doth occur as Matter of our Action; comprizing every good Purpose and reasonable Undertaking incident to us. Eccles. 9. 10.

But our Business, according to the Holy *Apostle*'s Intent, may be supposed especially to be the Work of our Calling; to which each Man hath a peculiar Obligation; and which therefore is most properly his Business, or ἡ πρᾶξις emphatically, the *Business* allotted to him.

Now this Business, our Calling, is double; our general Calling, which is common to us all as Christians, and our particular Calling, which peculiarly belongeth to us, as placed in a certain Station, either in the Church or State. In both which Vocations that we are much obliged and concerned to be industrious, shall be now my Business to declare.

I. As to our general Calling (that *sublime*, that *heavenly*, that *holy* Vocation) in which by divine Grace, according to the Evangelical Dispensation, we are engaged, that necessarily requireth, and most highly deserveth from us a great measure of Industry; the Nature and Design of it requireth, the Fruit and Result of it deserveth our utmost Diligence; all Sloth is inconsistent with discharging the Duties, with enjoying the Hopes, with obtaining the Benefits thereof. For,

Ἡ ἄνω κλῆσις. Phil. 3. 14.
Κλῆσις ἐπουράνιος. Heb. 3. 1.
Ἁγία κλῆσις. 1 Tim. 1. 9.
Eph. 1. 18. 2 Thess. 1. 11.

It is a State of continual Work, and is expressed in Terms importing abundant, incessant, intense Care and Pain; for to be indeed Christians, *We must work out our salvation with fear and trembling*; We must *by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour, and Immortality.* We must *walk worthy of the Lord to all well-pleasing, being fruitful in every good work.* We must *be rich in good works*, and *filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the praise and glory of God: We are God's workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.* Phil. 2. 12. Rom. 2. 7. Col. 1. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 18. Phil. 1. 11. John 15. 5, 8, 16.

We have a Soul to save, and *are appointed* εἰς περιποίησιν σωτηρίας, *to make an acquist of salvation.* Jam. 3. 17. Eph. 2. 10. 1 Thess. 5. 9.

We

We have a Mind to improve with Vertue and Wisdom, qualifying us for Entrance into Heaven, for Enjoyment of God's Favour, for Conversation with Angels.

1 Thess. 1. 9. Rom. 7. 6. 6. 22. Eph. 2. 19. As Christians we are assumed to be Servants of God, and re-admitted into his Family, from which for our Disloyalty we had been discarded; so that as he was our natural Lord, so he is now such also by special Grace; who did make us, who doth maintain us, under whose Protection, and at whose Disposal we subsist; whence we are obliged to be faithfully diligent in his Service; we must constantly wait upon him in devotional Addresses; we must carefully study to know his Pleasure; we must endeavour exactly to perform his Will, and obey his Commands; we must strive to advance his Glory, to promote his Interest, to improve all Talents and Advantages committed to us for those Purposes; we must (as St. *Paul* expresseth it) *always abound in the work of the Lord.*

Eph. 5. 10. Rom. 12. 2. Luke 11. 28. Mat. 25. 27. 1 Cor. 15. 58.

We must also look upon our selves as Servants of Christ our Redeemer; who by his Blood hath purchased us to himself, that we might be *zealous of good works*; performing a Service to him, which consisteth in a faithful Discharge of manifold Duties; and in pursuance of all Vertue; with most intent Application of Mind, with expedite Promptitude, with accurate Circumspection; *giving all diligence* (as St. *Peter* speaketh) in *adding* one Vertue to another; *being ready* (as St. *Paul* saith) *to every good work*; and *seeing that we walk circumspectly*, or behave our selves exactly according to the Rules of Duty in all our Conversation.

Col. 3. 25. Eph. 6. 7. 1 Cor. 7. 23. 6. 20. Tit. 2. 14.

2 Pet. 1. 5. Σπουδὴν πᾶσαν παρεισενέγκαντες. Tit. 3. 1. Βλέπετε πῶς ἀκριβῶς—Eph. 5. 15.

This Service requireth of us assiduous Attendance on Works of Piety and Devotion; that we do *incessantly watch to Prayers*, that we *always give thanks*, that we *continually do offer up the sacrifice of praise to God.*

Col. 4. 2. Eph. 6. 18. Rom. 12. 12. 1 Thess. 5. 17. Luke 18. 1. 1 Thess. 5. 18. Eph. 5. 20. Col. 3. 17. Heb. 13. 15.

It demandeth from us a continual *labour of charity*; that we *serve one another in love*; that we should as *we have opportunity*, *work good to all men*, that we should *always pursue good toward one another, and toward all men.*

1 Thess. 1. 3. Κόπου ἀγάπης. Gal. 5. 13. Δουλεύοντες. Gal. 6. 10. Ἐργαζώμεθα. 1 Thess. 5. 15.

It obligeth us *with all our powers to pursue peace with all men* (which considering our natural Peevishness, Pride, and Perverseness is often no easie Task) and that we do σπουδάζειν, *studiously endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.*

Rom. 12. 18. Εἰ δυνατόν. Heb. 12. 14. 2 Tim. 2. 22. Eph. 4. 3.

It chargeth on us contentedly and patiently to undergo whatever God doth impose of Burthen or Sufferance, so that *patience hath its perfect work*; and it is a crabbed work to bend our stiff Inclinations, to quell our refractory Passions, to make our sturdy Humour buckle thereto.

Jam. 1. 4.

It doth exact that we should govern and regulate according to very strict and severe Laws all the Faculties of our Soul, all the Members of our Body, all internal Motion, and all external Actions proceeding from us; that we should check our Inclinations, curb our Appetites, and compose our Passions; that we should guard our Hearts from vain Thoughts and bad Desires; that we should bridle our Tongues from evil and from idle Discourses; that we should order our Steps in the streight way of Righteousness, not deflecting to the Right Hand or to the Left.

In the Discharge of this Service how many rough Difficulties are there to be surmounted, how many great Obstacles to be removed, how many stout Oppositions to be encountered, how many potent Enemies to be vanquished, how many sore Hardships, Crosses and Tribulations to be endured?

How

How shrewd a Task must we find it to circumcise our Hearts, to mortifie our Earthly Members, to crucifie our Flesh with its Affections and Lusts, to pull out our right Eyes, and cut off our Right Hands, to renounce our worldly Interests, to hate our neerest Relations, to take up and bear our Cross whenever Conscience and duty shall call us thereto?

Our Calling therefore doth require great Industry; and the Business of it consequently is well represented by those Performances, which demand the greatest Intention, and laborious Activity; it is stiled *Exercise* (agonistick and ascetick Exercise; γύμναζε σεαυτὸν πρὸς εὐσέβειαν, *Exercise thy self to godliness*; and ἐν τούτῳ ἀυτὸς ἀσκῶ, *Herein I exercise my self to have always a conscience void of offence toward God and toward men*;) *wrestling* (ἡμῶν ἡ πάλη, *our wrestling is not* (only) *against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers*;) *running a race* (*Let us run with patience the race that is set before us*; *So run that ye may obtain*: *I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling*.) *A warfare, a combating* (*War a good warfare, holding faith and a good Conscience*; *fight the good fight*; *thou therefore endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ*: *Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things*;) offering *violence*; (*The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force*) *watching* (*Let us not sleep as do others, but let us watch and be sober*: *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong*: *watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation*.)

Γύμναζε σεαυτόν. 1 Tim. 4. 7.
Ἐν τούτῳ ἀσκῶ. Acts 24. 16. Heb. 12. 11.
Eph. 6. 12. 1 Cor. 9. 25. Heb. 12. 1. 1 Cor. 9. 24. Phil. 3. 14. 2 Tim. 4. 7. 1 Tim. 1. 18. 6. 12. 2 Tim. 4. 7. 2 Tim. 2. 3. 1 Cor. 9. 25. Matth. 11. 12. 1 Thess. 5. 6. 1 Cor. 16. 13. Mat. 26. 41. 24. 42. Luke 12. 37. 1 Pet. 5. 8. Apoc. 3. 2. 16. 15.

Hence the Precepts importing the general Tenour of Christian Practice are usually couched in terms implying great Sedulity and Contention of Soul; Ἀγωνίζεσθε, *Strive to enter in at the strait gate*: *Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest*; *Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that meat which endureth to everlasting life*. *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure*; *Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end*: *Wherefore, brethren, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless*.

Luke 13. Σπουδάζομεν. Heb. 4. 11. Ἐργάζεσθε. John 6. 27. Σπουδάζατε. 2 Pet. 1. 10. 1 Pet. 1. 13. Luke 12. 35. Eph. 6. 14. 2 Pet. 3. 14.

Such is the Work of our general Calling, and so much Industry it challengeth from us; with great Reason indeed, for that such Work is needful to our Happiness, and that our Labour will certainly be rewarded therewith.

The Work indeed of it self is most worthy to employ us; doth most become us, doth much adorn us, doth best befit our Divine Extraction and large Capacity; is the noblest, the handsomest, the sweetest Employment that could take us up; but we have also the greatest Inducements and Encouragements possible for our Industry therein.

John 4. 36.

There are by the Divine Bounty and Mercy, Wages assigned abundantly correspondent to our Work, yea, infinitely surpassing it: there is πολὺς μισθὸς *a great* (or a manifold) *hire* for our slender and simple Performances; there are several noble Prizes highly worth our striving for with our utmost Strength and Contention of Soul.

Mat. 5. 12.

In recompence thereof we shall assuredly gain even here in this transitory State the special Favour and Love of God, with his constant Protection and Care for our Good; his faithful Direction, and friendly Assistance to guide us, and uphold us in all our Ways, to bless and prosper our Undertakings, to supply us in our Needs, and comfort us in our Distresses; so that we shall, *lack nothing* that is good, that no *evil shall happen to us*, that *all things* shall concur and *co-operate for our benefit*.

Rom. 14. 18. *He that in these things serveth Christ, is acceptable to God, and approved of Men.*

Ps. 34. 9. 84. 11. 33. 19. 37. 3, 19. Psal. 91. 10. —— Prov. 12. 21. Rom. 8. 38.

We

We shall thereby taste the Satisfactions of a calm Mind, and a sound Conscience, quickned by the Consolations of the Divine Spirit; *the peace of God ruling in our hearts, which passeth all understanding.*

Col. 3. 15. Phil. 4. 7.

We shall afterward, when this Moment is passed over, and our short Days Work dispatched, receive from God's bountiful Hand an unconceivable Affluence of good things, an eternal Permanence of Life; undisturbed Rest, *indefectible Wealth*, ineffable Joy, incorruptible Glory, *a Kingdom unshakable.*

Jam. 1. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 4. 1 Cor. 9. 25.

He (saith our *Lord*) *that reapeth, receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life everlasting.*

John 4. 36.

To them (saith St. *Paul*) *who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory, and honour, and immortality, God in recompence will bestow eternal life.* And,

Ἀποδώσει — Rom. 2. 6.

I have (saith that blessed Labourer of himself) *fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.*

2 Tim. 4. 8.

What more effectual Spur or Incentive can there be to Industry in this Business, than to consider that which St. *Paul* so often doth inculcate; *Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same* (a Recompence for the same) *he shall receive of the Lord*; and *knowing that* (in consideration of our Service done to the Lord) *of the Lord we shall receive the reward of the inheritance?*

2 Cor. 5. 10. Col. 3. 24.

What Exhortation can be more firmly grounded, or strongly backed, than is that of the Apostle, *Therefore my brethren be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know, that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

1 Cor. 15. 58.

May it not also much encourage us to Industry to be assured, that not only the kind of our work, but the Degree of our Labour shall be considered and requited, in just Proportion; so that the harder we work, the higher we shall be rewarded; for, *to each one* (saith our *Lord*) *the son of man shall render a reward* κατὰ τὸ πεπραγμένον αὐτοῦ, *according to his performance*; *Every one* (saith St. *Paul*) *shall receive* ἴδιον μισθὸν κατὰ τὸν ἴδιον κόπον, *his proper reward according to his proper work*; whence we have reason to observe St. *John*'s Advice, *Look to your selves, that ye lose not those things which ye have gained, but that ye receive a full reward.*

Ἀποδώσει ἑκάστῳ. Mat. 16. 27. 1 Cor. 3. 8. Rev. 22. 12. 2. 23. Mat. 25. 21. Luke 19. 12. Μισθὸν πλήρη ἀπολάβητε. 2 Joh. 8.

To be negligent or slothful in such a case, for want of a little Care and Pains to forfeit such Advantages, what a Pity, what a Folly is it? Were an Opportunity presented by a little minding our Business, and bestirring our selves to procure a fair Estate, or a good Preferment, would not he be deemed mad or sottish, who would sit still, and forego that his Advantage? how much more Wildness is it to be drowsie and sluggish in this Case, thereby losing eternal Bliss and Glory? Well therefore might the *Apostle* say, *How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* How shall we escape not only the Sin, and guilt of baseit Ingratitude toward him that graciously doth offer it, but the Imputation of most wretched Folly, in being so much wanting to our own Interest and Welfare?

Heb. 2. 3.

Is it not a sad thing, a woful Shame to observe what Pains Men will throw away upon things of small or no Concernment to them? Yea, what Toil and Drudgery will they sustain in the Service of *Satan*, in pursuit of Sin in the Gratification of their Vanities and Lusts.

What Pains will a covetous Wretch take in scraping for Pelf, how will he rack his Mind with carking Sollicitude to get, to keep, to spare it? how will he tire his Spirits with restless Travel? how will he pinch his Car-

case

case for want of what Nature craveth? what Infamy and Obloquy will he endure for his niggardly Parsimony and Sordidness?

How much Labour will an ambitious Fop undergo for Preferment, or vain Honour? to how many tedious Attendances, to how pitiful Servilities will he submit? what sore Crosses and Disappointments will he swallow? what Affronts and Indignities will he patiently digest, without desisting from his Enterprize?

How will a Man (as St. *Paul* observed) πάντα ἐγκρατεύεσθαι, endure all painful Abstinence and Continence in order to the obtaining a *corruptible* 1 Cor. 9. 25. *Crown*, a fading Garland of Bays, a Puff of vain Applause?

What Diligence will Men use to compass the Enjoyment of forbidden Pleasures; how watchful in catching Opportunities, how eager in quest of them will they be? what Difficulties will they undertake, what Hazards will they incur, what Damages and Inconveniences will they sustain, rather than fail of satisfying their Desires?

What Akings of Head and Heart; what Pangs of Mind, and Gripes of Conscience, what Anxieties of Regret and Fear, will every Worker of Iniquity undergo? So faithful Friends hath this vain and evil World; so diligent Servants hath the accursed Lord thereof; so careful and laborious will Men be to destroy and damn themselves: O that we could be willing Chry. *de Sp.* 8 to spend as much Care and Pains in the Service of our God: O that we were as true Friends of our selves: O that we could be as industrious for our Salvation; that is, in the Business of our General Calling; which having considered, let us proceed to the other Business belonging to us, which is,

II. The Business of our Particular Calling; that in reference whereto St. *Paul* doth prescribe, *Every man as the Lord hath called him, so let him* 1 Cor. 7. 17. *walk. Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called*; let him 1 Cor. 7. 20. so abide, as faithfully to prosecute the Work, and discharge the Duty of it; the doing which otherwhere he termeth πράσσειν τὰ ἴδια, *to do our own* 1 Thess. 4. 11. *business* (*working with our hands*) and enjoineth it in Opposition to those Eph. 4. 28. two great Pests of Life, Sloth and pragmatical Curiosity; or the Neglect of our own, and medling with other Mens Affairs.

This the *Apostle* nameth *our calling*, because we are called or appointed thereto by divine Providence; for he supposeth and taketh it for granted, that to each Man in this World God hath assigned a certain Station, unto which peculiar Action is suted; in which Station he biddeth him quietly to abide, till Providence fairly doth translate him, and during his Abode 1 Cor. 7. 22. therein diligently to execute the Work thereof.

Every Man is a Member of a double Body; of the Civil Commonwealth, and of the Christian Church: In relation to the latter, whereof St. *Paul* telleth us (and what he saith by Parity of Reason may be referred likewise to the former) that *God hath set the members every one in the body,* 1 Cor. 12. 8. *as it pleaseth him*; and as it is in the Natural, so it is in every political and Rom. 12. 4. spiritual Body, every Member hath its proper Use and Function; *All members* (saith St. *Paul*) *have not* τὴν αὐτὴν πρᾶξιν *the same office*, or the same Work and Operation; yet every one hath some Work. There is no Member designed to be idle or useless, conferring no Benefit to the whole; but *the whole body* (saith the *Apostle*) *fitly joined together, and compacted by that* Eph. 4. 16. *which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part maketh increase of the body, unto the edifying it self in love*; each Member doth conspire and co operate to the Strength, Nourishment, Thriving and Welfare of the whole.

Ἕκαστος ὡς ἐμέρισεν ὁ Θεός. 1 Cor. 7. 17.

Every Man (who continueth a Man; in his Senses, or in any good Degree of natural Integrity) is by God endowed with competent Abilities to discharge some Function useful to common Good; or at least needful to his own Sustenance; to every one some Talent is committed, which in Subordination to God's Service he may improve, to the Benefit of the World, God's temporal, or of the Church, God's spiritual Kingdom.

It is plainly necessary, that the greatest Part of Men should have a determinate Work allotted to them, that they may support their Life and get their Food without being injurious, offensive, or burthensome to others; for their living they must either follow some Trade, or they must shark and filch, or they must beg, or they must starve.

And the rest are obliged to do somewhat, conducible to publick Good; that they may deserve to live; for a Drone should not be among the Bees; nor hath Right to devour the Honey: If any Man doth pretend, or presume that he hath nothing to do but to eat, to sleep, to play, to laugh; to enjoy his Ease, his Pleasure, his Humour, he thereby doth as it were disclaim a reasonable Title of living among Men, and sharing in the Fruits of their Industry; he in St. *Paul's* Judgment should be debarred of Food. for *this* (saith the Holy *Apostle*) *we commanded you, that if any man would not work, neither should he eat.*

2 Thess. 3. 10.

Such an one in the Body of Men what is he but an unnatural Excrescence, sucking Nutriment from it, without yielding Ornament or Use? what is he but a Wen deforming and encumbring the Body, or a Canker infesting and corrupting it.

As no Man (at least with Decency, Convenience and Comfort can live in the World, without being oblig'd to divers other Men for their Help in providing Accommodations for him, so Justice and Ingenuity (corroborated by divine Sanctions) do require of him, that in Commutation he, one way or other, should undertake some Pains redounding to the Benefit of others.

So hath the great Author of Order distributed the Ranks and Offices of Men in order to mutual Benefit and Comfort, that one Man should plow, another thresh, another grind, another labour at the Forge, another knit or weave; another sail, another trade, another supravise all these, labouring to keep them all in Order and Peace; that one should work with his Hands and Feet, another with his Head and Tongue; all conspiring to one common End, the Welfare of the whole, and the supply of what is useful to each particular Member; Every Man so reciprocally obliging and being obliged; the Prince being oblig'd to the Husbandman for his Bread, to the Weaver for his Cloaths, to the Mason for his Palace, to the Smith for his Sword; those being all oblig'd to him for his vigilant Care in protecting them; for their Security in pursuing the Work, and enjoying the Fruit of their Industry.

So every Man hath a Calling, and proper Business; whereto that Industry is required, I need not much to prove, the thing it self in Reason and Experience being so clearly evident; for what Business can be well dispatched, what Success can be expected to any Undertaking, in what Calling can any Man thrive without Industry? what Business is there that will go on of it self, or proceed to any good Issue if we do not carefully look to it, steadily hold it in its Course, constantly push and drive it forward? It is true as in Nature, so in all Affairs, *Nihil movet, non motum* nothing moveth without being moved.

Our

Our own Interest should move us to be industrious in our Calling, that we may obtain the good Effects of being so in a comfortable and creditable Subsistence; that we may not suffer the Damages and Wants, the Disappointments and Disgraces ensuing on Sloth; but the chief Motive should be from Piety and Conscience; for that it is a Duty which we owe to God. For God having placed us in our Station; he having apportioned to us our Task, we being in Transaction of our Business his Servants, we do owe to him that necessary Property of good Servants, without which Fidelity cannot subsist; for how can he be looked on as a faithful Servant, who doth not effectually perform the Work charged on him? or diligently execute the Orders of his Master. 1 Cor. 4. 2.

St. *Paul* doth enjoin Servants that they should *in all things obey their Masters*, with conscientious Regard to God, as therein performing Service to God, and expecting Recompence from him: And of Princes he saith, that they in Dispensation of Justice, enacting Laws, imposing Taxes, and all political Administrations are *the ministers of God*, προσκαρτεροῦντες, *attending constantly upon this very thing*: And if these Extremes, the highest and lowest of all Vocations, are Services of God; if the highest upon that score be tied to so much Diligence, then surely all middle Places upon the same Account of Conscience toward God do exact no less. Col. 3. 22. Eph. 6. 5. 1 Cor. 7. 22, 23. Rom. 13. 6.

If he that hath one Talent, and he that hath ten must both improve them for God's Interest, then he that hath two, or three, or more, is obliged to the same Duty proportionably.

Every one should consider the World as the Family of that great *Paterfamilias (of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named)* and himself as an Officer or Servant therein, by God's Will and Designation constituted in that Employment, into which Providence hath cast him; to confer in his Order and Way, somewhat toward a Provision for the maintenance of himself, and of his Fellow-Servants. Of a superiour Officer our *Lord* saith, *Who is that faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath made ruler over his houshold, to give them their meat in due season?* So the greatest Men are as Stewards, Treasurers, Comptrollers, or Purveyors; the rest are inferiour Servants, in their proper Rank and Capacity. Eph. 3. 15. Matth. 24. 45. Luke 12. 42.

And he that with Diligence performeth his respective Duty (be it high and honourable, or mean and contemptible in outward Appearance) will please God, as keeping good Order, and as being useful to his Service; so that upon the Reckoning God will say to him, *Well done good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things; I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.* But he that doth otherwise, (behaving himself carelessly or sluggishly in his Business) will offend God, as committing Disorder, and as being unprofitable. 1 Cor. 14. 33. Mat. 25. 21.—

He committeth Disorder, according to that of St. *Paul*; *We hear there are some, which walk among you disorderly, not working at all.* His Sentence and Doom will be, according to our *Lord*, *O thou wicked and slothful servant*——*Cast the unprofitable servant into utter darkness*; which Words are spoken in relation to one, who being a Flatterer, or Sluggard in his Calling, did not improve the special Talent entrusted with him for God's Service. 2 Thess. 3. 11 Mat. 25. 26. 30.

In fine, if we are conscientiously industrious in our Vocation, we shall assuredly find the Blessing of God thereon; and that he thereby will convey good Success, Comfort, competent Wealth, a fair Reputation, all desirable Good unto us; for as all these things are promised to Industry, so the Promise especially doth belong to that Industry, which a Man doth exercise in an orderly course of Action in his own Way; or rather in God's Way, wherein Divine Providence hath set him.

An irregular or impertinent Laboriousness, out of a Man's Calling or Sphere; a being diligent in other Mens Affairs, invading their Office (as if I a Priest will be trading, a Layman preaching) may not claim the Benefit of those Promises, or the Blessings of Industry; But a Husbandman, who (with conscientious Regard to God, and Confidence in him) is pain-
Prov. 21. 11. ful in tilling his Ground, may expect a good Crop, a Merchant who (upon
Prov. 10. 4. the same Principle, with the like Disposition) earnestly followeth his Trade,
13. 11. may hope for safe Voyages and good Markets; A Prince carefully minding his Affairs may look for Peace and Prosperity to his Country; a Scholar studying hard may be well assured of getting Knowledge, and finding Truth; all who with honest Diligence constantly do pursue their Business, may confidently and chearfully hope to reap the Advantages suitable to it from the favourable Blessing of God. So that we have all Reason to observe the *Apostle*'s Precept, *not to be slothful in business.*

I should apply this Doctrine to our own Case, urging its Practice by Considerations peculiar to our Vocation; but having already passed the Bounds of time, I reserve the doing it to another Opportunity.

Now the God of peace sanctifie you wholly, and make you perfect in every
1 Thess. 5. 23. *good work to do his will; working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight;*
Heb. 13. 20. through our Blessed Saviour *Jesus Christ*; to whom for ever be all Glory and Praise. *Amen.*

SERMON XXI.

Of Industry in our particular Calling, as *Gentlemen.*

ROM. XII. 11.

Not slothful in Business.

I Have largely treated upon the Duty recommended in this Precept, and urged the Observance of it in general, at a Distance; I now intend more particularly and closely to apply it, in reference to those Persons, who seem more especially obliged to it, and whose observing it may prove of greatest Consequence to publick Good; the which Application may also be most suitable and profitable to this Audience; those Persons are of two sorts; the one *Gentlemen*, the other *Scholars.*

I. The *First* Place, as Civility demandeth, we assign to *Gentlemen*; or Persons of eminent Rank in the World, well allied, graced with Honour, and furnished with Wealth; the which sort of Persons I conceive in a high Degree obliged to exercise Industry in Business. This

This at first hearing may seem a little Paradoxical and strange; for who have less Business than Gentlemen, who do need less Industry, than they? He that hath a fair Estate, and can live on his Means, what hath he to do, what Labour or Trouble can be exacted of him, what hath he to think on, or trouble his Head with, but how to invent Recreations and Pastimes to divert himself, and spend his waste Leisure pleasantly? Why should not he be allowed to enjoy himself, and the Benefits, which Nature or Fortune have freely dispensed to him, as he thinketh best, without Offence? Why may he not say with the rich Man in the *Gospel*, *Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry*? Is it not often said by the *Wise-man*, that there is *nothing better under the sun, than that a man should make his soul to enjoy good* in a chearful and comfortable Fruition of his Estate? According to the passable Notion and Definition, *What is a Gentleman but his Pleasure?*

Luke 12. 19.

Eccles. 2. 24. 3. 22. 5. 18. 8. 15.

If this be true, if a Gentleman be nothing else but this; then truly he is a sad Piece, the most inconsiderable, the most despicable, the most pitiful and wretched Creature in the World: If it is his Privilege to do nothing, it is his Privilege to be most unhappy; and to be so, will be his Fate, if he live according to it; for he that is of no Worth or Use, who produceth no beneficial Fruit, who performeth no Service to God, or to the World, what Title can he have to Happiness? what Capacity thereof? what Reward can he claim? what Comfort can he feel? to what Temptations is he exposed? what Guilts will he incur?

But in truth it is far otherwise; to suppose that a Gentleman is loose from Business, is a great Mistake; for indeed no Man hath more to do, no Man lieth under greater Engagements to Industry than he.

He is deeply obliged to be continually busie in more Ways than other Men, who have but one simple Calling or Occupation allotted to them; and that upon a tripple Account; in respect to God, to the World, and to himself.

1. He is first obliged to continual Employment in respect to God.

He out of a grateful regard to Divine Bounty for the Eminency of his Station, adorned with Dignity and Repute, for the plentiful Accommodations and Comforts of his Life, for his Exemption from those pinching Wants, those meaner Cares, those sordid Entertainments, and those toilsome Drudgeries, to which other Men are subject, is bound to be more diligent in God's Service, employing all the Advantages of his State to the Glory of his munificent Benefactour, to whose good Providence alone he doth owe them; for *who maketh him to differ* from another? and *what hath he that he did not receive* from God's free Bounty?

1 Cor. 4. 7.

In proportion to the Bulk of his Fortune his Heart should be enlarged with a thankful Sense of God's Goodness to him; his Mouth should ever be filled with Acknowledgment and Praise, he should always be ready to express his grateful Resentment of so great and peculiar Obligations.

He should dedicate larger Portions of that free Leisure which God hath granted to him, in waiting upon God, and constant Performances of Devotion.

He in frequently reflecting on the particular ample Favours of God, to him should imitate the Holy *Psalmist*, that illustrious Pattern of great and fortunate Men; saying after him, with his Spirit and Disposition of Soul; *Thou hast brought me to great honour, and comforted me on every side, therefore will I praise thee and thy faithfulness, O God.*

Psal. 71. 21.

Lord,

Psal. 30. 7.— Psal. 31. 8. Psal. 23. 5. Psal. 30. 12. Psal. 16. 5. *Lord, by thy favour thou hast made my mountain to stand strong: Thou hast set my feet in a large room: Thou preparest a table before me; —thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over; ——to the end that my glory may sing praise unto thee, and not be silent: The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot; the lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage*; therefore *I will bless the Lord.*

In conceiving such Meditations his Head and his Heart should constantly be employed; as also in contriving ways of declaring and discharging real Gratitude; asking himself, *What shall I render unto the Lord for all his Benefits?* What shall I render to him, not only as a Man for all the Gifts of Nature, as a Christian for all the Blessings of Grace, but as a Gentleman also, for the many Advantages of this my Condition, beyond so many of my Brethren, by special Providence indulged to me?

Psal. 116. 12.

He hath all the common Duties of Piety, of Charity, of Sobriety to discharge with Fidelity; for being a Gentleman doth not exempt him from being a Christian, but rather more strictly doth engage him to be such in a higher Degree than others; It is an Obligation peculiarly incumbent on him, in return for God's peculiar Favours, to pay God all due Obedience, and to exercise himself in all good Works; Disobedience being a more heinous Crime in him than in others, who have not such Encouragements to serve God.

His Obedience may be inculcated by those Arguments which *Joshua* and *Samuel* did use in pressing it on the *Israelites*; *Only* (said *Samuel*) *fear the Lord and serve him in truth, for consider how great things God hath done for you*; and, *I have given you* (saith God by *Joshua*) *a land for which ye did not labour, and cities which ye built not; and ye dwell in them; Of the vineyards and olive-yards which ye planted not, do ye eat; Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth.*

1 Sam. 12. 24. Josh. 24. 13.

His Disobedience may be aggravated, as *Nehemiah* did that of the *Israelites*, *They took strong cities and a fat land, and possessed houses full of all goods, wells digged, vineyards, and olive-yards, and fruit-trees in abundance; so they did eat and were filled, and became fat; and delighted themselves in thy great goodness; nevertheless they were disobedient, and rebelled against thee, and cast thy law behind their backs —— they have not served thee in their kingdom, and in thy great goodness, which thou gavest them; neither turned they from their wicked works.*

Nehem. 9. 25—— Isa. 63. 9. Psal. 105. 6. Jer. 2. 7. Ezek. 16. 7.— 1 Sam. 15. 17. 2 Sam. 12. 7. 1 Kings 16.— 26, 35.

A Gentleman hath more Talents committed to him, and consequently more Employment required of him; If a rustick Labourer, or a Mechanick Artisan hath one Talent, a Gentleman hath ten; He hath innate Vigour of Spirit, and Height of Courage fortified by Use, he hath Accomplishment and Refinement of Parts by liberal Education, he hath the Succours of Parentage, Alliance and Friendship; he hath Wealth, he hath Honour, he hath Power and Authority, he hath Command of time and Leisure; he hath so many precious and useful Talents entrusted to him, not to be *wrapped up in a napkin*, or *hidden under-ground*; not to be squandred away in private Satisfactions; but *for negotiation*, to be put out to use, to be improved in the most advantageous way to God's Service: Every Talent doth require a particular Care and Pains to manage it well.

Luke 19. 20. Mat. 25. 25. Παραματαθ-ουδε. Luke 19. 13. Ἐργάζεσθε. Mat. 25. 16.

He particularly is God's Steward, entrusted with God's Substance, for the Sustenance and Supply of God's Family; to relieve his fellow-Servants in their Need, upon seasonable Occasions by Hospitality, Mercy and charitable Beneficence; according to that Intimation of our Lord, *Who is that faithful and wise steward whom his Lord shall make ruler of his household*

Mat. 25. 27. Mat. 25. 14. Παρέδωκε τὰ ὑπάρχοντα αὐτῶ. Luke 12. 42.

hold to give them their portion and meat in due season? And according to those Apostolical Precepts, *As every one hath received a gift* (or special Favour,) *even so minister the same to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God*; and *Charge the rich in this world, —— that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate.* Χάρισμα. 1 Pet. 4. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 17.

And he that is oblig'd to purvey for so many, and so to abound in good Works, how can he want Business? how can he pretend to a *Writ of ease?*

Surely that Gentleman is very blind, and very barren of Invention, who is to seek for Work fit for him, or cannot easily discern many Employments belonging to him, of great Concern and Consequence.

It is easie to prompt and shew him many Businesses, indispensibly belonging to him, as such.

It is his Business to minister Relief to his poor Neighbours in their Wants and Distresses by his Wealth. It is his Business to direct and advise the Ignorant, to comfort the Afflicted, to reclaim the Wicked, and encourage the Good by his Wisdom. It is his Business to protect the Weak, to rescue the Oppressed, to ease those who groan under heavy Burthens, by his power; to be such a Gentleman and so employed as *Job* was; who *did not eat his morsel alone, so that the fatherless did not eat thereof*; who *did not with-hold the poor from their desire, or cause the eyes of the widow to fail*; who *did not see any perish for want of clothing, or any poor without covering*; who *delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.* Job 31. 17, 16. 19. Job 29. 12.

It is his Business to be hospitable; kind and helpful to Strangers; following those noble Gentlemen, *Abraham* and *Lot*, who were so ready to invite and entertain Strangers with bountiful Courtesie. 1 Pet. 4. 9. Heb. 13. 2. Rom. 12. 13. Gen. 18. 1.

It is his Business to maintain Peace, and appease Dissentions among his Neighbours, interposing his Counsel and Authority in order thereto; whereto he hath that brave Gentleman *Moses* recommended for his Pattern. 19. 1. Exod. 2. 13. Acts 7. 26.

It is his Business to promote the Welfare and prosperity of his Countrey with his best Endeavours, and by all his Interest; in which practice the Sacred History doth propound divers gallant Gentlemen (*Joseph, Moses, Samuel, Nehemiah, Daniel, Mordecai*, and all such renowned Patriots) to guide him. Jud. 5. 9.

It is his Business to govern his Family well; to educate his Children in Piety and Vertue; to keep his Servants in good order. Josh. 24. 15. Psal. 101.——

It is his Business to look to his Estate, and to keep it from wasting; that he may sustain the Repute of his Person and Quality with Decency; that he may be furnished with Ability to do good, may provide well for his Family, may be hospitable, may have wherewith to help his Brethren; for if, according to St. *Paul's* Injunction, a Man should *work with his own hands, that he may have somewhat to impart to him that needeth*; then must he that hath an Estate, be careful to preserve it, for the same good Purpose. Μεταδιδόναι. Eph. 4. 28.

It is his Business to cultivate his Mind with Knowledge, with generous Dispositions, with all worthy Accomplishments befitting his Condition, and qualifying him for Honourable Action; so that he may excel, and bear himself above the vulgar Level no less in real inward Worth, than exteriour Garb; that he be not a Gentleman merely in Name or Shew.

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Arduum nam ies est vitiis non tradere mores.

It is Business (and that no slight or easie Business) to eschew the Vices, to check the Passions, to withstand the Temptations, to which his Condition is liable; taking heed that his Wealth, Honour and Power do not betray him into Pride, Insolence or Contempt of his poorer Brethren; unto Injustice or Oppression; unto Luxury and riotous Excess; unto Sloth, Stupidity, Forgetfulness of God, and irreligious Prophaneness.

It is a Business especially incumbent on him to be careful of his Ways, that they may have good Influence on others, who are apt to look upon him as their Guide and Pattern.

He should labour and study to be a Leader unto Vertue, and a Notable Promoter thereof; directing and exciting Men thereto by his exemplary Conversation; encouraging them by his Countenance and Authority; rewarding the Goodness of meaner People by his Bounty and Favour: He should be such a Gentleman as *Noah*, who *preached righteousness* by his Words and Works before a prophane World.

Such particular Affairs hath every Person of Quality, Credit, Wealth and Interest, allotted to him by God, and laid on him as Duties; the which to discharge faithfully, will enough employ a Man, and doth require Industry, much Care, much Pains; excluding Sloth and Negligence: So that it is impossible for a Sluggard to be a worthy Gentleman, vertuously disposed, a charitable Neighbour, a good Patriot, a good Husband of his Estate; any thing of that, to which God, by setting him in such a Station, doth call him.

Thus is a Gentleman obliged to Industry in respect of God, who justly doth exact those Labours of Piety, Charity, and all Vertue from him. Farther,

2. He hath also Obligations to Mankind, demanding Industry from him, upon Accounts of common Humanity, Equity and Ingenuity; For,

How can he fairly subsist upon the common Industry of Mankind without bearing a share thereof? how can he well satisfie himself to dwell statelily, to feed daintily, to be finely clad, to maintain a pompous Retinue merely upon the Sweat and Toil of others, without himself rendring a Compensation, or making some competent Returns of Care and Pain, redounding to the good of his Neighbour?

How can he justly claim, or reasonably expect from the World the Respect agreeable to his Rank, if he doth not by worthy Performances conduce to the Benefit of it? Can Men be obliged to regard those, from whom they receive no good?

If no Gentleman be tied to serve the Publick, or to yield Help in sustaining the common Burthens, and supplying the Needs of Mankind, then is the whole Order merely a Burthen, and an Offence to the World; a Race of Drones, a Pack of Cyphers in the Common-wealth, standing for nothing, deserving no Consideration or Regard: And if any are bound, then all are; for why should the whole Burthen lie on some, while others are exempted?

It is indeed supposed, that all are bound thereto, seeing that all have Recompences publickly allowed to them upon such Considerations; divers Respects and Privileges peculiar to the Order, grounded upon this Supposition, that they deserve such Advantages by conferring notable Benefit to the Publick; the which indeed it were an Arrogance to seek, and an Iniquity to accept for doing nothing.

It is an unsufferable Pride for any Man to pretend or conceit himself to differ so much from his Brethren, that he may be allowed to live in ease and Sloth, while the rest of Mankind are subject to continual Toil and Trouble. Moreover,

3. A

3. A Gentleman is bound to be induſtrious for his own ſake; *it is* a Duty which he oweth to himſelf, to his Honour, to his Intereſt, to his Welfare. He cannot without Induſtry continue like himſelf, or maintain the Honour and Repute becoming his Quality and State; or ſecure himſelf from Contempt and Diſgrace; for to be honourable and ſlothful are things inconſiſtent; ſeeing Honour doth not grow, nor can ſubſiſt without undertaking worthy Deſigns, conſtantly purſuing them, and happily atchieving them; it is the Fruit and Reward of ſuch Actions, which are not performed with Eaſe.

External Reſpect and a Semblance of Honour, for the ſake of publick Order, may be due to an exteriour Rank or Title; but to pay this, is not to honour the Perſon, but his Title, becauſe it is ſuppoſed, that Men of real worth and uſe do bear it; or, leſt by refuſing it to one, the whole Order may ſeem diſreſpected; but yet true Honour, or mental Eſteem is not due upon ſuch accounts; nor is it poſſible to render it unto any Perſon, who doth not by worthy Qualities and good Deeds appear to merit it.

Nor can a Gentleman without Induſtry uphold his real Intereſts againſt the Attempts of Envy, of Treachery, of Flattery, of Sychophantry, of Avarice, to which his Condition is obnoxious; to preſerve his Wealth and Eſtate, which are the Supports of his Quality, he muſt endure Care and Pains; otherwiſe he will by greedy Harpies, and crafty Lurchers be rifled or cozened of his Subſtance; it will of it ſelf go to wreck, and be imbezill'd by Negligence.

He cannot without Induſtry guard his perſonal Welfare from manifold Inconveniences, Moleſtations and Miſchiefs; Idleneſs it ſelf will be very troubleſome and irkſome to him. His time will lie upon his Hands, as a peſring Incumbrance. His Mind will be infeſted with various Diſtractions and Diſtempers; vain and ſad Thoughts, foul Luſts, and unquiet Paſſions will ſpring up therein, as Weeds in a neglected Soil. His Body will languiſh and become deſtitute of Health, of Vigour, of Activity, for want of due Exerciſe. All the Miſchiefs which naturally do ſpring from Sloth and Stupidity will ſeize upon him.

4. Thus upon various accounts a Gentleman is engag'd to Buſineſs, and concern'd to exerciſe Induſtry therein; we may add, that indeed the very nature of Gentility, or the true notion of a Gentleman doth imply ſo much.

For what, I pray, is a Gentleman, what Properties hath he, what Qualities are characteriſtical or peculiar to him, whereby he is diſtinguiſhed from others, and raiſed above the Vulgar? Are they not eſpecially two, *Courage* and *Courteſie*? which he that wanteth is not otherwiſe than equivocally a Gentleman, as an Image or a Carcaſs is a Man; without which Gentility in a conſpicuous degree is no more than a vain Show, or an empty Name; and theſe plainly do involve Induſtry, do exclude Slothfulneſs; for *Courage* doth prompt boldly to undertake, and reſolutely to diſpatch great Enterprizes and Imployments of Difficulty; It is not ſeen in a flaunting Garb, or ſtrutting Deportment; not in hectorly, ruffian-like ſwaggering or huffing; not in high Looks or big Words; but in ſtout and gallant Deeds, employing Vigour of Mind and Heart to atchieve them; how can a Man otherwiſe approve himſelf for couragious, than by ſignalizing himſelf in ſuch a way?

And for *Courteſie*, how otherwiſe can it be well diſplayed, than in ſedulous Activity for the good of Men; It ſurely doth not conſiſt in modiſh Forms of Addreſs, or complemental expreſſions, or hollow Profeſſions, commonly void of meaning, or of ſincerity;) but in real Performances of Beneficence, when Occaſion doth invite, and in waiting for Opportunities to do good; the which Practice is accompanied with ſome Care and Pain;

adding a Price to it; for an easie Courtesie is therefore small, because easie, and may be deemed to proceed rather from ordinary Humanity, than from gentile Disposition; so that in fine, he alone doth appear truly a Gentleman, who hath the Heart to undergo hard Tasks for publick Good, and willingly taketh Pains to oblige his Neighbours and Friends.

5. The Work indeed of Gentlemen is not so gross, but it may be as smart and painful as any other. For all hard Work is not manual; there are other Instruments of Action beside the Plow, the Spade, the Hammer, the Shuttle; nor doth every Work produce Sweat, and visible tiring of Body; the Head may work hard in contrivance of good Designs; the Tongue may be very active in dispensing Advice, Perswasion, Comfort, and Edification in Vertue: A Man may bestir himself in *going about to do good*; these are Works imploying the cleanly Industry of a Gentleman.

6. In such Works it was, that the truest and greatest Pattern of Gentility that ever was, did employ himself: Who was that? Even our Lord himself; for he had no particular Trade or Profession: No Man can be more loose from any Engagement to the World than he was; no Man had less need of Business or Pains-taking than he; for he had a vast Estate, being *heir of all things*, all the World being at his Disposal, yea, infinitely more, it being in his power with a Word to create whatever he would to serve his need, or satisfie his Pleasure; Omnipotency being his Treasure and supply; he had a Retinue of Angels to wait on him, and minister to him; whatever Sufficiency any Man can fansie to himself to dispense with his taking pains, that had he in a far higher degree: Yet did he find Work for himself, and continu-
Isa. 53. 11. ally was employed in performing Service to God, and imparting Benefits to Men; nor was ever Industry exercised upon Earth comparable to his.

Gentlemen therefore would do well to make him the Pattern of their Life, to whose Industry they must be beholden for their Salvation: In order whereto we recommend them to his Grace.

SERMON XXII.

Of Industry in our particular Calling, as *Scholars*.

ROM. XII. 11.

Not slothful in Business.

I Proceed to the other sort of Persons, whom we did propound, Namely,

II. *Scholars*, and that on them particularly great Engagements do lie to be industrious, is most evident from various Considerations.

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The Nature and Design of this Calling doth suppose Industry; the matter and Extent of it doth require Industry; the Worth of it doth highly deserve Industry. We are in special Gratitude to God, in Charity to Men, in due regard to our selves bound unto it.

1. First, I say, the Nature and Design of our Calling doth suppose Industry: *There is* (saith the divine *Preacher*) *a man whose labour is in wisdom, in knowledge, and in equity*; Such Men are Scholars; so that we are indeed no Scholars, but absurd Usurpers of the Name, if we are not laborious; for what is a Scholar, but one who retireth his Person, and avocateth his Mind from other Occupations, and worldly Entertainments, that he may σχολάζειν, *vacare studiis*, employ his Mind and Leisure on Study and Learning, in the Search of Truth, the Quest of Knowledge, the Improvement of his Reason. Wherefore an idle Scholar, a lazy Student, a sluggish Man of Learning, is Nonsence. Eccles. 2. 21. Ἡ σοφία γραμματέως ἐν εὐκαιρείᾳ σχολῆς. Eccl. 38. 24.

What is Learning but a diligent attendance to Instruction of Masters, skilled in any Knowledge, and conveying their Notions to us in Word or Writing?

What is Study, but an earnest, steady, persevering Application of Mind to some Matter, on which we fix our Thoughts, with intent to see through it? What in *Solomon's* Language are these *Scholastick* Occupations, but *inclining the ear* and *applying our heart to understanding*; than which commonly there is nothing more laborious, more straining Nature, and more tiring our Spirits; whence it is well compared to the most painful Exercises of Body and Soul. Prov. 2. 2.

The *Wise-man* advising Men to seek Wisdom, the which is the proper Design of our Calling, doth intimate that Work to be like digging in the Mines for Silver, and like searching all about for concealed Treasure; than which there can hardly be any more difficult and painful Task, *If* (saith he) *thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand.* Prov. 2. 4. ——Otherwhere he compareth the same Work to assiduous watching and waiting, like that of a Guard or a Client, which are the greatest Instances of Diligence; *Blessed* (saith he; or Wisdom by him saith blessed) *is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors.* Prov. 8. 34.

Wherefore if we will approve our selves to be what we are called, and what we pretend to be, if we will avoid being Impostors, assuming a Name not due to us, we must not be slothful. Farther,

2. The Matter and Extent of our Business doth require Industry from us: The Matter of it, which is Truth and Knowledge; the Extent which is very large and comprehensive, taking in all Truth, all Knowledge, worthy our Study, and useful for the Designs of it.

Our Business is to find Truth; the which even in Matters of high Importance) is not easily to be discovered; being as a Vein of Silver, encompassed with Earth and mixed with Dross) deeply laid in the Obscurity of things, wrapt up in false Appearances, entangled with Objections, and perplexed with Debates; being therefore not readily discoverable; especially by Minds clouded with Prejudices, Lusts, Passions, partial Affections, Appetites of Honour and Interest; whence to descry it requireth the most curious Observation and solicitous Circumspection that can be; together with great Pains in the Preparation and Purgation of our Minds toward the Enquiry of it.

Our Business is to attain Knowledge, not concerning obvious and vulgar Matters, but about sublime, abstruse, intricate and knotty Subjects, remote from common Observation and Sense; to get sure and exact Notions

about which will try the best Forces of our Mind with their utmost Endeavours; in firmly setling Principles, in strictly deducing Consequences, in orderly digesting Conclusions, in faithfully retaining what we learn by our Contemplation and Study.

And if to get a competent Knowledge about a few things, or to be reasonably skilful in any sort of Learning, be difficult, how much Industry doth it require to be well seen in many, or to have waded through the vast compass of Learning, in no part whereof a Scholar may conveniently or handsomely be ignorant; seeing there is such a Connexion of things, and Dependance of Notions, that one part of Learning doth confer Light to another, that a Man can hardly well understand any thing without knowing divers other things; that he will be a lame Scholar, who hath not an Insight into many kinds of Knowledge, that he can hardly be a good Scholar who is not a general one.

To understand so many Languages (which are the Shells of Knowledge) to comprehend so many Sciences (full of various Theorems and Problems) to peruse so many Histories (of ancient and modern times;) to know the World, both natural and humane; to be acquainted with the various Inventions, Inquiries, Opinions and Controversies of learned Men; to skill the Arts of expressing our Mind, and imparting our Conceptions with Advantage, so as to instruct or perswade others; these are Works indeed, which will exercise and strain our Faculties (our Reason, our Fancy, our Memory) in painful Study.

The Knowledge of such things is not innate to us; it doth not of it self spring up in our Minds; it is not any ways incident by chance, or infus'd by Grace (except rarely by Miracle;) common Observation doth not produce it; it cannot be purchased at any rate, except by that, for which it was said of old, *the gods sell all things*, that is for Pains; without which the best Wit and greatest Capacity may not render a Man learned, as the best Soil will not yield good Fruit or Grain, if they be not planted or sown therein.

Dii laboribus omnia vendunt.

Consider, if you please, what a Scholar *Solomon* was; beside his Skill in *Politicks*, which was his principal Faculty and Profession, whereby he did with admirable Dexterity and Prudence manage the Affairs of that great Kingdom, *judging his people, and discerning what was good, and bad*; accurately dispensing Justice; setling his Country in a most flourishing state of Peace, Order, Plenty and Wealth; largely extending his Territory; so that his Wisdom of this kind was famous over the Earth; Beside, I say, this civil Wisdom, he had an exquisite Skill in Natural *Philosophy* and *Medicine*; For *He spake of Trees* (or Plants) *from the cedar that is in Lebanon, even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: He spake also of beasts and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.*

1 Kings 3. 9.
1 Kings 4. 20. 25. 10. 27.
1 Kings 4. 21.
1 Kings 10. 6, 24.
1 Kings 4. 33.

He was well versed in the *Mathematicks*; for it is said, *Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the East-Country, and all the wisdom of Egypt*; the Wisdom of which Nations did consist in those Sciences. And of his *Mechanick* Skill, he left for a Monument, the most glorious Structure that ever stood on Earth.

1 Kings 4. 30.

He was very skilful in Poetry and Musick; for he did himself *compose above a thousand songs*; whereof one yet extant declareth the Loftiness of his Fancy, the Richness of his Vein, and the Elegancy of his Style.

1 Kings 4. 32.

He had great Ability in Rhetorick; according to that in *Wisdom*, *God granted me to speak as I would*; and that in *Ecclesiastes*, *The Preacher sought to find out acceptable words*; a great Instance of which Faculty, we have in that admirable Prayer of his Composure at the Dedication of the Temple.

Sap. 7. 15.
Eccles. 12. 10.
1 Kings 8.

He did wonderfully excel in *Ethicks*; concerning which he *spake three thou-*

1 Kings 4. 32.

thousand Proverbs or moral Aphorisms; and *Moreover* (saith *Ecclesiastes*) *because the Preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many Proverbs*; the which did contain a great Variety of notable Observations, and useful Directions for common Life, couched in pithy Expressions. Eccles. 12. 9.

As for *Theology*, as the Study of that was the chief Study to which he exhorteth others (as to the *head*, or principal part *of wisdom*) so questionless he was himself most conversant therein; for proof whereof he did leave so many excellent Theorems and Precepts of Divinity to us. Prov. 2. 5, —

In fine, there is no sort of Knowledge, to which he did not apply his Study; witness himself in those Words, *I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all things, that are done under heaven.* Eccles. 1. 13.

Such a Scholar was he; and such if we have a noble Ambition to be, we must use the course he did; which was first in his Heart to prefer Wisdom before all worldly things; then to pray to God for it, or for his Blessing in our quest of it; then to use the means of attaining it, diligent Searching and hard Study; for that this was his method he telleth us, *I* (saith he) *applied my heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things.* Eccles. 7. 25.

Such Considerations shew the Necessity of Industry for a Scholar; but,

3. The Worth, and Excellency, and great Utility, together with the Pleasantness of his Vocation, deserving the highest Industry, do superadd much Obligation thereto.

We are much bound to be diligent out of Ingenuity, and in Gratitude to God, who by his gracious Providence hath assigned to us a Calling so worthy, an Employment so comfortable, a way of Life no less commodious, beneficial and delightful to our selves, than serviceable to God, and useful for the World.

If we had our Option and Choice, what Calling would we desire before this of any whereto Men are affixed? How could we better imploy our Mind, or place our Labour, or spend our time, or pass our Pilgrimage in this World, than in scholastical Occupations?

It were hard to reckon up, or to express the numberless great Advantages of this Calling, I shall therefore only touch some, which readily fall under my Thought recommending its Value to us.

It is a Calling, the Design whereof conspireth with the general End of our Being; the Perfection of our Nature in its Endowments, and the Fruition of it in its best Operations.

It is a Calling that doth not employ us in bodily Toil, in worldly Care, in pursuit of trivial Affairs, in sordid Drudgeries; but in those Angelical Operations of Soul, the Contemplation of Truth, and Attainment of Wisdom; which are the worthiest Exercises of our Reason, and sweetest Entertainments of our Mind; the most precious Wealth, and most beautiful Ornaments of our Soul; whereby our Faculties are improved, are polished and refined, are enlarged in their Power and Use by habitual Accessions: the which are conducible to our own greatest Profit and Benefit, as serving to rectifie our Wills, to compose our Affections, to guide our Lives in the ways of Vertue, to bring us unto Felicity. Prov. 2. 4, 10.

It is a Calling, which being duly follow'd, will most sever us from the vulgar sort of Men, and advance us above the common Pitch; enduing us with Light to see farther than other Men, disposing us to affect better things, and to slight those meaner Objects of Humane Desire, on which Men commonly dote; freeing us from the erroneous Conceits, and from the Perverse Affections of common People. It is said διπλῶν ὁρῶσιν οἱ μαθόντες γράμματα, *men of learning are double-sighted*; but it is true, that in many cases

ses they see infinitely farther than a vulgar Sight doth reach; and if a Man by serious Study doth acquire a clear and solid Judgment of things, so as to assign to each its due Weight and Price; if he accordingly be inclined in his Heart to affect and pursue them; if from clear and right Notions of things a meek and ingenuous Temper of Mind, a Command and Moderation of Passions, a firm Integrity, and a cordial Love of Goodness do spring, he thereby becometh another kind of thing, much different from those brutish Men (Beasts of the People) who blindly follow the Motions of their sensual Appetite, or the Suggestions of their Fancy, or their mistaken Prejudices.

It is a Calling which hath these considerable Advantages, that by vertue of Improvement therein, we can see with our own Eyes, and guide our selves by our own Reasons, not being led blindfold about, or depending precariously on the Conduct of others in Matters of highest Concern to us. That we are exempted from giddy Credulity, from wavering Levity, from fond Admiration of Persons and Things, being able to distinguish of things, and to settle our Judgments about them, and to get an intimate Acquaintance with them, assuring to us their true Nature and Worth: that we are also thereby rescu'd from admiring our selves, and that over-weening Self-conceitedness, of which the *Wise-man* saith, *The sluggard is wiser in his* Prov. 26. 16. *own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.*

It is a Calling, whereby we are qualified and enabled to do God service; to gratifie his Desires, to promote his Honour, to advance his Interests; to render his Name glorious in the World; by teaching, maintaining and propagating his Truth; by perswading Men to render their due Love, Reverence, and Obedience to him; than which we can have no more honourable or satisfactory Imployment; more like to that of the glorious and blessed Spirits.

It is a Calling, the due Prosecution whereof doth ingratiate us with God, and procureth his Favour; rendring us fit Objects of his Love, and entitling us thereto in regard to our Qualities, and Recompence of our Works: For Sap. 7. 28. *God loveth none but him that dwelleth with wisdom*; and, *so shalt thou find favour* Psal. 5. 5. *and good understanding in the sight of God and man.* Prov. 3. 4.

It is a Calling whereby with greatest Advantage we may benefit Men, and deserve well of the World; drawing Men to the Knowledge and Service of God, reclaiming them from Errour and Sin, rescuing them from Misery, and conducting them to Happiness; by clear Instruction, by faithful Admonition, by powerful Exhortation: And what can be more noble, than to be the Lights of the World, the Guides of Practice to Men, the Authors of so much good, so egregious Benefactors to Mankind?

It is a Calling most exempt from the Cares, the Crosses, the Turmoils, the factious Jarrs, the anxious Intrigues, the vexatious Molestations of the World; its Business lying out of the road of those Mischiefs, wholly lying in solitary Retirement, or being transacted in the most innocent and ingenuous Company.

It is a Calling least subject to any Danger or Disappointment; wherein we may well be assured not to miscarry or lose our Labour; for the Merchant indeed by manifold Accidents may lose his Voyage, or find a bad Market; the Husbandman may plough and sow in vain; but the Student hardly can fail of improving his Stock, and reaping a good Crop of Knowledge; especially if he study with a conscientious Mind, and pious Reverence to God, imploring his gracious Help and Blessing.

It is a Calling, the Industry us'd wherein doth abundantly recompence it self, by the Pleasure and Sweetness which it carrieth in it; so that the more Pains one taketh, the more Delight he findeth, feeling himself proportionably to grow in Knowledge; and that his Work becometh continually more easie to him.

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It is a Calling, the Business whereof doth so exercise as not to weary, so entertain as not to cloy us; being not (as other Occupations are) a drawing in a Mill, or a nauseous (tedious) Repetition of the same Work; but a continual Progress toward fresh Objects; our Mind not being staked to one or a few poor Matters, but having immense Fields of Contemplation, wherein it may everlastingly expatiate, with great Proficiency and Pleasure. Γηρᾶσκω δ' ἀεὶ πολλὰ διδασκόμενος.

It is a Calling which doth ever afford plentiful Fruit, even in regard to the Conveniences of this present and temporal State; the which sufficiently will requite the Pains expended thereon: For if we be honestly industrious we shall not want Success; and succeeding we shall not want a Competence of Wealth, of Reputation, of Interest in the World: For concerning Wisdom, which is the result of honest Study, the *Wise-man* telleth us, *Riches and honour are with her, yea, durable riches and righteousness: length of days are in her right-hand, and in her left hand riches and honour: Exalt her, and she shall promote thee, she shall bring thee to honour, when thou dost embrace her; she shall give to thine head an ornament of grace, a crown of glory shall she deliver to thee*; In common Experience the Wealth of the Mind doth qualifie for Imployments, which have good Recompences annexed to them; and neither God nor Man will suffer him long to want, who is endowed with worthy Accomplishments of Knowledge: It was a ridiculous Providence in *Nero* that if he should chance to lose his Empire, he might live by fidling; yet his Motto was good; and *Dionysius*, another Tyrant, found the Benefit of it; τὸ τεχνίον γαῖα τρέφει, he that hath any good Art, hath therein an Estate, and Land in every Place; he is secured against being reduc'd to Extremity of any Misfortune: *Wisdom* (saith the *Wiseman*) *is a defence, and money is a defence; but the excellency of knowledge is, that wisdom giveth life to them that have it*: Money is a Defence, of which Fortune may bereave us; but Wisdom is beyond its Attacks; being a Treasure seated in a Place inaccessible to external Impressions.

Prov. 8. 18. 3. 16. 4. 9, 10. Eccl. 7. 12.

And as a Learned Man cannot be destitute of Substance; so he cannot want Credit, having such an Ornament, than which none hath a more general Estimation; and which can be of low rate only among that sort of Folk, to whom *Solomon* saith, *How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity? — and fools hate knowledge?* It is that which recommendeth a Man in all Company, and procureth Regard, every one yielding * Attention and Acceptance to instructive, neat, apposite Discourse) that which the Scripture calleth *acceptable, pleasant gracious words*) Men think themselves obliged thereby by receiving Information and Satisfaction from it; and accordingly *Every man* (saith the *Wise-man*) *shall kiss his lips, that giveth a right answer*; and——*for the grace of his lips the King shall be his friend*; and, *the words of a wise-man's mouth are gracious.* It is that, an Eminency wherein purchaseth lasting Fame, and a Life after Death, in the good Memory and Opinion of Posterity; *Many shall commend his understanding, and so long as the world endureth, it shall not be blotted out, his memorial shall not depart away, and his name shall live from generation to generation.* A fame no less great, and far more innocent than Acts of Chivalry and Martial Prowess; for is not *Aristotle* as renown'd for teaching the World with his Pen, as *Alexander* for conquering it with his Sword; is not one far oftener mentioned, than the other? do not Men hold themselves much more oblig'd to the Learning of the Philosopher, than to the Valour of the Warriour? Indeed the Fame of all others is indebted to the Pains of the Scholar, and could not subsist, but with and by his Fame, *Dignum laude virum, musa vetat mori*; Learning consecrateth it self and its subject together, to immortal Remembrance.

Prov. 12. 8. *A man shall be commended according to his wisdom.* Prov. 1. 22. 1. 7. *Prov. 22. 17. Prov. 24. 26. Prov. 22. 15, 26. Eccles. 10. 12. Ecclus. 39. 9.

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It is a Calling that fitteth a Man for all Conditions and Fortunes; so that he can enjoy Prosperity with Moderation, and sustain Adversity with Comfort: He that loveth a Book, will never want a faithful Friend, a wholsome Counsellour, a chearful Companion, an effectual Comforter. By Study, by reading, by thinking one may innocently divert, and pleasantly entertain himself, as in all Weathers, so in all Fortunes.

In fine, it is a Calling, which *Solomon*, who had curiously observed and exactly compared and scann'd, by Reason and by Experience all other Occupations and ways of Life, did prefer above all others; and we may presume would sooner have parted with his royal State, than with his Learning; for *Wisdom* (saith he) *is the principal thing, therefore get wisdom; and with all thy getting get understanding*; and *Then I saw* (then, that is, after a serious Disquisition and Discussion of things, I saw) *that wisdom exceedeth folly* (that is, Knowledge excelleth Ignorance) *as light excelleth darkness.*

Prov. 4. 7. Eccluf. 2. 13.

These things and much more may be said of Learning in general; but if more distinctly we survey each Part, and each Object of it, we shall find, that each doth yield considerable Emoluments, and Delights; Benefit to our Soul, Advantage to our Life, Satisfaction to our Mind.

The Observation of things, and Collection of Experiments how doth it enrich the Mind with *Ideas*, and breed a kind of familiar Acquaintance with all things, so that nothing doth surprize us, or strike our Mind with Astonishment and Admiration? and if our *eye be not satisfied with seeing, nor our ear filled with hearing*, how much less is our Mind satiated with the Pleasures of speculating and observing that immense Variety of Objects subject to its View.

Eccles. 1. 8.

The Exercise of our Mind in rational Discursiveness, about things in quest of Truth; canvasing Questions, examining Arguments for and against; how greatly doth it better us, fortifying our Natural Parts, enabling us to fix our Thoughts on Objects without roving, enuring us to weigh and resolve, and judge well about Matters proposed; preserving us from being easily abused by captious Fallacies, gull'd by specious Pretences, tossed about with every Doubt or Objection started before us?

Invention of any kind (in discerning the Causes of abstruse Effects, in resolving hard Problems, in demonstrating Theorems, in framing Compositures of witty Description, or forcible Perswasion) how much doth it exceed the Pleasure of hunting for any Game, or of combating for any Victory? do any Man's Children so much please him, as these Creatures of his Brain?

The reading of Books what is it, but conversing with the wisest Men of all Ages and all Countries, who thereby communicate to us their most deliberate Thoughts, choicest Notions, and best Inventions, couched in good Expression, and digested in exact Method.

And as to the particular Matters or Objects of Study, all have their Use and Pleasure. I shall only touch them.

The very initial Studies of *Tongues* and *Grammatical* Literature are very profitable and necessary, as the Inlets to Knowledge, whereby we are enabled to understand wise Men speaking their Sense in their own Terms and lively Strain, whereby especially we are assisted to drink sacred Knowledge out of the Fountains, the Divine Oracles.

Luther would not part with a little *Hebrew* he had for all the *Turkish* Empire.

Rhetorick, or the part of conveying our Thoughts to others by Speech with Advantages of Clearness, Force and Elegancy, so as to instruct, to perswade, to delight the Auditors; of how great Benefit is it, if it be well used? how much may it conduce to the Service of God, and Edification of Men? What hath been a more effectual Instrument of doing good, and work-

working Wonders not only in the World, but in the Church? how many Souls have been converted from Error, Vanity and Vice, to Truth, Soberneſs and Vertue, by an eloquent *Apollos*, a *Baſil*, a *Chryſoſtom*? Ἀνὴρ λόγιος, καὶ δυνατὸς-- Acts 18. 24.

The Peruſal of *Hiſtory*, how pleaſant Illumination of Mind, how uſeful Direction of Life? how ſprightly Incentives to Vertue doth it afford? how doth it ſupply the room of Experience, and furniſh us with Prudence at the Expence of others, informing us about the ways of Action, and the Conſequences thereof by Examples, without our own Danger or Trouble? how may it inſtruct and encourage us in Piety, while therein we trace the Paths of God in Men, or obſerve the Methods of Divine Providence, how the Lord and Judge of the World in due ſeaſon protecteth, proſpereth, bleſſeth, rewardeth Innocence and Integrity? how he croſſeth, defeateth, blaſteth, curſeth, puniſheth Iniquity and Outrage; managing things with admirable Temper of Wiſdom to the good of Mankind, and Advancement of his own Glory?

The *Mathematical* Sciences, how pleaſant is the Speculation of them to the Mind? how uſeful is the Practice to common Life? how do they whet and excite the Mind? how do they inure it to ſtrict Reaſoning, and patient Meditation?

Natural Philoſophy, the Contemplation of this great Theatre, or viſible Syſtem preſented before us; obſerving the various Appearances therein, and inquiring into their Cauſes; reflecting on the Order, Connection and Harmony of things; conſidering their original Source, and their final Deſign: How doth it enlarge our Minds, and advance them above vulgar Amuſements, and the Admiration of thoſe petty things, about which Men cark and bicker? how may it ſerve to work in us pious Affections of Admiration, Reverence and Love toward our great Creator, whoſe *eternal divinity is clearly ſeen*, whoſe *glory is declared*, whoſe tranſcendent Perfections and Attributes of immenſe Power, Wiſdom and Goodneſs are conſpicuouſly diſplayed, whoſe particular Kindneſs toward us Men doth evidently ſhine in thoſe his Works of Nature? Rom. 1. 20. Pſal. 19. 1. Pſal. 8.

The Study of *Moral Philoſophy*, how exceedingly beneficial may it be to us, ſuggeſting to us the Dictates of Reaſon concerning the Nature and Faculties of our Soul, the chief Good and End of our Life, the way and means of attaining Happineſs, the beſt Rules and Methods of Practice; the Diſtinctions between Good and Evil, the Nature of each Vertue, and Motives to embrace it; the Rank wherein we ſtand in the World, and the Duties proper to our Relations; by rightly underſtanding and eſtimating which things we may know how to behave our ſelves decently and ſoberly toward our ſelves, juſtly and prudently toward our Neighbours; we may learn to correct our Inclinations, to regulate our Appetites, to moderate our Paſſions, to govern our Actions, to conduct and weild all our Practice well in Proſecution of our End; ſo as to enjoy our Being and Conveniencies of Life in conſtant Quiet and Peace, with Tranquillity and Satisfaction of Mind?

But eſpecially the Study of *Theology* how numberleſs unexpreſſible Advantages doth it yield? For,

It enlighteneth our Minds with the beſt Knowledge concerning the moſt high and worthy Objects in order to the moſt happy End, with the firmeſt Aſſurance.

It certainly and perfectly doth inform us concerning the Nature and Attributes, the Will and Intentions, the Works and Providence of God.

It fully declareth to us our own Nature, our Original, our deſign'd End, our whole Duty, our certain Way of attaining eternal Life and Felicity.

It exactly teacheth us how we ſhould demean our ſelves in all reſpects, pi-

piously toward God, justly and charitably toward our Neighbour, soberly toward our selves; without Blame in the World, with Satisfaction of our Conscience, with assured Hope of blessed Rewards.

It proposeth those Encouragements, and exhibiteth Assurances of those Helps, which serve potently to engage us in all good Practice.

It setteth before us a most compleat and lively Pattern of all Goodness; apt most clearly to direct, most strongly to excite, most obligingly to engage us thereto; especially instructing and inclining to the Practice of the most high and hard Duties, Meekness, Humility, Patience, Self-denial, Contempt of all worldly Vanities.

It discovereth those sublime Mysteries and stupendious Wonders of Grace, whereby God hath demonstrated an Incomprehensible Kindness to Mankind, and our Obligation to correspondent Gratitude.

1 Pet. 1. 12. Tit. 3. 4.

It representeth manifold Arguments and Incentives to love God with most intense Affection, to confide in him with most firm Assurance, to delight in him continually *with joy unspeakable*; which are the noblest, the sweetest, the happiest Operations of our Soul.

2 Cor. 4. 8.

It reareth our Hearts from vain Thoughts, and mean Desires concerning these poor, transitory, earthly things, to Contemplations, Affections, and Hopes toward Objects most excellent, eternal and celestial.

It engageth us to study the Book of God, the Book of Books, the richest Mine of most excellent Knowledge, containing infallible Oracles of Truth, and heavenly Rules of Life; *which are able to make us wise to salvation, and perfect to every good work.*

2 Tim. 3. 15. Psal. 19. 10.

And how can we otherwise be so well employ'd, as in Meditation about such things? What Occupation doth nearer approach to that of the blessed Angels? What Heaven is there upon Earth like to that of constantly feasting our Minds and Hearts in the Contemplation of such Objects? Especially considering that this Study doth not only yield private Benefit to our selves in forwarding our own Salvation, but enableth us by our Guidance and Encouragement to promote the eternal Welfare of others, and by our Endeavours to people Heaven, according to that Exhortation of St. *Paul* pressing on *Timothy* this Study with Diligence; *Meditate upon these things; give thy self wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all; take heed unto thy self, and unto the doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thy self, and them that hear thee.*

1 Tim. 4. 16.

So considerable is each part of Learning, so extreamly profitable are some parts of it; Indeed the Skill of any liberal Art is valuable, as a handsome Ornament, as a harmless Divertisement, as an useful Instrument upon Occasions; as preferable to all other Accomplishments and Advantages of Person or Fortune (Beauty, Strength, Wealth, Power or the like;) for who would not purchase any kind of such Knowledge at any rate; who would sell it for any Price; who would not chuse rather to be deformed or impotent in his Body, than to have a mis-shapen and weak Mind; to have rather a lank Purse than an empty Brain; to have no Title at all, than no worth to bear it out? if any would, he is not of *Solomon*'s Mind; for of Wisdom (by which he meaneth a Comprehension of all Knowledge, Divine and Humane; into which the Knowledge of Natural things, of Mathematicks, of Poetry, are reckoned Ingredients) he saith, *The merchandize of it is better than the merchandize of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold; she is more precious than rubies, and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her: Her fruit is better than gold, yea, than fine gold; and her revenue than choice silver.*

1 Kings 4. 29——

Prov. 2. 14. 8. 11. Prov. 8. 19. 16. 16. 20. 15. 4. 7.

Now then, considering all these Advantages of our Calling, if we by our Negligence or Sluggishness therein do lose them, are we not very ingrate-

grateful to God, who gave them as with a gracious Intent for our Good, ſo with Expectation that we ſhould improve them to his Service? If God had allotted to us the Calling of Ruſticks, or of Artificers, we had been impious in not diligently following it; but we are abominably ingrateful in neglecting this moſt incomparably excellent Vocation.

Are we not extremely defective to our ſelves, if indulging a wretched Humour of Lazineſs we will not enjoy thoſe ſweet Pleaſures, nor embrace thoſe great Profits to which God in Mercy calleth us?

If *Solomon* ſaid true, *He that getteth wiſdom, loveth his own ſoul, he that keepeth underſtanding ſhall find good*; how little Friends are we to our ſelves, how neglectful of our own Welfare, by not uſing the means of getting Wiſdom? Prov. 19. 8.

The heart of him that hath underſtanding ſeeketh knowledge ſaith *Solomon*; what a Fool then is he that ſhunneth it? who, though it be his way and his ſpecial Duty to ſeek it, yet neglecteth it; chuſing rather to do nothing, or to do worſe. Prov. 15. 14.

And do we not deſerve great Blame, Diſpleaſure and Diſgrace from Mankind, if having ſuch Opportunities of qualifying our ſelves to do good, and ſerve the Publick, we by our Idleneſs render our ſelves worthleſs and uſeleſs?

How, being ſlothful in our Buſineſs, can we anſwer for our violating the Wills, for abuſing the Goodneſs, for perverting the Charity and Bounty of our worthy Founders and Benefactors, who gave us the good things we enjoy, not to maintain us in Idleneſs, but for Supports and Encouragements of our Induſtry? how can we excuſe our ſelves from diſhoneſty and perfidious Dealing, ſeeing that we are admitted to theſe Enjoyments under Condition, and upon Confidence (confirmed by our free Promiſes and moſt ſolemn Engagements) of uſing them according to their pious Intent, that is in a diligent Proſecution of our Studies, in order to the Service of God, and of the Publick?

Let every Scholar, when he miſ-ſpendeth an Hour, or ſluggeth on his Bed, but imagine that he heareth the Voice of thoſe glorious Kings or venerable Prelates, or worthy Gentlemen complaining thus, and rating him; Why, Sluggard, doſt thou againſt my Will poſſeſs my Eſtate? Why doſt thou preſume to occupy the Place due to an induſtrious Perſon? Why doſt thou forget or deſpiſe thy Obligation to my Kindneſs? Thou art an Uſurper, a Robber, or a Purloiner of my Goods, which I never intended for ſuch as thee; I challenge thee of Wrong to my ſelf, and of Sacrilege toward my God, to whoſe Service I devoted thoſe his Gifts to me.

How reproachful will it be to us, if that Expoſtulation may concern us, *Wherefore is there a price in the hand of a fool to get wiſdom, ſeeing he hath no heart to it?* Prov. 17. 16.

If to be a Dunce or a Bungler in any Profeſſion be ſhameful, how much more ignominious and infamous to a Scholar to be ſuch? from whom all Men expect, that he ſhould excel in intellectual Abilities; and be able to help others by his Inſtruction and Advice.

Nothing ſurely would more grate on the Heart of one, that hath a Spark of Ingenuity, of Modeſty, of generous good Nature, than to be liable to ſuch an Imputation.

To avoid it therefore (together with all the Guilt, and all the Miſchiefs attending on Sloth) let each of us in God's Name, carefully mind his Buſineſs; And let the Grace and Bleſſing of God proſper you therein. *Amen.*

SERMON XXIII.

The Unſearchableneſs of God's Judgments.

ROM. XI. 33.

How unſearchable are his Judgments, and his ways paſt finding out.

THESE Words are the Cloſe of a Diſputation, wherein St. *Paul* was engaged with the Advocates of *Judaiſm*, concerning God's Providence toward his ancient People, in rejecting the greateſt Part of them upon their refuſal to embrace the *Chriſtian* Doctrine; and in admitting the *Gentile* World to favour, upon its compliance with the Overtures thereof propoſed in the *Goſpel*. In this Proceeding thoſe *Infidels* could not diſcern God's Hand, nor would allow ſuch a Diſpenſation worthy of him, advancing ſeveral Exceptions againſt it: God (ſaid they) having eſpouſed and conſecrated us to himſelf; having to our Fathers, in regard to their Piety, made ſo abſolute Promiſes of Benediction on their Poſterity; having conſequently endowed us with ſuch Privileges and choice Pledges of his Favour, having taken ſo much pains with us, and performed ſo great things in our behalf; having ſo long avowed, ſupported, and cheriſhed us; how can it well conſiſt with his Wiſdom, with his Juſtice, with his Fidelity, with his Conſtancy thus inſtantly to abandon and repudiate us? Doth not this Dealing argue his former Affections to have been miſ-placed? doth it not implead his ancient Covenant and Law of Imperfection? doth it not ſupplant his own Deſigns, and unravel all that he for ſo many Ages hath been doing? Upon ſuch Accounts did this Diſpenſation appear very ſtrange and ſcandalous to them: but St. *Paul* being infallibly aſſured of its Truth, doth undertake to vindicate it from all Miſpriſions, rendring a fair Account of it, and aſſigning for it many ſatisfactory Reaſons, drawn from the general Equity of the Caſe, from the Nature of God, his Attributes, and his Relations to Men; from the Congruity of this Proceeding to the Tenour of God's Providence, to his moſt ancient Purpoſes, to the true Intent of his Promiſes, to his expreſs Declarations and Predictions; to the ſtate of things in the World, and the preſſing Needs of all Mankind: Such Reaſons (I ſay, which I have not time more explicitly to relate) doth the Apoſtle produce in favour of this great Diſpenſation; the which did ſuffice to clear and juſtifie it from all their Objections; yet notwithſtanding after that he had ſteered his Diſcourſe through all theſe Rocks, he thought it ſafe to caſt Anchor; winding up the Conteſt in this modeſt Intimation, that whatever he could ſay, might not perhaps exhauſt the Difficulty, or void all Scruple; that therefore in this and in all ſuch Caſes, for entire Satisfaction, we ſhould have Recourſe to the incomprehenſible Wiſdom of God, who frequently in the courſe of his Providence doth act upon grounds, and ordereth things in Methods tranſcending our Ability to diſcover or trace: To conſider ſome Cauſes and Reaſons of

which

which Incomprehensibility, and to ground thereon some practical Advices will be the Scope of my Discourse: The Reasons may be these.

1. As the Dealings of very wise Men sometimes are founded upon Maxims, and admit Justifications not obvious, nor penetrable by vulgar Conceit, so may God act according to Rules of Wisdom and Justice; which it may be quite impossible by our Faculties to apprehend, or with our Means to descry.

As there are natural Modes of Being and Operation (such as God's necessary Subsistence, his Production of things from nothing, his Eternity without Succession, his Immensity without Extension, his Prescience without Necessitation of Events, his ever acting, but never changing; and the like) so there may be prudential and moral Rules of proceeding far above our reach, so God himself telleth us: *As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* Isa. 55. 8. Some of them we may be uncapable to know, because of our finite Nature; they being peculiar Objects of Divine Wisdom, and not to be understood by any Creature: For as God cannot impart the Power of doing all things possible, so may he not communicate the Faculty of knowing all things intelligible; that being indeed to ungod himself, or to deprive himself of his peerless Supremacy in Wisdom; hence is he stiled *the only wise God*; hence is he said to *dwell in light inaccessible*; hence he *chargeth the Angels with folly*; hence the most illuminate Seraphims do veil their Faces before him. 1 Tim. 1. 17. Rom. 16. 27. Jude 25. 1 Tim. 6. 16. Job 4. 18. Isa. 6. 2.

Other such Rules we may not be able to perceive from the Meanness of our Nature, or our low Rank among Creatures; for beneath Omniscience there being innumerable Forms of Intelligence, in the lowest of these we sit, one Remove from Beasts; being endowed with Capacities suitable to that inferiour Station, and to those meaner Employments, for which we were designed and framed; whence our Mind hath a Pitch, beyond which it cannot soar; and things clearly intelligible to more noble Creatures, moving in a higher Orb, may be dark and unexplicable to us: *as an Angel of God, so is my Lord the King, to discern good and bad*, was an Expression importing this Difference, how those glorious Creatures do overtop us in intellectual Capacities. Psal. 103. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 11. 2 Sam. 14. 17, 20. 19. 27.

Also divers Notions not simply passing our Capacity to know, we are not yet in condition to ken, by reason of our Circumstances here, in this dark Corner of things, to which we are confined, and wherein we lie under many Disadvantages of attaining Knowledge: He that is shut up in a close Place, and can only peep through Chinks, who standeth in a Valley, and hath his Prospect intercepted, who is encompassed with Foggs, who hath but a dusky Light to view things by, whose Eyes are weak or foul, how can he see much or far, how can he discern things remote, minute or subtile, clearly and distinctly? Such is our Case; our Mind is pent up in the Body, and looketh only through those Clefts by which Objects strike our Sense; its Intuition is limited within a very small Compass; it resideth in an Atmosphere of Fancy, stuft with Exhalations from Temper, Appetite, Passion, Interest; its Light is scant and faint (for Sense and Experience do reach only some few gross Matters of Fact, Light infused, and Revelation imparted to us, proceed from arbitrary Dispensation, in definite Measures) our Ratiocination consequently from such Principles, must be very short and defective; nor are our Minds ever thoroughly sound, or pure and defecate from Prejudices; Hence no Wonder, that now we are wholly ignorant of divers great Truths, or have but a glimmering Notion of them, which we may, and hereafter shall come fully and clearly to understand: so that even the Apostles, the Secretaries of Heaven might say, *We know in part,* 1 Cor. 13. 9, 12.

part, and we prophesie in part; We now see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.

In fine, those Rules of Equity or Experience, which we in our Transactions with one another do use (being derived from our Original Inclinations to like some good things, or from Notions stamped on our Soul when God made us according to his Image, from common Experience, from any kind of rational Collection, from the Prescription of God's Word) if they be applied to the Dealings of God will be found very incongruous, or deficient; the Case being vastly altered from that infinite Distance in Nature and State between God and us; and from the immense Differences which his Relations toward us have from our Relations to one another.

Wherefore in divers Enquiries about Providence, to which our Curiosity will stretch it self, it is impossible for us to be resolved, and launching into them, we shall soon get out of our Depth, so as to swim in Dissatisfaction, or to sink into Distrust: Why God made the World at such an Instant, no sooner or later; why he made it thus, not exempt from all Disorder; why he framed Man (the Prince of visible Creatures) so fallible and frail; so prone to Sin, so liable to Misery; why so many things happen, offensive to him, why his Gifts are distributed with such Inequality? such Questions we are apt to propound and to debate; but the Resolution of them our Mind perhaps was not made to apprehend, nor in its most elevate Condition shall attain it; however in this State we by no means can come at it; it at least being kept close from us among those things, of which it is said, *The* Deut. 29. 30. *secret things belong unto the Lord our God*, in distinction from others, about which it is added, *But those that are revealed, belong unto us and to our children for ever.*

In such Cases the absolute Will, the Sovereign Authority, the pure Liberality of God do supply the Place of Reasons, sufficient, if not to satisfie the Rom. 9. 20. Minds of Men fondly curious, yet to stop the Mouths of those, who are Isa. 45. 9. boldly peremptory: The which are alledged, not with intent to imply that Gen. 18. 25. God ever acteth unaccountably, or without highest Reason, but that some- Ezek. 18. 25. times his Methods of acting are not fit Subjects of our Conception or Dis- Isa. 5. 3. cussion; for otherwhile God appealeth to the Verdict of our Reason; when the Case is such that we can apprehend it, and the Apprehension of it may conduce to good Purposes.

2. As the standing Rules of God's acting, so the occasional Grounds thereof are commonly placed beyond the Sphere of our Apprehension.

God is obliged to prosecute his own immutable Decrees; *working all* Eph. 1. 11. *things*, as the *Apostle* saith, *according to the counsel of his own will*; which how can we any-wise come to discover? can we climb up above the Heaven of Heavens, and there unlock his Closet, rifle his Cabinet, and peruse the Rom. 11. 34. Records of everlasting Destiny, by which the World is governed? No, *Who* Isa. 40. 13. Jer. 23. 18. *knoweth his mind, or hath been his counsellour? Who*, saith the *Prophet*, *hath* Sap. 9. 13. *stood in the counsel of the Lord; or hath perceived and heard his word?*

He doth *search the hearts, and try the reins of men*; he doth * *weigh their spirits*, and *their works*; he doth *know their frame*, he doth *understand their thoughts afar off*; he perceiveth their closest Intentions, their deepest Contrivances, their most retired Behaviours; he consequently is acquainted with their true Qualifications, Capacities and Merits; unto which he most justly and wisely doth accommodate his Dealings with them; the which therefore must often thwart the Opinions and Expectations of us, who are ignorant of those Particulars, and can only view the exteriour Face

* Prov. 16. 2. Isa. 26. 7. 1 Sam. 2. 3. Psal. 103. 14. 139. 2. 64. 6. Job 14. 16. Ἡμεῖς μὲν γὰρ μόνα ὁρῶμεν τὰ πεφυκότα· ὁ δὲ τὰ ὅλων Θεὸς, καὶ τὰ παύτων ἔνδοθεν ὄντων ἐπίσταται τὸ σκότον, καὶ τοῦτο μᾶλλον, ἢ τοῖς ἔργοις δικάζων ἐκφέρει τὸ ψῆφον. Theod. *Ep.* 3.

Face or Semblance of things: For as *Samuel*, in the case of preferring *David* before his Brethren, did say) *God seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh at the outward appearance, but God looketh on the heart.* 1 Sam. 16. 7.

God also hath a perfect Foresight of contingent Events; he seeth upon what Pin each Wheel moveth, and with what Weight every Scale will be turned; he discerneth all the Connections, all the Entanglements of things, and what the Result will be upon the Combination, or the clashing of numberless Causes; in Correspondence to which Perceptions he doth order things consistently, and conveniently; whereas we being stark blind, or very dim-sighted in such respects (seeing nothing future, and but few things present) cannot apprehend what is fit and feasible; or why that is done, which appeareth done to us. Isa. 45. 11.

God observeth in what relations, and what degrees of Comparison (as to their Natures, their Vertues, their Consequences) all things do stand, each toward others; so poising them in the Balance of right Judgment, as exactly to distinguish their just Weight and Worth; whereas we cannot tell what things to compare, we know not how to put them into the Scale, we are unapt to make due Allowances, we are unable to discern which side doth overweigh: In the immense Variety of Objects our Knowledge doth extend to few things eligible, nor among them can we pick out the best Competitors for our choice: Hence often must we be at great Losses in scanning the Designs, or tracing the Footsteps of Providence.

3. We are also uncapable thoroughly to discern the ways of Providence from our moral Defects, in some measure common to all Men; from our Stupidity, our Sloth, our Temerity, our Impatience, our Impurity of Heart, our Perverseness of Will and Affections: we have not the Perspicacity to espy the subtile Tracts, and secret Reserves of Divine Wisdom; we have not the Industry, with steady Application of Mind, to regard and meditate on God's Works; we have not the Temper and Patience to wait upon God, until he discover himself in the Accomplishment of his Purposes; we have not that *blessed purity of heart*, which is requisite to the *seeing God* in his special Dispensations, we have not that Rectitude of Will and Government of our Passions, as not to be scandalized at what God doeth, if it thwarteth our Conceit or Humour; such Defects are observable in the best Men; who therefore have misapprehended, have disrelished, have fretted and murmured at the Proceedings of God; we might instance in *Job*, in *David*, in *Elias*, in *Jonah*, in the holy *Apostles* themselves, by whose Speeches and Deportments in some cases it may appear how difficult it is for us, who have *eyes of flesh* (as *Job* speaketh) and Hearts too never quite freed of Carnality, to see through, or fully to acquiesce in the Dealings of God. Matth. 5. 8. Job 10. 3.

It is indeed a Distemper incident to us, which we can hardly shun, or cure, that we are apt to measure the Equity and Expedience of things according to our Opinions and Passions; affecting consequently to impose on God our silly Imaginations as Rules of his proceeding, and to constitute him the Executioner of our sorry Passions; what we conceit fit to be done, that we take God bound to perform; when we feel our selves stirred, then we presume God must be alike concerned: to our Apprehensions every slight inconvenience is a huge Calamity, every Scratch of Fortune is a ghastly Wound; God therefore, we think, should have prevented it, or must speedily remove it; every pitiful Bauble, every trivial Accommodation a matter of high Consequence, which if God with-hold, we are ready to clamour on him; and wail as Children for want of a Trifle. Are we soundly angry or enflamed with Zeal? then *fire must come down from heaven*, then Thunder-bolts must fly about, then nothing but sudden Woe and Vengeance Luke 9. 54.

geance are denounced; are we pleased? then Showers of Blessings must descend on the Heads; then Floods of Wealth must run into the Laps of our Favourites, otherwise we are not satisfied; and scarce can deem God awake, or mindful of his Charge. We do beyond measure hate or despise some Persons, and to those God must not afford any Favour, any Mercy, any Forbearance, or time of Repentance; we excessively admire or dote on others, and those God must not touch or cross; if he doth not proceed thus, he is in danger to forfeit his Authority: He must hardly be allowed to govern the World, in case he will not square his Administrations to our fond Conceit, or froward Humour: Hence no wonder, that Men often are stumbled about Providence; For God will not rule according to their Fancy or Pleasure (it would be a mad World if he should) neither indeed could he do so if he would, their Judgments and their Desires being infinitely various, inconsistent and repugnant. Again,

4. The Nature of those Instruments which Divine Providence doth use in Administration of Human Affairs, hindereth us from discerning it: It is an Observation among *Philosophers*, that the Footsteps of divine Wisdom are, to Exclusion of doubt, far more conspicuous in the Works of Nature, than in the Management of our Affairs; so that some who by Contemplation of natural Appearances were convinced of God's Existence and his Protection of the World (who thence could not doubt but that an immense Wisdom had erected the beautiful Frame of Heaven and Earth, had ranged the Stars in their Order and Courses; had formed the Bodies and Souls of *Animals*, had provided for the Subsistence and Propagation of each *Species*, had setled and doth uphold the visible World in its so comely and convenient State, that even such Men) reflecting on the Course of Humane Transactions, have staggered into Distrust, whether a Divine Wisdom doth sit at the Helm of our Affairs; many thence hardly would admit God to be concerned in them, but supposed him to commit their Conduct to a fatal Swinge, or a casual Fluctuation of obvious Causes: One great Reason of this Difference may be, that whereas the Instruments of Divine Power in Nature are in themselves merely passive, or act only as they are acted by pure Necessity (as a Pen in Writing or a Hammer in striking) being thence determinate, uniform, constant and certain in their Operation; whenever there any Footsteps of Counsel, any Tendency to an End, and Deviation from the common Tracks of Motion do appear, such Effects cannot reasonably be imputed merely to natural Causes, but to a superiour Wisdom, weilding them in such a manner, and steering them to such a Mark: but the visible Engines of Providence in our Affairs are self-moving Agents, working with Knowledge and Choice; the which, as in themselves they are indeterminate, irregular and uncertain, so they are capable to be diversified in numberless unaccountable Ways according to various Representations of Objects, or by Influence of divers Principles inclining to judge and chuse differently: Temper, Humour, Passion, Prejudice, Custom, Example, together with Contingencies of Occasion (depending on like Principles in adjacent free Causes) do move singly or combinedly, in Ways so implicate, to the various Production of so various Events, that nothing hardly can fall out, which may not with some plausible Colour of Reason be derived from some one of those Sources, or from a Complication of them: Nothing can appear so uncouth or extravagant, which may not be fathered on some Fetch of Wit, or some hitof Fancy, or Capricio of Humour, or some Transport of

Nam cum dispositi quæssissem fœdera mundi,
Præscriptosque mari fines ——
——*tunc omnia rebar*
Consilio firmata Dei ——
Sed cum res hominum tanta caligine volvi
Adspicerem ——
——*rursus labefacta cadebat*
Religio, &c.

Claud. *in* Ruff. 1. Diod. Sic. *lib.* 15. *p.* 482.

of Passion, or some lucky Advantage, or on divers of those conspiring; whence in accounting for the Reason of such Events, Men deem they may leave out Providence as superfluous; especially considering, that usually Disorders and Defects, only imputable to Man's Will, do accompany and further such Events.

For instance, what other Cause would many think needful to assign for the Conveyance of *Joseph* into *Egypt*, than the Envy of his Brethren; for *Shimei*'s reviling *David*, than his base Malignity; for *David*'s numbering the People, than his wanton Pride; for *Jeroboam*'s Revolt, than his unruly Ambition; for *Job*'s being robb'd, than the theevish Disposition of the *Arabs*; for his being diseased, than a Redundance of bad Humours; for our *Lord*'s Suffering, than the spiteful Rage of the *Jewish* Rulers and People; together with the treacherous Avarice of *Judas*, and the corrupt Easiness of *Pilate*? These Events all of them are ascribed to God's Hand, and special Ordination; but Men could not see or avow it in them; what need will Men ever say in such cases to introduce God's Aid, when humane Means suffice to atchieve the Feat? Gen. 45. 5. 50. 20. Psal. 105. 17. 2 Sam 16. 10. 2 Sam. 24. 1. 1 Kings 12. 15. 24. Job 1. 15, &c. Acts 2. 23. 4. 28.

5. Indeed, as in Nature, the Influences of Heaven, and of inferiour Causes so commonly in the Production of these Events, divine and humane Agency are so knit and twisted one with the other, that it is not easie to discriminate them, so as to sever the Bounds of common and special Providence; or to discern what God performeth by natural Instruments, what by superiour Efficacy; when the Balance turneth from our Inclinations, when it is cast from a Grain thrown in by divine Interposition; the Management of these Affairs being a Consort, wherein God's Wisdom beareth one part, Man's Free-will playeth another; Fortune and Occasion also do strike in, we not seeing the first, are prone to ascribe all the Harmony to the last, which are most obvious and visible.

Θεὸς μὲν δὴ πάντα, ἢ μᾶλλον Θεὸν πάντα ἢ καιρὸς τὰ ἀνθρώπινα κυβερνῶσι τύχη. Max. Tyr. *diss.* 3. ἐ Plat.

6. The more apt we are to do thus, because the manner of Divine Efficacy is ever very soft and gentle: God disposeth things *fortiter & suaviter*; so as effectually to perform what he designeth, but in the most sweet and easie way: his Providence doth not hurry along like an impetuous rumbling Torrent, but glideth on as a smooth and still Current, with an irresistible, but imperceptible Force carrying things down therewith: without much ado, without any Clatter, by a Nod of his Head, by a Whisper of his Mouth, by a Turn of his Hand, he doth effect his Purposes: winding up a close Spring, he setteth the greatest Wheels in Motion; and thrusting in an insensible Spoak, he stoppeth the greatest Wheels in their career; injecting a Thought, exciting an Humour, presenting an Occasion, insinuating a petty Accident, he bringeth about the most notable Events. He doth so *fashion the hearts of men*, so *manage their hands*, so *guide their steps*, that even they who are acted by him cannot feel the least Touch upon them. For, *The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of waters, he turneth it whersoever he will*; that is, by secret Pipes, by obscure Chanels God conveyeth the Minds and Wills of greatest Persons (the chief Engines of his Providence) unto such Points of Resolution as he pleaseth, so that they seem to flow thither of their own accord, without any exteriour Direction or Impulse: Hence do his most effectual Operations slip by us without making Impression on our Minds, which are wont to apprehend things, as with a gross Palpability they do incur the Senses, so that the *Preacher*, comparing the Methods of Providence with the most occult Pro-

Sap. 8. 1. ἐυρώστως ἢ χρηστῶς.

Θεῦ πνος ἐμβάλοντος εἰς νῦν ἀνθρώπων. Plut. Timol.

Psal. 33. 15. Isaiah 41. 13. 42. 6. Prov. 16. 9. 20. 24. Jer. 10. 23. Job 33. 14. 23. 8.

Prov. 21. 1.

Eccl. 11. 5. ceedings in Nature, might well say, *As thou knowest not the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child, so thou knowest not the works of God, who maketh all.* Again,

7. God in his Progress toward the Atchievement of any Design, is not wont to go in the most direct and compendious ways, but commonly windeth about, and taketh a large compass, enfolding several other co-incident Purposes, some whereof may be no less considerable, than is that, which we deem most necessary, and affect to see dispatched; but this Course seemeth tedious to us, who have not the Wit to perceive that Complexion of Ends, nor the Temper to wait for the Completion of them. If God, when we seem to need, doth not instantly appear in our Favour and Succour, if he doth not presently vindicate Truth and Right; if he doth not nip wicked Designs in the Bud, and repress the first Onsets of outragious Violence; if for a while he suffereth the *tabernacles of robbers to prosper*, and *iniquity to lift up its horn*; then he is in a Slumber, quite unmindful or insensible of us; then he turneth aside his Face, or doth behold what passeth, as an unconcerned Spectator; then he standeth aloof, unready to help us; then doth he hold off his Hand, not medling in our Affairs; in such cases we are apt to cry out, *Estis ubi O superi: How long, O Lord, wilt thou forget; how long wilt thou hide thy face? Lord, how long wilt thou look on? Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord? why standest thou afar off? why withdrawest thou thy hand? pluck it out of thy bosom: Return, O Lord, how long?* such are our Prayers, such our Expostulations; so is our blind Impatience prone to muse and mutter; not considering how many good Designs God is carrying on in a calm and steady Pace, by well measured Steps, all which in due season, when they are ripe for Accomplishment, shall undoubtedly be effected; for, *The Lord*, as St. *Peter* saith, *is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is long-suffering toward all men*, that is, he certainly will express his faithful Benignity toward good Men, yet so as also to extend his merciful Patience toward others; he so will tender the Interests of some, as concurrently to procure the Welfare of all, and accordingly will time his Proceedings, allowing the Leisure and Opportunities requisite thereto: He can, although we cannot, *wait to be gracious*; for as in him there are no Passions to precipitate Action, so to him there are no sensible Differences of time, *One day being with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

Sil. Ital. Psal. 13. 1. 89. 46. 90. 13. 74. 10. 44. 24. 55. 1. 94. 3. 35. 17. Psal. 35. 17. Psal. 44. 23. 35. 23. 7. 6. Psal. 74. 11. Psal. 10. 1. Psal. 90. 13. 6. 4. 7. 7. 80. 14. Psal. 22. 1, 11, 19. 38. 2. 71. 12. *Vid.* Hab. 1. 2.

(Jer. 23. 20.) 2 Pet. 3. 9, 10.

Isa. 30. 18.

8. Again, God (as is the Property of every wise Agent) is wont to act variously, according to the State and Circumstances of things, or to the Dispositions and Capacities of Persons; so as to do the same thing for different Ends, and different things for the same End; to apply one Instrument to several Uses, and by several Instruments to work out one Purpose: so he afflicteth good Men out of Love for Trial and Improvement of their Vertues, bad Men in Displeasure to illustrate his Power and Justice on them; he encourageth and blesseth the one, he punisheth and curseth the other with Prosperity; he reclaimeth both from Error and Sin by either of those Methods, as their Temper and their Circumstances do require: Whence it is very difficult for us ever from the kind of Accidents befalling Men to divine how far God is concerned in them, or to what particular Scope they are aimed; so that well might the *Preacher*, upon a careful Observation of such Occurrences, establish this Rule, *No man knoweth love, or hatred* (that is, the special Regard of God toward Men) *by all that is before them*;

Eccl. 9. 1, 2.

them; because, *All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.* Farther,

9. There are different Ends which Providence in various Order and Measure doth pursue, which we, by reason of our dim Insight and short Prospect cannot descry: God, as the universal and perpetual Governour of the World, in his dispensation of things, respecteth not only the Good of this or that Person, of one Nation or one Age; but often in some degree waving that, or taking care for it in a less remarkable way) hath a provident regard to the more extensive Good of a whole People, of the World, of Posterity; as he did order his Friend *Abraham* to wander in a strange Land, for the Benefit of his Seed; *Joseph* to be sold, calumniated, and fettered for the Preservation of his Family; our Lord to suffer those grievous things for the Redemption of Mankind; the *Jews* to be rejected for the Salvation of the *Gentiles*: In such cases pur-blind Men observing Events to cross particular and present Ends, but not being aware how conducible they may prove to general, remote, and more important Designs, can hardly be satisfied how God should be concerned in them; the present, or that which lieth adjacent just under our Nose, is all that we can or will consider; and therefore must be ill Judges of what is done by all-provident Wisdom. Hab. 3. 6.

10. Again, God permitteth things, bad in their own Nature, with regard to their instrumental Use and Tendency; for that often the worst things may be ordinable to the best Ends; things very bitter may work pleasant Effects; upon the wildest Stock divine Husbandry can ingraft most excellent Fruit; Sin really, and suffering reputedly, are the worst Evils, yet from them much Glory to God, and great Benefit to Men do accrue; even from the most wicked Act that ever was committed, from the most lamentable Event that ever did happen, Fruits admirably glorious, and immensely beneficial did spring; yet usually so blind are we as to be offended at such things, and from them to raise Exceptions against Providence.

11. Also the Expediency of things to be permitted or crossed, doth frequently consist, not in themselves singly taken, as particular Acts or Events, but in their Conjunction, or Reference to others, with which they may become subservient toward a common End; so that divers things in themselves extreamly bad, may by Combination or Collision engender good Effects; and thence prove fit Weapons or Tools of Providence; as the most deadly Poisons may be so mixed, that curbing one another's Force, they may constitute a harmless Mass, sometimes a wholsome Medicine; but we poring on the simple Ingredients, and not considering how they may be tempered, or how applied by a skilful Hand, can hardly deem the Toleration of them congruous to Wisdom. Farther,

12. That Providence sometimes is obscure and intricate, may be attributed to the Will of God, upon divers good Accounts designing it to be such: *Verily* (saith the *Prophet*) *thou art a God that hidest thy self, O God of Israel the Saviour.* Is. 45. 15. Psal. 89. 46.

God commonly doth not intend to exert his Hand notoriously; for that whereas every special Interposition of his Hand is in effect a Miracle (surmounting the natural Power, or thwarting the ordinary Course of inferiour Causes) it doth not become him to prostitute his miraculous Power, or to exert it otherwise than upon singular Occasions, and for most weighty Causes: 'tis not conformable to the Tenour of his Administrations to convince Men against their Will, or by irresistible Evidence to wring Persuasion from stubborn or stupid Minds; but to exercise the Wisdom, and to prove the ingenuity of well-disposed Persons, who upon competent Intimations, shall be capable to spell out, and forward to approve his Proceedings.

13. He will not glare forth in Discoveries so bright as to dazle, to confound our weak Sight; therefore he veileth his Face with a Cloud, and wrappeth his Power in some Obscurity; therefore *clouds and darkness are round about him; he maketh darkness his secret place; his Pavilion round about him is dark waters and thick clouds of the sky.*

Hab. 3. 4. Psal. 97. 2. 18. 11.

14. He meaneth thereby to improve and exalt our Faith, being the less seen, that he may be the more believed; Faith never rising higher than when it doth soar to Objects beyond our Sight; when we can approve God's Wisdom and Justice in Occurrences surmounting our Conceit; when we can rely upon God's Word and Help, although the Stream of his Proceedings seemeth to cross our Hopes.

15. It is fit also that God many times designedly should act in Ways surpassing our Apprehension, and apt to baffle and puzzle our Reason, that he may appear God indeed, infinitely transcending us in perfection of Wisdom and Justice; or that we comprehending the Reason of his Actings, may not imagine our Wisdom comparable, our Justice commensurate to his; yea, that we in those respects do exceed him; for *That* (as *Tertullian* discourseth) *which may be seen, is less than the eyes that survey it; that which may be comprehended, is less than the hands that grasp it; that which may be valued, is less than the senses which rate it*; it is Gods being inestimable that makes him worthily esteemed; his being incomprehensible rendreth him adorable.

Quod videri communiter, quod comprehendi, quod æstimari potest, minus est oculis quibus occupatur, & manibus quibus contaminatur, & sensibus quibus invenitur. Tert. *Apol.* 17.

Hoc est quod Deum æstimari facit, dum æstimari non capit. Tert. 16.

16. The Obscurity of Providence doth indeed conciliate an awful Reverence toward it; for Darkness naturally raiseth a Dread of invisible Powers; we use to go on tremblingly, when we cannot see far about us; we regard none so much as those, whose Wisdom we find to over-reach ours, and whose Intentions we cannot sound; it was *Elihu*'s Observation, *With God is terrible Majesty, the Almighty we cannot find him out;—— men do therefore fear him.*

Job 37. 22, 23, 24.

17. It is also requisite, that God should dispose many Occurrences, cross to our vulgar Notions, and offensive to our carnal Sense, that we may thence be prompted to think of God, driven to seek him, engaged to mark him interposing in our Affairs; Men from disorderly and surprizing Accidents preposterously do conceive Doubts about Providence, as if in managing things, nothing odd, or amiss, would occur; whereas if no such Events did start up, they might be proner to question it, they would at least come to forget or neglect it; for if humane Transactions passed on as do the Motions of Nature, in a smooth Course, without any Rub or Disturbance, Men commonly would no more think of God than they do, when they behold the Sun rising, the Rivers running, the Sea flowing; they would not depend on his Protection, or have recourse to him for Succour; it is Difficulty and Distress seizing on them, which compel Men to implore God for Relief, which dispose them to see his Hand reaching it forth unto them; according to that in the *Psalm*; *When he slew them, then they sought him, they returned and enquired early after God, they remembred that God was their rock, and the most high God their redeemer.* Again,

Psal. 78. 34.

18. It is needful that the present Course of Providence should not be transparently clear and satisfactory, that we may be well assured concerning a future Account, and forced in our Thoughts to recur thither for a Resolution of all such emergent Doubts and Difficulties; for if all Accompts were apparently stated and discharged here; if now Right did ever prevail, and Iniquity were suppressed; if Vertue were duly crowned, and Vice deservedly scourged, who would hope or fear an After-reckoning?

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This indeed is the grand Cause, why Providence now doth appear so cloudy, that Men consider not how our Affairs have no compleat Determination, or final Issue here; things now are doing and not done; in a Progress and Tendency toward somewhat beyond, not in a State of Consistence and Perfection; this not being the Place of deciding Causes, or dispensing Rewards; but a State of Probation of Work, of Travel, of Combat, of running for the Prize, of sowing toward the Harvest; a State of Liberty to follow our own Choice, and to lay the ground of our Doom; of falling into Sin, and of rising thence by Repentance; of God's exercising Patience and exhibiting Mercy: wherefore as we cannot well judge of an artificial Work by its first Draughts, or of a Poem by a few Scenes, but must stay till all be finished or acted through; so we cannot here clearly discern the entire Congruity of providential Dispensations to the Divine Attributes, the *Catastrophe* or utmost Resolution of things is the general Judgment, wherein the deep Wisdom, the exact Justice, the perfect Goodness of God will be displayed to the full Satisfaction or Conviction of all Men; when God's Honour will be thoroughly vindicated, his despised Patience, and his abused Grace will be avenged; every Case will be rightly tried, every Work will be justly recompenced, all Accompts will be set streight; in the mean time divers things must occur, unaccountable to us, looking upon things as they now stand absolutely before us, without Reference to that Day: Considering this may induce us to suspend our Opinion about such Matters, allowing God to go through with his Work before we censure it, not being so quick and precipitate as to forestall his Judgment; and surely would we but observe that reasonable Advice of St. *Paul*, *Judge nothing before the time until the Lord come*, our chief Doubts would be resolved, our shrewdest Exceptions against Providence would be voided.

Chrys. *Tom.* 7. *p.* 15.

Rom. 2. 7.

1 Cor. 4. 5.

These are the chief Reasons of the Point, which Meditation did suggest; upon it (for it is not a Point merely speculative, but pregnant with useful Consequences) divers practical Applications may be grounded, which the time scarcely will allow me to name.

1. It should render us modest and sober in our Judgment about providential Occurrences, not pretending thoroughly to know the Reasons of God's Proceedings, or to define the Consequences of them; for it is plainly fond Arrogance or profane Imposture to assume perfect Skill in that which passeth our Capacity to learn.

Eccles. 3. 20. Psal. 131. 1.

2. It should make us staunch and cautious of grounding Judgment or Censure upon present Events about any Cause, or any Person; for it is notorious Temerity to pass Sentence upon grounds uncapable of Evidence.

Luke 13. 1.

3. It should repress wanton Curiosity, which may transport us beyond our Bounds in Speculation of these mysterious Intrigues; so that we shall lose our Labour and Time, shall discompose our Minds, shall plunge our selves into vain Errors or anxious Doubts.

Job 11. 12. Sap. 9. 13. Job 42. 3.

4. It should keep us from Conceitedness and Confidence in our own Wisdom; for how can we conceit highly of that, or much confide in it, which we find so unable to penetrate the Reason of most common and obvious Appearances; so *non-pluss* in its Enquiries, so defeated in its Expectations, so mistaken in its Judgments of things.

Job 40. 4. 42. 2. Psal. 73. 22. 39. 9.

5. It should preserve us from Infidelity, and from Despair upon account of any cross Accidents occurring here; for 'tis unreasonable to disbelieve a Notion, otherwise well grounded, because we cannot assoil Scruples or Cavils drawn from Matters inscrutable to us; 'tis foolish to despair of a good

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Event, upon Appearances, whereof we cannot apprehend the full Reason, or final Result.

2 Kings 20.9. Mat. 16.23. 6. It should prevent our taking Offence, or being discontented at any Events rising up before us; for to be displeased at that, which a superiour Wisdom, unsearchable to us, doth order, is to be displeased at we know not what, or why, which is childish Weakness, to fret and wail at that, which for all we can see, proceedeth from good Intention, and tendeth to good Issue, is pitiful Frowardness.

Eccles. 8. 11. 7. It should guard us from Security, or from presuming upon Impunity for our Miscarriages: For seeing God doth not always clearly and fully discover his Mind, it is vain from God's Reservedness to conclude his Unconcernedness; or because he is now patient, that he never will be just in chastizing our Offences.

Isaiah 26. 11. 5. 12. 8. It should quicken our Industry in observing and considering the Works of Providence; for since they are not easily discernible, and the discerning them in some measure is sometimes of great use, it is needful that we be very diligent in contemplation of them; the fainter our Light is, the more attent we should be in looking; the knottier the Subject, the more earnest should be our Study on it.

9. It should oblige us to be circumspect and wary in our Conversation; for the darker the Way is, the more careful should be our Walking therein, lest we err, lest we stumble, lest we strike on somewhat hurtful to us.

Jer. 10. 23. 10. It should engage us constantly to seek God, and to depend on him, for the Protection and Conduct of his Grace, which is the only Clew, that can lead us safely through this intricate Labyrinth of worldly Contingencies.

Psal. 36. 6. 92. 5. Apoc. 15. 3. 19. 2. 11. In fine, it should cause us humbly to admire and adore that Wisdom, which governeth the World in ways no less great and wonderful than just and holy: For *Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord, God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, O thou king of Saints.*

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

SERMON XXIV.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the rule over you.

OBedience unto Spiritual Guides and Governours is a Duty of great Importance; the which to declare and press is very seasonable for these times, wherein so little regard is had thereto; I have therefore pitched on this Text, being an Apostolical Precept, briefly and clearly enjoining that Duty: and in it we shall consider and explain these two Particulars: 1. The Persons to whom Obedience is to be payed. 2. What that

that Obedience doth import, or wherein it consisteth: and together with Explication of the Duty, we shall apply it, and urge its Practice.

I. As to the Persons unto whom Obedience is to be performed, they are, generally speaking, all spiritual Guides, or Governours of the Church (those *who speak to us the word of God, and who watch for our souls*, as they are describ'd in the Context) expressed here by a Term very significant and appositе, as implying fully the Nature of their Charge, the Qualification of their Persons, their Rank and Privileges in the Church, together consequently with the grounds of Obligation to the correspondent Duties toward them. There are in holy Scripture divers Names and Phrases appropriate to them, each of them denoting some eminent part of their Office, or some Appurtenance thereto; but this seemeth of all most comprehensive; so that unto it all the rest are well reducible: The Term is ἡγέμενοι, that is, *Leaders*, or *Guides*, or *Captains*; which properly may denote the subsequent particulars in way of Duty, or Privilege appertaining to them. Heb. 13. 7, 17.

1. It may denote Eminence of Dignity, or Superiority to others: that they are (as it is said of *Judas* and *Silas* in the *Acts*) ἄνδρες ἡγέμονοι ἐν ἀδελφοῖς, *principal men among the brethren*: for to *lead*, implieth Precedence, which is a Note of Superiority and Preeminence. Hence are they stiled πρεσβῦτες, *Presidents* or *Prelates*; οἱ πρῶτοι, the *first* or *prime* Men; οἱ μείζονες, the *greater*, Majors or Grandees among us: *He* (saith our Lord) *that will be the first among you, let him be your servant*; and *He that is greater among you, let him be as the younger*; *and he that is chief, as he that doth serve*; where ὁ μείζων, and ὁ ἡγέμων, (the *greater* and the *Leader*) are Terms equivalent, or interpretative the one of the other; and our Lord in those Places as he prescribeth Humility of Mind and Demeanour, so he implieth difference of Rank among his Disciples: whence to render especial Respect and Honour to them, as to our Betters, is a Duty often enjoined. Acts 15. 22. 1 Tim. 5. 17. Rom. 12. 8. 1 Thess. 5. 12. Mat. 20. 27. Luke 22. 26. Phil. 2. 29. 1 Thess. 5. 13. 1 Tim. 5. 17.

2. It doth imply Power and Authority: Their Superiority is not barely grounded on personal Worth or Fortune; it serveth not merely for Order, and Pomp; but it standeth upon the nature of their Office, and tendeth to Use: They are by God's Appointment enabled to exercise Acts of Power; to command, to judge, to check, controul, and chastise in a spiritual way, in order to spiritual Ends; (the Regulation of God's Worship and Service, the Preservation of Order and Peace, the promoting of Edification in divine Knowledge in Holiness of Life) so are they ἡγέμενοι, as that Word in common Use (as the Word ἡγεμὼν of kin to it) doth signifie *Captains* and *Princes*; importing Authority to command and rule; whence the *Hebrew* Word נָשִׂיא, a *Prince*, is usually rendred by it; and ὁ ἡγέμενος, is the Title, attributed to our Lord, to express his kingly Function, being the same with ἀρχηγός, the *Prince* or *Captain*.) Hence are they otherwise stiled ὑποβερνήσεις, (*Governors*) ἐπίσκοποι, (*Overseers*, or *Superintendents*) as St. *Jerome* rendreth it) *Pastors* (a Word often signifying *Rule*, and attributed to civil Governours) πρεσβύτερο, (*Elders*, or *Senators*; the Word denoteth not merely Age, but Office and Authority) οἱ ἐπιμελῶντες, *such as take care for*, the *Curators* or *Supravisors of the Church*: Hence also they are signally and specially in relation unto God stiled δοῦλοι (*the Servants*) διάκονοι (*the Ministers*) ὑπηρέται (*the Officers*) λειτουργοὶ (*the publick Agents*) οἰκονόμοι (*the Stewards*) συνεργοὶ (*the Coadjutors*, or Assistants) πρέσβεις (*the Legates*) ἄγγελοι (*the Angels*, or Messengers) *of God*; which Titles imply, that God by them, as his Substitutes and Instruments, doth Mat. 2. 6. Acts 5. 31. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Acts 20. 28. Mat. 2. 6. Psalm 78. 71. 1 Pet. 5. 2. 2 Sam. 5. 2. 7. 7. 1 Tim. 3. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 24. Rom. 15. 16. 1 Cor. 4. 1, 2, 3. 9. 6. 1. 16. 2 Cor. 6. 4. Tit. 1. 2. Gal. 4. 14. Apoc. 1. 20.

doth administer the Affairs of his spiritual Kingdom; that as by secular Magistrates (his Vicegerents and Officers) he manageth his universal temporal Kingdom, or governeth all Men in order to their worldly Peace and Prosperity; so by these spiritual Magistrates he ruleth his Church, toward its spiritual Welfare and Felicity.

3. The Word also doth imply Direction or Instruction; that is, Guidance of People in the way of Truth and Duty, reclaiming them from Error and Sin; This, as it is a means hugely conducing to the Design of their Office, so it is a principal Member thereof: whence διδάσκαλοι *Doctors*, or Masters in Doctrine, is a common Name of them; and to be διδακτικοὶ, *able and apt to teach* (ἱκανοὶ διδάξαι and πρόθυμοι) is a chief Qualification of their Persons; and to *attend on teaching*, to *be instant in preaching*, to *labour in the word and doctrine* are their most commendable Performances; Hence also they are called *Shepherds*, because they feed the Souls of God's People with the Food of wholsome Instruction; *Watchmen*, because they observe Mens ways, and warn them when they decline from right, or run into Danger; the *Messengers* of God, because they declare God's Mind and Will unto them for the Regulation of their Practice.

Eph. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 12. 28. Rom. 12. 7. 1 Tim. 3. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 28. 2. 2. 1 Tim. 4. 13, 16. 5. 17. 2 Tim. 4. 2. Col. 1. 28.

4. The Word farther may denote exemplary Practice; for to lead implieth so to go before, that he who is conducted may follow; as a Captain marcheth before his Troop; as a Shepherd walketh before his Flock, as a Guide goeth before the Traveller, whom he directeth; hence they are said to be, and enjoined to behave themselves, *as patterns of the flock*; and the People are charged to imitate and follow them.

1 Pet. 5. 3. 1 Tim. 4. 12. Phil. 3. 17. Tit. 2. 7. 2 Thess. 3. 9, 7. Heb. 3. 7. 1 Thess. 1. 6. 1 Cor. 11. 1. 4. 16.

Such in general doth the Word here used imply the Persons to be, unto whom Obedience is prescribed; but there is farther some Distinction to be made among them; there are Degrees and Subordinations in these Guidances; some are in regard to different Persons both impowered to guide, and obliged to follow or obey.

The Church is *acies ordinata*, a well marshalled Army, wherein under the *Captain-General of our faith and salvation* (*the Head of the Body*, the Sovereign Prince and Priest, the *Arch-Pastor*, the chief *Apostle of our profession*, and *Bishop of our Souls*) there are divers Captains serving in fit Degrees of Subordination; Bishops commanding large Regiments, Presbyters ordering less numerous Companies; all which by the Bands of common Faith, of mutual Charity, of Holy Communion, and Peace being combined together, do in their respective Stations govern and guide, are governed and guided: The Bishops, each in his Precincts guiding more immediately the Priests subject to them; the Priests, each guiding the People committed to his charge; all Bishops and Priests being guided by Synods established or congregated upon emergent Occasion; many of them ordinarily by those principal Bishops, who are regularly settled in a Presidency over them; according to the Distinctions constituted by God and his Apostles, or introduced by Humane Prudence, as the Preservation of Order and Peace (in various times and Circumstances of things) hath seemed to require; to which Subordination the two great *Apostles* may seem to have regard, when they bid us ὑποτάσσεσθαι ἀλλήλοις, *to be subject to one another*; their Injunction at least may (according to their general Intent, which aimeth at the Preservation of Order and Peace) be well extended so far.

1 Pet. 5. 4. Heb. 3. 1.

1 Pet. 5. 5. Eph. 5. 21. Phil. 2. 3. Ὑποτασσέσθω ἕκαστος τῷ πλησίον αὐτοῦ καθὼς καὶ ἐτέθη ἐν τῷ χαίσματι αὐτοῦ. Clem. *ad* Corinth. p. 49.

Of

Of this distinction there was never in ancient times made any question, nor did it seem disputable in the Church, except to one Malecontent (*Arrius*) who did indeed get a name in Story, but never made much noise, or obtained any vogue in the World: very few followers he found in his heterodoxy; No great Body even of *Hereticks* could find cause to dissent from the Church in this point; but all *Arians*, *Macedonians*, *Novatians*, *Donatists*, &c. maintained the distinction of Ecclesiastical Orders among themselves, and acknowledged the duty of the inferiour Clergy to their Bishops: and no wonder, seeing it standeth upon so very firm and clear grounds; upon the reason of the Case, upon the testimony of Holy Scripture, upon general tradition and unquestionable monuments of Antiquity, upon the common judgment and practice of the greatest Saints, Persons most renowned for Wisdom and Piety in the Church. Cyp. *Ep.* 10. *Ep.* 12. Ep. 27. *Ep.* 65.

Reason plainly doth require such Subordinations; for that without them it is scarce possible to preserve any durable concord, or Charity in Christian Societies; to establish any decent Harmony in the Worship and Service of God, to check odious Scandals, to prevent or repress baneful Factions, to guard our Religion from being overspread with pernicious Heresies, to keep the Church from being shattered into numberless Sects, and thence from being crumbled into nothing; in fine, for any good time to uphold the profession and practice of Christianity it self: for how if there be not setled Corporations of Christian People, having bulk and strength sufficient by joynt endeavour to maintain the truth, honour, and interest of their Religion, if the Church should only consist of independent and incoherent Particles (like Dust or Sand) easily scattered by any Wind of opposition from without, or by any commotion within; if *Christendom* should be merely a *Babel* of confused Opinions and Practices, how, I say, then could Christianity subsist? how could the Simple among so discordant apprehensions be able to discern the truth of it, how would the Wise be tempted to dislike it, being so mangled and disfigured? what an object of contempt and scorn would it be to the profaner World, in such a Case? It needeth therefore considerable Societies to uphold it; but no Society (especially of any large extent) can abide in order and peace, under the management of equal and co-ordinate Powers; without a single undivided Authority, enabled to moderate Affairs, and reduce them to a Point, to arbitrate emergent Cases of difference, to put good Orders in execution, to curb the adversaries of Order and Peace; these things cannot be well performed, where there is a parity of many Concurrents, apt to dissent, and able to check each other; no *Democracy* can be supported without borrowing somewhat from *Monarchy*; no Body can live without a Head; an Army cannot be without a General, a Senate without a President, a Corporation without a Supreme Magistrate: this all experience attesteth; this even the chief impugners of *Episcopal* presidency do by their practice confess; who for prevention of disorder have been fain of their own heads to devise Ecclesiastical Subordinations of *Classes*, *Provinces* and *Nations*; and to appoint *Moderatours* (or temporary Bishops) in their Assemblies; so that Reason hath forced the Dissenters from the Church to imitate it.

Ecclesiæ salus in summi Sacerdotis dignitate consistit, cui non exors quædam, & ab omnibus detur eminens potestas tot in Ecclesiâ efficientur schismata, quot sacerdotes. Hier. *in* Lucif.

Nec Presbyterorum cœtus ritè constitutus dici potest, in quo nullus sit ὑγέμων. Bez. *de Grad. Min. cap.* 22.

Essentiale fuit, quod ex Dei Ordinatione perpetua necesse fuit, est, & erit, ut Presbyterio quispiam & loco & dignitate Primus actioni gubernandæ præsit cum eo, quod ipsi divinitus attributum est jure. Bez. *de Min. Evang. Grad. c.* 23. *p.* 153.

If there be not Inspectors over the Doctrine and Manners of the common Clergy, there will be many who will say and do any thing; they

will in teaching pleaſe their own Humour, or ſooth the People, or ſerve their own Intereſts; they will indulge themſelves in a licentious manner of Life; they will claſh in their Doctrines, and ſcatter the People, and draw them into Factions.

It is alſo very neceſſary for preſerving the unity and communion of the Parts of the Catholick Church; ſeeing ſingle Perſons are much fitter to maintain correſpondence, than headleſs Bodies.

The very Credit of Religion doth require, that there ſhould be Perſons raiſed above the common Level, and endued with eminent Authority, to whoſe care the promoting it ſhould be committed; for ſuch as the Perſons are who manage any Profeſſion, ſuch will be the reſpect yielded thereto; if the Miniſters of Religion be Men of Honour and Authority, Religion it ſelf will be venerable; if *thoſe* be mean, that will become contemptible.

Apoc. 2, 3, &c. The Holy Scripture alſo doth plainly enough countenance this Diſtinction; for therein we have repreſented one *Angel* preſiding over principal Churches, which contained ſeveral *Presbyters*; therein we find Epiſcopal Ordination, and Juriſdiction exerciſed; we have one Biſhop conſtituting *Presbyters* in divers *Cities* of his *Dioceſe*; ordering all things there-

Tit. 1. 5. 1 Tim. 5. 1, 17, 19, 20, 22, &c. in concerning Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline; judging Presbyters, rebuking, μετὰ πασῆς ἐπιταγῆς, *with all authority* (or imperiouſneſs, as it were; *Tit.* 2. 15.) and reconciling Offenders, ſecluding Hereticks, and ſcandalous Perſons.

In the *Jewiſh* Church there were an *High-Prieſt*, *Chief-Prieſt*, a *Sanhedrin*, or *Senate*, or *Synod*.

The Government of Congregations among God's ancient People (which it is probable was the Pattern that the *Apoſtles*, no affecters of needleſs Innovation, did follow in eſtabliſhing Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline among Chriſtians) doth hereto agree; for in their *Synagogues*, anſwering to our Chriſtian Churches, they had as their *Elders* and *Doctours*, ſo over ראש הקהל them an ἀρχισυνάγωγος, the *Head* of the *Elderſhip*, and *Preſident* of the *Synagogue*.

The primitive general uſe of Chriſtians moſt effectually doth back the Scripture, and interpret it in favour of this Diſtinction; ſcarce leſs than demonſtrating it conſtituted by the *Apoſtles*; for how otherwiſe is it imaginable, that all the *Churches* founded by the *Apoſtles* in ſeveral moſt diſtant, and disjoyned places (at *Jeruſalem*, at *Antioch*, at *Alexandria*, at *Epheſus*, at *Corinth*, at *Rome*) ſhould preſently conſpire in acknowledgement and uſe of it? how could it without apparent Confederacy be formed, how could it creep in without notable clatter, how could it be admitted without conſiderable oppoſition, if it were not in the Foundation of thoſe Churches laid by the *Apoſtles*? How is it likely, that in thoſe Times of grievous Perſecution falling chiefly upon the *Biſhops* (when to be eminent among Chriſtians yielded ſlender Reward, and expoſed to extreme hazard; when to ſeek Preeminence was in effect to court Danger and Trouble, Torture and Ruine) an ambition of irregularly advancing themſelves above their Brethren ſhould ſo generally prevail among the ableſt and beſt Chriſtians? How could thoſe famous Martyrs for the Chriſtian Truth be ſome of them ſo unconſcionable as to affect, others ſo irreſolute as to yield to ſuch injurious Encroachments? and how could all the Holy Fathers (Perſons of ſo renowned, ſo approved Wiſdom and Integrity) be ſo blind as not to diſcern ſuch a Corruption, or ſo bad as to abett it? how indeed could all God's Church be ſo weak as to conſent in Judgment, ſo baſe as to comply in Practice with it? In fine, how can we conceive, that all the beſt

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monuments of antiquity down from the beginning (the *Acts*, the *Epistles*, the *Histories*, the *Commentaries*, the *Writings* of all sorts coming from the Blessed *Martyrs*, and most Holy *Confessors* of our faith) should conspire to abuse us; the which do speak nothing but *Bishops*; long *Catalogues* and rows of *Bishops* succeeding in this and that *City*; *Bishops* contesting for the faith against *Pagan* Idolaters, and *Heretical* corrupters of Christian Doctrine; *Bishops* here teaching, and planting our religion by their labours, there suffering and watering it with their blood.

I could not but touch this point: But I cannot insist thereon; the full discussion of it, and vindication of the truth from the cavils advanced against the truth by modern dissenters from the Church, having employed voluminous Treatises; I shall only further add, that if any Man be so dully, or so affectedly ignorant as not to see the reason of the case, and the dangerous consequences of rejecting this ancient form of discipline; if any be so overweeningly presumptuous, as to question the faith of all History, or to disavow those Monuments and that Tradition, upon the testimony whereof even the truth and certainty of our Religion, and all its sacred Oracles do rely; if any be so perversely contentious, as to oppose the custom, and current practice of the Churches through all Ages down to the last Age; so self-conceitedly arrogant, as to condemn or slight the judgment, and practice of all the Fathers (together also with the opinion of the later most grave *Divines*, who have judged Episcopal presidency needful, or expedient, where practicable) so peevishly refractary as to thwart the setled order of that Church, in which he was baptized, together with the Law of the Countrey, in which he was born; upon such a person we may look as one utterly invincible, and intractable: So weak a judgment, and so strong a will who can hope by reason to convert? I shall say no more to that Point. 1 Cor. 11. 16.

The ἡγέμενοι then, (the Guides and Governours) in our *Text* are primarily the *Bishops*, as the superiour and chief Guides, each in his place according to order peaceably established; then secondarily the *Presbyters* in their Station as Guides inferiour, together with the *Deacons* as their assistants; such the Church always hath had, and such by God's blessing, our Church now hath, toward whom the duty of obedience is to be performed.

To the consideration of that I should now proceed, but first it seemeth expedient to remove a main obstruction to that performance; which is this; a misprision, or doubt concerning the persons of our Guides and Governours; for in vain it would be to teach or persuade us to obey them, if we do not know who they are, or will not acknowledge them: For as in Religion it is *Primus Deorum cultus Deos credere*, *The first worship of God to believe God* (as *Seneca* saith) so it is the first part of our obedience to our Governours to avow them; it is at least absolutely prerequisite thereto. It was of old a precept of St. *Paul* to the *Thessalonians*: *We beseech you Brethren to know those, who labour among you; and preside over you*; and another to the *Corinthians*; *Submit your selves* (saith he) *to such, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth*---then he subjoineth ἐπιγινώσκετε τὰς τοιάτας, *acknowledge such*; there were, it seemeth, those in the *Apostolical* times, who would not know, or acknowledge their guides; there were even those, who would not *admit* the *Apostles* themselves, (as Saint *John* saith of *Diotrephes*) who *resisted their words* (as St. *Paul* saith of *Alexander*) to whom the *Apostles* were not *Apostles*, as St. *Paul* intimateth concerning some in regard to himself; there were then *Pseud-apostles*, who excluded the *true Apostles*, intruding themselves into that high office: Sen. Ep. 95. 1 Thess. 5. 12. 1 Cor. 16. 16, 18. 3 John 10. 2 Tim. 4. 15.

2 Cor. 9. 2. 2 Cor. 11. 13. Phil. 3. 2. No wonder then it may be, that now in these dregs of time, there should be many, who disavow, and desert their true Guides, transferring the observance due to them upon bold pretenders; who are not indeed Guides, but Seducers; not Governours, but Usurpers, and sacrilegious Invaders of this holy Office: The duty we speak of cannot be secured without preventing or correcting this grand mistake; and this we hope to compass by representing a double character or description, one of the *true Guides*, another of the *counterfeits*, by comparing which we may easily distinguish them, and consequently be induced dutifully to avow and follow the one sort, wisely to disclaim and decline the other.

Those, I say, then, who constantly do profess, and teach that sound and wholsome Doctrine, which was delivered by our Lord, and his Apostles in word and writing, was received by their Disciples in the primitive Churches, was transmitted and confirmed by general tradition, was sealed by the bloud of the blessed *Martyrs*, and propagated by the labours of the Holy Fathers; the which also manifestly recommendeth and promoteth true reverence and piety toward God, justice and charity toward Men, order and quiet in humane Societies, purity and sobriety in each Man's private conversation:

Those who celebrate the true worship of God, and administer the Holy Mysteries of our religion in a serious, grave, decent manner, purely and without any notorious corruption either by hurtful errour, or superstitious foppery, or irreverent rudeness, to the advancement of God's honour, and edification of the participants in vertue and piety.

Those who derive their authority by a continued succession from the *Apostles*; who are called unto, and constituted in their office in a regular and peaceable way, agreeable to the institution of God, and the constant practice of his Church; according to rules approved in the best and purest Ages; who are prepared to the exercise of their function by the best education, that ordinarily can be provided, under sober discipline, in the Schools of the Prophets, who thence by competent endowments of mind, and useful furniture of good learning, acquired by painful study, become qualified to guide and instruct the people: Who after previous examination of their abilities, and probable testimonies concerning their manners (with regard to the qualifications of incorrupt doctrine, and sober conversation 1 Tim. 3. 7. 10. prescribed by the *Apostles*) are adjudged fit for the office; who also in a pious, grave, solemn manner, with invocation of God's blessing, by *laying on the hands of the Presbytery* are admitted thereunto.

Those whose practice in guiding and governing the people of God is not managed by arbitrary, uncertain, fickle, private fancies or humours, but regulated by standing Laws; framed (according to general directions extant in Holy Scripture) by pious and wise persons, with mature advice, in accommodation to the seasons and circumstances of things for common edification, order and peace.

Those who, by virtue of their good principles, in their dispositon and demeanour appear sober, orderly, peaceable, yielding meek submission to Government, tendring the Churches peace, upholding the communion of the Saints, abstaining from all schismatical, turbulent and factious practices.

Those also, who are acknowledged by the Laws of our Countrey, an 1 Pet. 2. 13. obligation to obey whom is part of that *humane constitution*, unto which we are in all things (not evidently repugnant to God's Law) indispensibly bound to submit; whom our Sovereign, God's Vicegerent and the nursing Father of his Church among us (unto whom in all things high respect

respect in all lawful things entire obedience is due) doth command and encourage us to obey:

Those, I say, to whom this character plainly doth agree, we may reasonably be assured, that they are our true Guides and Governours, whom we are obliged to follow and obey: For what better assurance can we in reason desire? what more proper marks can be assigned to discern them by? what methods of constituting such needful officers can be fetled more answerable to their design, and use? how can it be evil or unsafe to follow guides authorized by such warrants, conformed to such patterns, endowed with such dispositions, acting by such principles and rules? can we mistake, or miscarry by complying with the great body of God's Church through all Ages, and particularly with those great Lights of the Primitive Church, who by the excellency of their knowledge, and the integrity of their virtue have so illustrated our Holy Religion?

There are on the other hand sufficiently plain characters, by which we may descry seducers, and false pretenders to guide us.

Those who do ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν, *teach otherwise*, or discourse from the good ancient wholsome Doctrine, revealed in the Holy *Scripture*, attested by *Universal Tradition*, professed, taught, maintained to death by the Primitive *Saints* and *Martyrs*; who affect novelties, uncouth notions, big words, and dark Phrases, who dote on curious empty speculations, and idle questions, which engender strife, and yield no good fruit. 1 Tim. 6. 3. 1. 3, 4. Gal. 1. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 4. 6. 4, 20. 2 Tim. 2. 14, 16, 23. Tit. 3. 9, 2 Per. 2. 18.

Those who ground their opinions, and warrant their proceedings not by clear testimonies of divine revelation, by the dictates of sound reason, by the current authority of wise and good Men, but by the suggestions of their own fancy, by the impulses of their passion, and zeal, by pretences to special inspiration, by imaginary necessities, and such like fallacious rules. *Ipsorum ordinationes temerarias, inconstantes, leves,* Tertull.

Those who by counterfeit shews of mighty zeal, and extraordinary affection, by affected forms of speech, by pleasing notions, by prophesying *smooth things*, *daubing* and *glozing*, by various artifices of flattery and fraud attract and abuse weak and heedless people.

Those who without any apparent commission from God, or allowable call from Men, or extraordinary necessity of the case, in no legal or regular way, according to no custom received in God's Church, do intrude themselves into the office, or are only assumed thereto by ignorant, unstable, giddy, factious people, such as those of whom St. *Paul* saith, that *according to their own Lusts they heap up teachers to themselves, having itching ears.* *Hi sunt qui se ultro apud temerarios convenas sine divina dispositione præficiunt, qui se præpositos sine ulla ordinationis lege constituunt, qui nemine Episcopatum dante Episcopi sibi nomen assumunt.* Cypr. *de Un. Eccl. p.* 256. 2 Tim. 4. 3.

Those who are not in reasonable ways fitly prepared, not duly approved, not competently authorized, not orderly admitted to the office, according to the prescriptions of God's Word, and the practice of his Church; not entring into the fold by the door, but breaking through, or clambering over the fences of sober discipline.

Those who in their mind, their principles, their designs, and all their practice appear void of that charity, that meekness, that calmness, that gravity, that sincerity, that stability, which qualifie worthy and true Guides: Who in the disposition of their mind are froward, fierce, and stubborn, in their principles loose and slippery, in their designs and behaviour turbulent, disorderly, violent, deceitful: Who regard not order or peace, but wantonly raise scandals, create dissentions, abett and foment disturbances in the Church. Who under religious appearances indulge their passions, and serve their interests, using a guise of devotion, and talk

talk about holy things as instruments to vent wrath, envy and spleen; to drive forward designs of ambition and avarice; who will not submit to any certain judgment or rule, will like nothing but what their fancy suggests, will acknowledge no law but their own will; who for no just cause, and upon any slender pretence withdraw themselves, and seduce others from the Church in which they were brought up, deserting its communion, impugning its laws, defaming its Governours, endeavouring to subvert its establishment: Who manage their discipline (such as it is of their own framing) unadvisedly and unsteadily, in no stable method, according to no setled rule, but as present conceit, or humour, or advantage prompteth; so that not being fixed in any certain judgment or practice, they soon clash with themselves, and divide from one another; incessantly roving from one Sect to another; *being carried about with divers and strange Doctrines; like Children tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine.*

Heb. 13. 9. Eph. 4. 14.

Those, the fruits of whose doctrine and managery amount at best onely to empty *form of godliness, void of real vertue*; while in truth they fill the minds of Men with ill-passions, ill-surmises, ill-will; they produce impious, unjust and uncharitable dealing of all kinds, particularly discontentful murmurings, disobedience to Magistrates; schisms and factions in the Church; combustions and seditions in the State.

2 Tim. 3. 13. In fine those, who in their temper and their deportment resemble those ancient seducers, branded in the Scripture, those *evil Men, who did seduce, and were seduced:*

Tit. 1. 10. Whose dispositions are represented in these *Epithets*: They were ἀνυπότακτοι, *unruly*, or persons indisposed and unwilling to submit to Government; 2 Pet. 2. 10. τολμηταὶ, αὐθάδεις, *presumptuous and self-willed*, or self-pleasing darers γογγυσταὶ, μεμψίμοιροι, *murmurers, complainers*, or conjunctly discontented mutiners, Tit. 3. 10, 11. αὐτοκατάκριτοι, *self-condemned*, namely, by contradictious shuffling and shifting, or by excommunicating themselves from the Church; 2 Tim. 3. 13, 14. γόητες, *bewitchers*, inveagling and deluding credulous people by dissimulation, and specious appearances; Matt. 7. 15. Act. 20. 29. *having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; being wolves in sheeps cloathing, grievous wolves not sparing the flock; deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the servants* 2 Cor. 11. 13, 15. *of Christ, and Ministers of righteousness; lovers of themselves, covetous, boasters, proud, revilers, truce-breakers, false-accusers, traytours, heady, high-*1 Tim. 6. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 16. *minded, vain talkers, deceivers, ignorant, unlearned, unstable:*

Rom. 16. 17, 18. Whose practices were; *To cause divisions and offences contrary to received* (1 Tim. 1. 6, 7.) *Doctrine: By good words and fair speeches to deceive the hearts of the simple;* Eph. 4. 14. *---To swerve from charity---having turned aside to vain jangling, desiring* Act. 20. 29. *to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say, nor whereof* 2 Tim. 3. 5. *they affirm. To beguile unstable Souls; To lie in wait to deceive; To speak* 1 Tim. 6. 4. *perverse things that they may draw Disciples after them; to creep into Hou-*2 Pet. 2. 18. *ses captivating silly Women; To doat about questions and strifes of words,* Jud. 16. *whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings; To* Tit. 1. 11. *speak swelling words of vanity; To admire persons because of advantage* (or 1 Tim. 4. 2. out of private design, for self-interest;) *To subvert whole houses, teaching* Phil. 1. 16, 17. *things which they ought not for filthy lucres sake; to speak lies in hypocrisie;* 2 Pet. 2. 19. *To preach Christ out of envy and strife, not out of good-will, or pure intenti-*2 Thess. 3. 6, 11. *on* (ἐκ ἁγνῶς, *not purely*; *To promise liberty* to their followers; *To walk dis-*2 Pet. 2. 10. *orderly* (that is, in repugnance to order setled in the Church;) *To despise* Jude 8. *dominion, and without fear to reproach dignities; To speak evil* (rashly) 16. *of those things which they know not* (which are beside their skill and cogni-9. zance) *To separate themselves,* from the Church.

2 John 9.

Such

Such Persons as these, arrogating to themselves the Office of Guides, and pretending to lead us, we must not follow or regard, but are in reason and conscience obliged to reject and shun them, as the Ministers of *Satan*, the Pests of *Christendom*, the Enemies and Murtherers of Souls. Tit. 3. 10. 2 Thess. 3. 6. Rom. 16. 18. 1 Tim. 6. 5.

It can indeed no-wise be safe to follow any such Leaders (whatever Pretences to special Illumination they hold forth, whatever specious guises of Sanctity they bear) who in their Doctrine or Practice deflect from the great beaten Roads of holy Scripture, primitive Tradition, and Catholick Practice, roving in bye-paths suggested to them by their private Fancies and Humours, their Passions and Lusts, their Interests and Advantages: there have in all Ages such counterfeit Guides started up, having debauched some few heedless Persons, having erected some συναγωγὰς, or petty Combinations against the regularly setled Corporations; but never with any durable success or countenance of Divine Providence; but like prodigeous *Meteors*, having caused a little gazing, and some Disturbance, their Sects have soon been dissipated, and have quite vanished away: the Authors and Abettors of them being either buried in oblivion, or recorded with ignominy: like that *Theudas* in the Speech of *Gamaliel*; who *rose up boasting himself to be somebody; to whom a number of Men about* 400 *joyned themselves; who was slain, and all as many as obeyed him, were scattered, and brought to nought.* Jude 13. Acts 5. 36.

But let thus much suffice to have been spoken concerning the Persons to whom Obedience must be performed.

SERMON XXV.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the Rule over you.

I Proceed to the Duty it self, the Obedience prescribed, which may (according to the extent in signification of the Word πείθεσθαι) be conceived to relate either to the Government, or to the Doctrine, or to the Conversation of the Persons specified; implying that we should obey their Laws, that we should embrace their Doctrine, that we should conform to their Practice, according to proper Limitations of such Performance, respectively:

We begin with the first, as seeming chiefly intended by the Words:

Obedience to Ecclesiastical Government; what this doth import we may understand by considering the Terms, whereby it is expressed, and those whereby its Correlate (spiritual Government) is signified; by Examples and Practice relating to it, by the Nature and Reason of the Matter it self.

Beside

Beſide the Word πείθεσθαι (which is commonly uſed to ſignifie all ſorts of Obedience, chiefly that which is due to Governours) here is added a Word ſerving to explain that, the word ὑπείκειν, which ſignifieth to yield, give way, or comply; relating (as it ſeemeth by its being put indefinitely) to all their proceedings in matters concerning their charge. In other places, parallel to our *Text*, it is expreſſed by ὑποτάσσεσθαι, the ſame Term, by which conſtantly the Subjection due to ſecular Powers (in all the Precepts enjoyning it) is expreſſed: Ὁμοίως νεώτεροι ὑποτάγητε πρεσβυτέροις, *In like manner* (or correſpondently ſaith St. *Peter*) *ye younger ſubmit your ſelves to the elder* (that is, as the Context ſhews, ye Inferiours in the Church obey your Superiours; ὁ νεώτερος both there and otherwhere doth ſignifie the ſtate of inferiority, as ὁ πρεσβύτερος importeth Dignity and Authority.) And ὑποτάσσεσθε τοῖς τοιούτοις, *Submit your ſelves unto ſuch, and to every one that helpeth with us, and laboureth*, ſaith St. *Paul*; and ἀλλήλοις ὑποτασσόμενοι, *Submitting your ſelves to one another in the fear of God*, that is, yielding conſcientiouſly that Submiſſion, which eſtabliſhed Order requireth from one to another: whence we may collect, that the Duty conſiſteth in yielding ſubmiſſion and compliance to all Laws, Rules and Orders enacted by Spiritual Governours for the due celebration of God's Worſhip, the promoting Edification, the conſerving Decency, the maintenance of Peace; as alſo to the Judgments and Cenſures in order to the ſame Purpoſes adminiſtred by them.

(Tit. 3. 1. Rom. 13. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 13.) 1 Pet. 5. 5. Luke 22. 26. 1 Cor. 16. 16. Eph. 5. 21. 1 Pet. 5. 5.

This Obedience to be due to them may likewiſe be inferred from the various Names and Titles attributed to them; ſuch as thoſe of *Prelates*, *Superintendents*, *Paſtours*, *Supraviſours*, *Governours* and *Leaders*; which Terms, (more largely touched before) do imply Command and Authority of all ſorts, *Legiſlative*, *Judicial*, and *Executive*.

Such Obedience alſo Primitive Practice doth aſſert to them: for what Authority the holy *Apoſtles* did aſſume and exerciſe, the ſame we may reaſonably ſuppoſe derived to them; the ſame in Kind, although not in peculiarity of manner (by immediate Commiſſion from *Chriſt*, with ſupply of extraordinary Gifts and Graces) and in unlimitedneſs of extent: for they do ſucceed to the Apoſtles in charge and care over the Church, each in his Precinct (the Apoſtolical Office being diſtributed among them all.) The ſame Titles which the Apoſtles aſſumed to themſelves, they aſcribe to their *Sympresbyters*, requiring the ſame Duties from them, and preſcribing Obedience to them in the ſame Terms; They claimed no more Power than was needful to further Edification, and this is requiſite that preſent Governours alſo ſhould have; their Practice in Government may alſo well be preſumed exemplary to all future Governours: As then we ſee them διατάσσειν, *to order* things, and frame Eccleſiaſtical Conſtitutions, διορθῶν, *to rectifie* things, or reform *defects*, to *impoſe* Obſervances *neceſſary* or expedient to the time; to judge Cauſes and Perſons, *being ready to avenge* or puniſh *every diſobedience*; to *uſe ſeverity* upon occaſions; with the ſpiritual *Rod* to chaſtiſe ſcandalous Offenders, *diſorderly walkers*, Perſons contumacious and unconformable to their Injunctions; to reject Hereticks, and baniſh notorious Sinners from Communion, warning the Faithful to forbear converſation with them: As they did challenge to themſelves *an authority from Chriſt* to exerciſe theſe and the like Acts of ſpiritual Dominion and Juriſdiction, exacting punctual Obedience to them; as we alſo ſee the like Acts exerciſed by Biſhops, whom they did conſtitute to feed and rule the Church; ſo we may reaſonably conceive all Governours

Cujus in ſolidum ſinguli participes ſumus. Vid. Cypr. *de Unit. Eccl.*

2 Cor. 10. 8. 13. 10.
To ordain Elders.
To confirm Proſelytes.
To exerciſe Juriſdiction.

1 Cor. 11. 34. Tit. 1. 5. Acts 15. 28. 1 Cor. 5. 12. 2 Cor. 10. 6. 2 Cor. 13. 10. 2 Cor. 4. 21. 12. 21. 13. 2. 2 Theſſ. 3. 6, 14. Tit. 3. 10. 1 Tim. 6. 5. Rom. 16. 17. 2 Cor. 10. 8. 13. 10.

Epiſcopi ſucceſſores Apoſtolorum. Cypr. *Ep.* 27. & *Ep.* 69, & 6. *Ep.* 41. & *Ep.* 75. (Firmil.)

of

of the Church (the Heirs of their Office) inveſted with like Authority in order to the ſame purpoſes, and that correſpondent Obedience is due to them; ſo that what blame, what puniſhment was due to thoſe, who diſobeyed the Apoſtles, doth in proportion belong to the tranſgreſſors of their Duty toward the preſent Governours of the Church; eſpecially conſidering that our Lord promiſed his perpetual preſence and aſſiſtance to the Apoſtles. Matt. 28. 20.

We may farther obſerve, that accordingly in continual ſucceſſion from the firſt Ages, the good primitive *Biſhops* (the great Patrons and Propagatours of our Religion) did generally aſſume ſuch Power, and the People readily did yield Obedience; wherein that one did wrongfully uſurp, the other did weakly comply, were neither probable, nor juſt to ſuppoſe; whence general Tradition doth alſo confirm our obligation to this Duty.

That this kind of obedience is required doth alſo farther appear from conſidering the reaſon of Things, the condition of the Church, the deſign of Chriſtian Religion.

1. Every Chriſtian Church is a Society; no Society can abide in any comely order, any ſteady quiet, any deſirable proſperity without Government; no Government can ſtand without correſpondent obligation to ſubmit thereto.

2. Again, The ſtate of Religion under the Goſpel is the Kingdom of Heaven; *Chriſt* our Lord is King of the Church; it he viſibly governeth and ordereth by the ſpiritual Governours as his Subſtitutes and Lieutenants (whence they peculiarly are ſtyled his *Miniſters*, his *Officers*, his *Stewards*, his *Legates*, his *Co-workers.*) When he aſcending up to Gods Right-hand was inveſted with entire poſſeſſion of that Royal State, he ſetled them to adminiſter Affairs concerning that Government in his Place and Name; *Aſcending up on high he gave gifts unto men —— He gave ſome Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts, ſome Paſtours and Teachers*; Eph. 4. 8, 11, 12. He gave them, that is, he appointed them in their Office, ſubordinate to himſelf, *for the perfecting of the Saints, for the work of the Miniſtery, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt*; As to him therefore ruling by them, by them enacting Laws, diſpenſing Juſtice, maintaining Order and Peace, Obedience is due.

3 Again, For the honour of God, the commendation of Religion, and benefit of the People, it is needful, that in all religious Performances, things ſhould, according to St. *Paul*'s rule, be performed *decently, and according to order*, without unhandſom Confuſion, and troubleſom Diſtraction; this cannot be accompliſhed without a Determination of Perſons, of Modes, of Circumſtances appertaining to thoſe Performances) for how can any thing be performed decently, if every Perſon hath not his Rank and Station, his Office and Work allotted to him; if to every thing to be done, its time, its place, its manner of performance be not aſſigned, ſo that each one may know what, when, where, and how he muſt do?) ſuch determination muſt be committed to the diſcretion and care of ſome Perſons, impowered to frame ſtanding Laws or Rules concerning it, and to ſee them duly executed (for all Perſons without delay, ſtrife, confuſion, and diſturbance cannot meddle in it) with theſe Perſons all the reſt of the Body muſt be obliged to comply; otherwiſe all ſuch Determinations will be vain and ineffectual. Such Order Reaſon doth recommend in every Proceeding; ſuch Order eſpecially becometh the grandeur and importance of Sacred things; ſuch Order God hath declared himſelf to approve, and love, eſpecially in his own Houſe, among his People, in matters relating to his Service; (1 Cor. 14. 23. Tit. 2. 10.) 1 Cor. 14. 40. 1 Cor. 14. 33.

Service; for *He is not* (as St. *Paul* saith, arguing to this purpose) *the God of confusion, but of peace, in all Churches of the Saints.*

Σύμψυχοι. Phil. 2. 2. Ὁμόφρονες. 1 Pet. 3. 8. Eph. 4. 3. Phil. 2. 2. 1. 27. Phil. 3. 16. Rom. 15. 5, 6. 12. 16. 2 Cor. 13. 11. 1 Cor. 1. 10.

4. Again, It is requisite that all Christian Brethren should conspire in serving God with mutual Charity, hearty Concord, harmonious Consent; that (as the Apostles so often prescribed) they *should endeavour to keep unity of Spirit in the bond of peace:* That they should *be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind, standing fast in one Spirit, with one mind; That they should walk by the same rule, and mind the same thing; That with one mind, and one mouth they should glorifie God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; That they should all speak the same thing; and that there be no divisions among them, but that they be perfectly joyned together in the same mind, and in the same judgment;* (like those in the *Acts*, of whom it is said, *The multitude of believers had one heart, and one soul*) *That there should be no schisms* (Divisions, or Factions) *in the body*; that all Dissensions, all *murmurings*, all Emulations should be discarded from the Church: the which Precepts, secluding an obligation to Obedience, would be impossible, and vain; for (without continual Miracle, and transforming Humane Nature, things not to be expected from God, who apparently designeth to manage Religion by ordinary ways of Humane Prudence, his gracious Assistance concurring) no durable Concord in any Society can ever effectually be maintained otherwise than by one publick Reason, Will and Sentence, which may represent, connect, and comprize all; in defect of that every one will be of a several Opinion about what is best, each will be earnest for the prevalence of his Model and Way; there will be so many Law-givers as Persons, so many Differences as Matters incident; nothing will pass smoothly and quietly, without bickering and jangling; and consequently without Animosities and Feuds; whence no Unanimity, no Concord, scarce any Charity or Good-will can subsist.

Acts 4. 32. 1 Cor. 12. 25. 11. 18. 1. 11. 3. 3. 2 Cor. 12. 20. Phil. 2. 14.

5. Farther, in consequence of these things common Edification requireth such Obedience: It is the duty of Governours to order all things to this end, that is, to the maintenance, encouragement, and improvement of Piety; for this purpose their Authority was given them, (as St. *Paul* saith) and therefore it must be deemed thereto conducible; it is indeed very necessary to Edification, which without Discipline guiding the simple and ignorant, reclaiming the erroneous and presumptuous, cherishing the regular, and correcting the refractary, can no-wise be promoted.

2 Cor. 13. 10. 10. 8.

Excluding it, there can be no means of checking or redressing Scandals, which to the reproach of Religion, to the disgrace of the Church, to the corrupting the Minds, and infecting the Manners of Men will spring up, and spread. Neither can there be any way to prevent the rise and growth of pernicious Errours or Heresies; the which assuredly in a state of unrestrained Liberty the wanton and wicked Minds of Men will breed, their licentious Practice will foster, and propagate; to *the encrease of all impiety; their mouths must be stopped*, otherwise *they will subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not for filthy lucre sake; the word* of naughty Seducers *will spread like a gangrene*, if there be no corrosive or corrective Remedy to stay its progress.

1 Tim. 1. 19. 6. 5. 2 Tim. 2. 16, 17, 18. 2 Tim. 2. 16. Tit. 1. 11. 2 Tim. 2. 17.

Where things are not managed in a stable, quiet, orderly way, no good Practice can flourish or thrive; Dissention will choak all good Affections, Confusion will obstruct all good Proceedings; from Anarchy Emulation and Strife will certainly grow, and from them all sorts of Wickedness; for *where* (saith St. *James*) there is *emulation and strife, there is confusion, and every evil thing.*

Jam. 3. 16.

All

All those Benefits, which arise from holy Communion in Offices of Piety and Charity (from common Prayers and Praises to God, from participation in all sacred Ordinances, from mutual Advice, Admonition, Encouragement, Consolation, good Example) will together vanish with Discipline; these depend upon the friendly union and correspondence of the Members; and no such Union can abide without the Ligament of Discipline, no such Correspondence can be upheld without unanimous compliance to publick Order. The Cement of Discipline wanting, the Church will not be like a *spiritual house*, compacted of *lively stones* into one goodly Pile; but like a company of scattered Pebbles, or a heap of Rubbish. 1 Pet. 2. 5.

So considering the reason of things, this Obedience will appear needful; to enforce the practice thereof we may adjoin several weighty Considerations.

Consider Obedience what it is, whence it springs, what it produceth, each of those respects will engage us to it.

It is in it self a thing very good and acceptable to God, very just and equal, very wise, very comely and pleasant.

It cannot but be grateful unto God, who is the God of love, of order, of peace, and therefore cannot but like the means furthering them; he cannot but be pleased to see Men do their Duty, especially that which regardeth his own Ministers; in the respect performed to whom he is himself indeed avowed, and honoured, and obeyed.

Tempus est, —ut de submissione provocent in se Dei clementiam, & de honore debito in Dei sacerdotem eliciant in se divinam misericordiam. Cypr. *Ep.* 30.

It is a just and equal thing, that every Member of Society should submit to the Laws and Orders of it; for every Man is supposed upon those Terms to enter into, and to abide in it; every Man is deemed to owe such Obedience in answer to his enjoyment of Privileges, and partaking of Advantages thereby; so therefore whoever pretendeth a Title to those excellent Immunities, Benefits and Comforts, which communion with the Church affordeth, it is most equal, that he should contribute to its support and welfare, its honour, its peace; that consequently he should yield Obedience to the Orders appointed for those ends. Peculiarly equal it is in regard to our Spiritual Governours, who are obliged to be very solicitous and laborious in furthering our best good; who stand deeply engaged, and are responsible for the welfare of our Souls: they must be contented to *spend, and be spent*, to undergo any Pains, any Hardships, any Dangers and Crosses occurring in pursuance of those Designs: and is it not then plainly equal (is it not indeed more than equal, doth not all Ingenuity and Gratitude require?) that we should encourage, and comfort them in bearing those Burthens, and in discharging those Incumbrances by a fair and chearful Compliance? 'tis the *Apostle*'s enforcement of the Duty in our Text: *Obey them* (saith he) *and submit your selves; for they watch for your souls, as those, who are to render an accompt, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief* (or groaning.)

Is it not indeed extreme iniquity and ingratitude, when they with anxious care, and earnest toil are endeavouring our Happiness, that we should vex and trouble them by our perverse and cross Behaviour?

Nay, is it not palpable Folly to do thus, seeing thereby we do indispose and hinder them from effectually discharging their Duty to our Advantage? ἀλυσιτελὲς γὰρ ὑμῖν τοῦτο, *for this* (addeth the *Apostle*, farther pressing the Duty) *is unprofitable to you*, or it tendeth to your Disadvantage and Damage; not only as involving guilt, but as inferring loss; the loss of all those spiritual Benefits, which Ministers being encouraged, and thence performing their Office with alacrity and sprightful diligence would

procure to you: it is therefore our Wisdom to be obedient, because Obedience is so advantageous and profitable to us.

The same is also a comely and amiable thing, yielding much Grace, procuring great Honour to the Church, highly adorning and crediting Religion: It is a goodly sight to behold things proceeding orderly; to see every Person quietly resting in his Post, or moving evenly in his Rank; to observe Superiours calmly leading, Inferiours gladly following,
Psal. 139. 1. and Equals lovingly accompanying each other: this is the *Psalmist*'s *Ecce quam bonum! Behold, how* (admirably) *good, and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!* such a state of things argueth the good Temper and Wisdom of Persons so demeaning themselves, the excellency of the Principles, which do guide and act them, the goodness
Tit. 2. 10. 5. of the Constitution which they observe; so it crediteth the Church, and graceth Religion; a thing which (as St. *Paul* teacheth) *in all things* we should endeavour.

It is also a very pleasant and comfortable thing to live in Obedience; by it we enjoy tranquility of Mind, and satisfaction of Conscience, we taste all the sweets of Amity and Peace, we are freed from the stings of inward Remorse, we escape the grievances of Discord and Strife.

The Causes also and Principles, from which Obedience springeth, do much commend it: it ariseth from the Dispositions of Soul, which are most Christian and most Humane; from Charity, Humility, Meekness, Sobriety of Mind, and calmness of Passion; the which always dispose Men to submiss, complaisant, peaceable Demeanour toward all Men, especially toward those, whose Relation to them claimeth such Demeanour; these a genuine, free, cordial and constant Obedience do signifie to live in the Soul; together with a general honesty of Intention, and exemption from base Designs.

In fine, innumerable and inestimable are the Benefits and good Fruits accruing from this Practice; Beside the Support it manifestly yieldeth to the Church, the gracefulness of Order, the conveniences and pleasures of Peace, it hath also a notable influence upon the common Manners of Men, which hardly can ever prove very bad, where the Governours of the Church do retain their due Respect and Authority; nothing more powerfully doth instigate to Vertue, than the countenance of Authority, nothing more effectually can restrain from exorbitancy of Vice, than the Bridle of Discipline: this obvious Experience demonstrateth, and we shall plainly see, if we reflect upon those times when Piety and Vertue have most flourished: whence was it, that in those good old Times Christians did so abound in good Works, that they burnt with holy Zeal, that they gladly would do, would suffer any thing for their Religion? whence but from a mighty respect to their Superiours; from a strict regard to their Direction and Discipline? Did the *Bishops* then prescribe long Fasts, or impose rigid Penances? willingly did the People undergo them; Did the *Pastour* conduct into Danger, did he lead them into the very Jaws of Death, and Martyrdom? the Flock with a resolute alacrity did follow; did a *Prelate* interdict any Practice scandalous, or prejudicial to the Church; under pain of incurring Censure? Every Man trembled at the consequences of transgressing: No terrour of worldly Power, no severity of Justice, no dread of corporal Punishment had such efficacy to deter Men from ill-doing, as the Reproof and Censure of a Bishop; his Frown could avail more than the Menaces of an Emperour, than the Rage of a Per-

Neque hoc ità dixerim, ut negligatur Ecclesiastica disciplina, & permittatur quisquam facere quod velit sine ulla correptione. & quadam medicinali vindicta, & terribili lenitate, & charitatis severitate. Aug. *adv.* Petil. 3. 4.

Perſecutour, than the Rods and Axes of an Executioner: No Rod indeed did ſmart like the ſpiritual Rod, no Sword did cut ſo deep as that of the Spirit; no Loſs was then ſo valuable, as being deprived of ſpiritual Advantages; no Baniſhment was ſo grievous as being ſeparated from Holy Communion; no Sentence of Death was ſo terrible, as that which cut Men off from the Church: No Thunder could aſtoniſh or affright Men like the crack of a ſpiritual *Anathema*: This was that which kept Vertue in requeſt, and Vice in deteſtation; hence it was that Men were ſo good, that Religion did ſo thrive, that ſo frequent, and ſo illuſtrious Examples of Piety did appear: Hence indeed we may well reckon that Chriſtianity did (under ſo many Diſadvantages and Oppoſitions) ſubſiſt, and grow up; Obedience to Governours was its guard; that kept the Church firmly united in a Body ſufficiently ſtrong to maintain it ſelf againſt all aſſaults of Faction within, of Oppoſition from abroad; that preſerved that Concord, which diſpoſed and enabled Chriſtians to defend their Religion againſt all Fraud and Violence: that cheriſhed the true Vertue, and the beautiful Order, which begot veneration to Religion; to it therefore we owe the life and growth of Chriſtianity, ſo that through many ſharp Perſecutions it hath held up its Head; through ſo many perillous Diſeaſes it hath kept its Life until this Day. There were not then of old any ſuch Cavils and Clamours againſt every thing preſcribed by Governours; there were no ſuch unconſcionable Scruples, no ſuch hard-hearted Pretences to tender Conſcience deviſed to baffle the Authority of Superiours; had there been ſuch, had Men then commonly been ſo froward and factious as now, the Church had been ſoon ſhivered into pieces, our Religion had been ſwallowed up in Confuſion and Licentiouſneſs.

If again we on the other hand fix our Conſideration upon Diſobedience, (the Nature, the Sources, the Conſequences thereof) it will, I ſuppoſe, much conduce to the ſame effect, of perſuading us to the practice of this Duty:

It is in it ſelf a heinous Sin, being the tranſgreſſion of a Command in nature and conſequence very important, upon which God layeth great ſtreſs, which is frequently inculcated in Scripture, which is fenced by divers other Precepts, which is preſſed by ſtrong Arguments, and backed by ſevere threatnings of Puniſhment upon the Tranſgreſſours.

It is in its nature a kind of apoſtaſie from Chriſtianity, and rebellion againſt our Lord; for as he that refuſeth to obey the King's Magiſtrates in adminiſtration of their Office is interpreted to diſclaim his Authority, and to deſign Rebellion againſt him; ſo they who obſtinately diſobey the Miniſters of our Lord's ſpiritual Kingdom, do thereby appear to diſavow him, to ſhake off his Yoke, to impeach his Reign over them; ſo doth he himſelf interpret and take it: *He* (ſaith our Lord) *that heareth you, heareth me, and he that* (ὁ ἀθετῶν, *that baffleth*) *deſpiſeth you, deſpiſeth me*; and, *If any man neglect to hear the Church* (or ſhall diſobey it, ἐὰν παρακούσῃ) *let him be to thee as a heathen, and a publican*; that is, ſuch a refractary Perſon doth by his Contumacy put himſelf into the ſtate of one removed from *the Commonwealth of Iſrael*, he forfeiteth the ſpecial protection of God, he becometh as an Alien, or an Outlaw from the Kingdom of our Lord. Luke 10. 16. Matt. 10. 40. 12. 17.

Nec putent ſibi vitæ aut ſalutis conſtare rationem, ſi Epiſcopis & Sacerdotibus obtemperare noluerint; cùm in Deutron. Deus dicat, &c. Cypr. *Ep.* 61.

Under the *Moſaical* Diſpenſation thoſe *who would do preſumptuouſly, and would not hearken unto the Prieſt, that ſtood to miniſter before the Lord*, did incur capital Puniſhment; thoſe who factiouſly murmured againſt *Aaron*, are ſaid to make an Inſurrection againſt God, and anſwerably were puniſhed Deut. 17. 12.

Num. 16. 11. 30. nished in a miraculous way (*The Lord made a new thing, the earth opened, and swallowed them up; they went down alive into the pit.*) It was in the Hos. 4. 4. Prophetical times an expression signifying height of impiety; *My People is as those who strive with the Priest:* Seeing then God hath no less regard to his peculiar Servants now than he had then; seeing they no less represent him, and act by his Authority now, than any did then; seeing their Service is as precious to him, and as much tendeth to his Honour now, as the *Levitical* Service then did; seeing he no less loveth Order and Peace in the *Church*, than he did in the *Synagogue*; we may well suppose it a no less heinous Sin, and odious to God, to despise the Ministers of *Christ*'s Gospel, than it was before to despise the Ministers of *Moses* his Law.

Quo exemplo ostenditur, & probatur obnoxios omnes & culpæ & pœnæ futuros, qui se schismaticis contra præpositos & sacerdotes irreligiosâ temeritate miscuerint. Cypr. *Ep.* 76.

It is a Sin indeed, pregnant with divers Sins, and involving the breach of many great Commands, which are frequently proposed and pressed in 1 Cor. 16. 14. the *New Testament*, with design in great part to guard and secure it; *That* Phil. 2. 14. *of doing all things in charity*, or *doing all things without murmurings*, *and dis-* Rom. 12. 18. *sentions*, *of pursuing peace so far as lieth in us*, of maintaining unity, con- 2 Tim. 2. 22. cord, unanimity in Devotion, of avoiding Schisms, and Dissentions, and Heb. 12. 14. Mark 9. 10. the like; which are all notoriously violated by this Disobedience; it includeth the most high breach of Charity, the most formal infringing Peace, the most scandalous kind of Discord that can be, to cross our Superiours.

An esse sibi cum Christo videtur, qui adversus sacerdotes Christi facit? &c. Cypr. *de Unit. Eccl. p.* 258.

It is also a practice issuing from the worst Dispositions of soul, such as are most opposite to the Spirit of our Religion, and indeed very repugnant to common Reason, and Humanity; from a proud Haughtiness, or vain wantonness of Mind, from the irregularity of unmortified and unbridled Passion, from exorbitant Selfishness (Selfishness of every bad kind, Self-conceit, Self-will, Self-interest) from turbulent Animosity, froward crossness of Humour, rancorous Spite, perverse Obstinacy; from Envy, Ambition, Avarice, and the like ill Sources, the worst fruits of the Flesh and corrupt Nature; to such Dispositions the rejecting God's *Prophets* of old, and the non-compliance with the *Apostles* are ascribed in *Scripture*; and from the same the like neglect of God's Messengers now do proceed; as whoever will observe may easily discern; do but mind the Discourses of factious People, you shall perceive them all to breathe generally nothing but Ill-nature.

The Fruits also, which it produceth, are extremely bad; manifold great Inconveniencies and Mischiefs, hugely prejudicing the interest of Religion, and the welfare of the Church.

Vide Cypr. *Ep.* 55 *Neque enim aliunde, &c.* It is immediately and formally a violation of Order and Peace; whence all the woful Consequences of Disorder and Faction do adhere thereto.

Inde Schismata, & Hæreses obortæ sunt, & oriuntur, dum Episcopus, qui unus est, & Ecclesiæ præest superbâ quorundam præsumptione contemnitur. Cypr. *Ep.* 69.

Hæc sunt initia Hæreticorum, & ortus atque conatus Schismaticorum malè cogitantium ut sibi placeant, ut præpositum superbo tumore contemnant. Sic de Ecclesia receditur, sic altare profanum foris collocatur, sic contra pacem Christi, atque unitatem Dei rebellatur. Cypr. *Ep.* 65.

It breedeth great Disgrace to the Church, and Scandal to Religion; for what can appear more ugly than to see among the Professors of Religion, Children opposing their Fathers, Scholars contesting with their Masters, Inferiours slighting and crossing their Superiours? what can more expose the Church and Religion to the contempt, to the derision of *Atheists* and *Infidels*, of profane and lewd Persons, of wild *Heretick*s and *Schismatick*s, of all Enemies unto Truth and Piety, than such foul irregularity.

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It corrupteth the Minds and Manners of Men; for when that Discipline is relaxed, which was ordained to guard Truth, and promote Holiness; when Men are grown so licentious and stubborn, as to contemn their Superiours, to disregard their wholsom Laws and sober Advice, there can be no curb to restrain them; but down precipitantly they run into all kind of vicious Irregularities and Excesses; when those Mounds are taken away, whither will Men ramble; when those Banks are broken down, what can we expect but Deluges of impious Doctrine, and wicked Practice to overflow the ignorant and inconsiderate People?

Ecclesiæ gloria præpositi gloria est. Cypr. *Ep.* 7. *Ep.* 55.

Doth not indeed this Practice evidently tend to the dissolution of the Church, and destruction of Christianity? for when the *Shepherds* are (as to conduct and efficacy) *taken away*, will *not the sheep be scattered*, or *wander astray*, *like sheep without a shepherd*, being bewildred in various Errors, and exposed as a Prey to any wild Beasts; to the *grievous wolves*, to the *ravenous lions*, to the wily Foxes? here a fanatical Enthusiast will snap them, there a profane Libertine will worry them, there again a desperate Atheist will tear and devour them.

Matt. 26. 31.

Τὸ πάντων τῆς χαλεπῶν αἴτιον, ὅτι τὰ τῆς διῳδύνων ἡρανίζον, ὕδρεμία αἰδὼς, ἀ-δεὶς φόβος, &c. Chryf. *in* 2 Tim. *Or.* 2.

Consult we but obvious Experience, and we shall see, what spoils and mines of Faith, of good Conscience, of common Honesty and Sobriety this practice hath in a few years caused: how have *Atheism* and *Infidelity*, how have Profaneness and Dissoluteness of Manners, how have all kinds of Dishonesty and Baseness grown up since Men began to disregard the Authority of their spiritual Guides? what dismal Tragedies have we in our Age beheld acted upon this Stage of our own Country; what bloody Wars and Murthers (Murthers of *Princes*, of *Nobles*, of *Bishops* and *Priests*) what miserable Oppressions, Extortions and Rapines; what execrable Seditions and Rebellions; what barbarous Animosities and Feuds; what abominable Treasons, Sacrileges, Perjuries, Blasphemies; what horrible violations of all Justice and Honesty? and what I pray was the Source of these things? where did they begin? where but at murmuring against, at rejecting, at persecuting the spiritual Governours, at casting down and trampling on their Authority; at slighting and spurning at their Advice; surely would Men have observed the Laws, or have hearkned to the Counsels of those grave and sober Persons, whom God had appointed to direct them, they never would have run into the commission of such Enormities.

It is not to be omitted, that in the present state of things the guilt of Disobedience to spiritual Governours is encreased and aggravated by the supervenient guilt of another Disobedience to the Laws of our Prince and Country; Before the secular Powers (unto whom God hath committed the dispensation of Justice, with the maintenance of Peace and Order in reference to worldly Affairs) did submit to our Lord, and became *nursing parents of the Church*, the power of managing Ecclesiastical matters did wholly reside in spiritual Guides; unto whom Christians, as the *peculiar* Subjects of God, were obliged willingly to yield Obedience; and refusing it, were guilty before God of spiritual Disorder, Faction, or Schism; but now after that political Authority (out of pious Zeal for God's Service, out of a wise care to prevent the influences of Disorder in spiritual Matters upon the temporal Peace, out of grateful return for the Advantages the Commonwealth enjoyeth from Religion, and the Church) hath pleased to back and fortifie the Laws of spiritual Governours by civil Sanctions, the Knot of our Obligation is tied faster, its force is redoubled, we by Disobedience incur a double guilt, and offend God two ways, both as Supreme Governour of the World, and as King of the Church;

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to our Schism against the Church we add Rebellion against our Prince, and so become no less bad Citizens than bad Christians; Some may perhaps imagine their Disobedience hence more excusable, taking themselves now only thereby to transgress a political Sanction; but (beside that even that were a great Offence, the Command of our temporal Governours being sufficient, out of conscience to Gods express Will, to oblige us in all things not evidently repugnant to God's Law) it is a great Mistake to think the Civil Law doth any-wise derogate from the Ecclesiastical; that doth not swallow this up, but succoureth and corroborateth it; their concurrence yieldeth an accession of weight and strength to each; they do not by conspiring to prescribe the same thing either of them cease to be Governours as to right; but in efficacy the Authority of both should thence be augmented; seeing the obligation to Obedience is multiplied upon their Subjects; and to disobey them is now two Crimes, which otherwise should be but one.

SERMON XXVI.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the Rule over you.

SUCH is the Nature of this Duty, and such are the Reasons enforcing the practice thereof; I shall only farther remove two Impediments of that practice; and so leave this Point.

Μάλιστα γὰρ ἁπάντων χειμαζοῖς ἐκ ἐφεῖ) πρὸς βίαν ἐπανορθῶν τὰ ἁμαρτανόντων πλαίσματα, &c. Chrys. de Sacerd. 2.

Ἐνταῦθα δὲ βιαζόμενον, ἀλλὰ πείθοντα δεῖ ποιεῖν ἀμείνω τὸν υἱόν. Ibid.

Matt. 20. 27. Luke 22. 26. 1 Pet. 5. 3.

1. One hindrance of Obedience is this, that spiritual Power is not despotical, or compulsory, but parental or pastoral; that it hath no external force to abett it, or to avenge Disobedience to its Laws; they must not κατεξουσιάζειν, or καταυθεντεύειν, (be imperious, or domineer) they are not allowed to exercise violence, or to inflict bodily correction; but must rule in meek and gentle ways, directly influential upon the Mind and Conscience, (ways of rational persuasion, exhortation, admonition, reproof) *in meekness instructing those that oppose themselves;---convincing, rebuking, exhorting with all long-suffering, and doctrine:* their Word is their only Weapon, their force of argument all the constraint they apply; hence Men commonly do not stand in awe of them, nor are so sensible of their obligation to obey them; they cannot understand why they should be frighted by Words, or controlled by an unarmed Authority.

2 Tim. 2. 24. 4. 2. 1 Tim. 3. 3.

But this in truth (things being duly considered) is so far from diminishing our Obligation, or arguing the Authority of our Governours to be weak and precarious, that it rendreth our Obligation much greater, and their Authority more dreadful; for the sweeter and gentler their way of go-

governing is, the more disingenuous and unworthy a thing it is to disobey it; not to be perswaded by reason, not to be allured by Kindness, not to admit friendly Advice, not to comply with the calmest Methods of furthering our own Good, is a brutish thing; he that only can be scared and scourged to Duty, scarce deserveth the Name of a Man: it therefore doth the more oblige us, that in this way we are moved to Action by Love rather than fear: Yet if we would fear wisely and justly, (not like Children, being frighted with formidable Shapes, and Appearances, but like Men apprehending the real Consequences of things) we should the more fear these spiritual Powers, because they are insensible: For that God hath commanded us to obey them, without assigning visible Forces to constrain or chastise, is a manifest Argument, that he hath reserved the Vindication of their Authority to his own Hand, which therefore will be infallibly certain, and terribly severe; so the nature of the Case requireth, and so God hath declared it shall be; The Sentence that is upon Earth pronounced by his Ministers upon contumacious Offenders, he hath declared himself ready to ratifie in Heaven, and therefore most assuredly will execute it: As under the old Law God appointed to the Transgression of some Laws, upon which he laid special Stress, the Punishment of being *cut off from his people*; the Execution of which Punishment he reserved to himself, to be accomplished in his own way, and time; so doth he now in like manner take upon him to maintain the Cause of his Ministers; and to execute the Judgments decreed by them; and if so, we may consider that *it is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God:* Ecclesiastical Authority therefore is not a Shadow void of Substance or Force, but hath the greatest power in the World to support and assert it; it hath Arms to maintain it most effectual and forcible (those of which St. *Paul* saith, *The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God* ——) it inflicteth Chastisements far more dreadful than any secular Power can inflict; for these only touch the Body, those pierce the Soul; these concern only our temporal State, those reach Eternity it self; these at most yield a transitory Smart, or kill the Body, those produce endless Torment; and (utterly as to all Comfort in being) destroy the Soul.

Mat. 18. 18.

Heb. 10. 31.

2 Cor. 10. 4.

The Punishment for extream contumacy is called *delivery to Satan*; and is not this far worse than to be put into the Hands of any Gaoler or Hangman? What are any Chords of Hemp, or Fetters of Iron in comparison to those Bands, of which 'tis said, *Whatever ye bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven*; which engage the Soul in a Guilt, never to be loosed, except by sore Contrition, and serious Repentance? What are any Scourges to St. *Paul's* Rod, lashing the Heart and Conscience with stinging Remorse; What any Axes or Faulchions to that *sword of the spirit*; which cutteth off a Member from the Body of Christ? What are any Faggots and Torches to that unquenchable *fire and brimstone* of the infernal Lake? What, in fine, doth any Condemnation here signifie to that horrible Curse, which devoteth an incorrigible Soul to the bottomless Pit?

Spirituali gladio superbi & contumaces necantur, dum de Ecclesia ejiciuntur. Cypr. *Ep.* 61.

It is therefore indeed a great Advantage to this Power that it is spiritual.

2. Another grand Obstruction to the practice of this Duty is, Pretence to scruple about the Lawfulness, or Dissatisfaction in the Expedience of that, which our Governours prescribe, that we are able to advance Objections against their Decrees, that we can espy Inconveniences ensuing upon their Orders; that we imagine the Constitution may be reformed, so as to become more pure, more convenient and comely, more serviceable to Edification; that we cannot fansie that to be best, which they enjoy: For removing this Obstruction let me only propound some Questions.

Cypr. *Ep.* 50. & 52. (p. 97.)

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Φιλοίνοις οἶνον ἢ λείπῃ, ἢ δὲ φιλονείκῳ μάχη. Socr. hist. 7. 31.

Were not any Government appointed in vain, if such pretences might exempt or excuse from Conformity to its Orders? can such ever be wanting? is there any thing devisable, which may not be impugned by some plausible Reason, which may not disgust a squeamish Humour? is there any Matter so clearly innocent, the Lawfulness whereof a weak Mind will not question, any thing so firm and solid, in which a small Acuteness of Wit cannot pick a Hole, any thing so indisputably certain, that whoever affecteth to cavil may not easily devise some Objections against it?

Is there any thing here that hath no Inconveniencies attending it? are not in all humane Things, Conveniencies and Inconveniencies so mixt and complicated, that it is impossible to disintangle and sever them? can there be any Constitution under Heaven so absolutely pure and perfect, that no Blemish or Defect shall appear therein? can any Providence of Man foresee, any Care prevent, any Industry remedy all Inconveniencies possible? Is a Reformation satisfactory to all Fancies any-wise practicable; and are they not fitter to live in a *Platonick Idea* of a Common-wealth, than in any real Society who press for such an one? to be facile and complaisant in other Cases, bearing with things which do not please us, is esteemed commendable, a courteous and humane Practice, why should it not be much more reasonable to condescend to our Superiours, and comport with their Practice? is it not very discourteous to deny them the Respect which we allow to others, or to refuse that Advantage to publick Transactions, which we think fit to grant unto private Conversation?

Οὐ δὲ μόνον ἡ ἀρίστην (πολιτείαν) δεῖ θεραπεῖν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡ δυνατὴν Arist. Pol. 4. 1.

To what purpose did God institute a Government, if the Resolutions thereof must be suspended, till every Man is satisfied with them; or if its State must be altered so often as any Man can pick in it Matter of Offence or Dislike; or if the Proceedings thereof must be shaped according to the numberless Varieties of different and repugnant Fancies?

Si ubi jubeantur quærere singulis liceat; pereunte obsequio etiam imperium intercidit. Tac. 1. p. 450. Otho.

Are, I pray, the Objections against Obedience so clear, and cogent, as are the Commands which enjoin, and the Reasons which enforce it? are the Inconveniencies adhering to it apparently so grievous, as are the Mischiefs which spring from Disobedience? do they in a just Balance counterpoize the Disparagement of Authority, the Violation of Order, the Disturbance of Peace, the Obstruction of Edification, which Disobedience produceth?

Dixisti forte scrupulum tibi esse tollendum de animo, in quem incidisti; incidisti sed tua credulitate irreligiosâ, &c. Cypr. Ep. 69. (ad Florent.) *vid. optimè & appositè de hâc re disserentem.*

Do the *Scruples* (or *Reasons*, if we will call them so) which we propound, amount to such a Strength and Evidence, as to out-weigh the Judgment of those whom God hath authorised by his Commission, whom he doth enable by his Grace to instruct and guide us? May not those, whose Office it is to judge of such things; whose Business it is to study for Skill in order to that purpose, who have most Experience in those Affairs, specially belonging to them, be reasonably deemed most able to judge both for themselves and us, what is lawful, and what expedient? have they not Eyes to see what we do, and Hearts to judge concerning the Force of our Pretences, as well as we?

Qui fidei & veritati præsumus. Cypr. Ep. 72.

Is it not a Design of their Office to resolve our Doubts, and void our Scruples in such Cases, that we may act securely and quietly, being directed by better Judgments than our own? Are they not strictly obliged in Conscience, are they not deeply engaged by Interest to govern us in the best manner? Is it therefore Wisdom, is it Modesty, is it Justice for us to advance our private Conceits against their most deliberate publick Resolutions? May we not in so doing mistake; may we not be blind, or

weak

weak (not to say fond, or proud, or perverse) and shall those Defects or Defaults of ours evacuate so many Commands of God, and render his so noble, so needful an Ordinance quite insignificant?

Do we especially seem to be in earnest, or appear otherwise than illusively to palliate our naughty Affections, and sinister Respects, when we ground the Justification of our Non-conformity upon dark Subtilties, and intricate Quirks; which it is hard to conceive that we understand our selves, and whereof very perspicacious Men cannot apprehend the Force? Do we think we shall be innocent Men, because we are smart Sophisters; or that God will excuse us from our Duty, because we can perplex Men with our Discourses? or that we are bound to do nothing, because we are able to say somewhat against all things?

Would we not do well to consider, what huge Danger they incur, and how many a Load of Guilt they must undergo, upon whom shall be charged all those sad Disorders, and horrid Mischiefs which are naturally consequent on Disobedience; what if Confusion of things, if Corruption of Manners; if Oppression of Truth, if Dissolution of the Church do thence ensue, what a Case then shall we be in, who confer so much thereto? Would not such Considerations be apt to beget Scruples far more disquieting an honest, and truly conscientious Mind, than any such either profound Subtilties, or superficial Plausibilities can do; which Dissenters are wont to alledge? For needeth he not to have extream Reason (Reason extreamly strong and evident) who dareth to refuse that Obedience, which God so plainly commandeth, by which his own Authority is maintained, on which the Safety, Prosperity, and Peace of the Church dependeth, in which the Support of Religion, and the Welfare of numberless Souls is deeply concerned?

Did, let me farther ask, the *Apostles*, when they settled Orders in the Church, when they imposed what they conceived needful for Edification, and Decency, when they inflicted spiritual Chastisements upon disorderly Walkers, regard such Pretences? or had those self-conceited and self-willed People (who *obeyed* not their *Words*, but *resisted* and rejected them) no such Pretences? Had they nothing, think we, to say for themselves? nothing to object against the Apostolick Orders, and Proceedings? they had surely; they failed not to find Faults in the Establishment, and to pretend a kind of tender Conscience for their Disobedience; yet this hindred not, but that the Apostles condemned their Mis-behaviour and inflicted severe Censures upon them? 2 Tim. 4. 15. 1 Tim. 1. 20. 2 Thess. 3. 14. 6.

Did not also the Primitive *Bishops* (and all Spiritual Governours down from the Beginning every where almost to these Days of Contention and Disorder) proceed in the same Course, not fearing to enact such Laws concerning indifferent Matters, and Circumstances of Religion, as seemed to them conducible to the good of the Church? Did not all good People readily comply with their Orders, how painful soever, or disagreeable to Flesh and Blood, without Contest or Scruple? yet had not they as much Wit, and no less Conscience than our selves? They who had Wisdom enough to descry the Truth of our Religion through all the Clouds of Obloquy and Disgrace, which it lay under; who had Zeal and Constancy to bear the hardest Brunts of Persecution against it; were they such Fools as to see no Fault; so stupid as to resent nothing, or so loose as to comply with any thing? No surely; they were in truth so wise as to know their Duty, and so honest as to observe it.

If these Considerations will not satisfie, I have done; and proceed to the next Point of our Duty, to which the Precept in our Text may extend.

tend; concerning the Doctrine of our Guides: In which respect it may be conceived to imply the following Particulars, to be performed by us, as Instances, or Parts, or degrees thereof.

1. We should readily and gladly address our selves to hear them; not out of profane and wilful Contempt, or slothful Negligence declining to attend upon their Instructions: There were of old those, of whom the *Prophets* complain, who would not so much as hearken to the Words of those, whom God sent unto them; but stopped their Ears, *withdrew the shoulder, and hardened the neck, and would not hear*; there were those in the *Evangelical* times, who did ἀπωθεῖσθαι τὸν λόγον, *thrust away the word of God, judging themselves unworthy of eternal life*; *who would not admit, or hear the word of Life*, and Overtures of Grace propounded by the *Apostles*; There were *Gadarenes*, who beseeched our Lord himself to depart from their Coasts; There have always been *deaf Adders, who stop their ears to the voice of the Charmer, charm he never so wisely*; No wonder then if now there be those, who will not so much as allow a Hearing to the Messengers of God, and the Guides of their Soul, some out of a factious Prejudice against their Office or their Persons, or their Way to shun them, giving themselves over to the Conduct of Seducers; some out of a profane Neglect of all Religion, out of being wholly possessed with worldly Cares, and Desires, out of Stupidity and Sloth (indisposing them to mind any thing that is serious) will not afford them any Regard: All these are extreamly blameable, offensive to God, and injurious to themselves: It is a heinous Affront to God (implying a hostile Disposition toward him, an Unwillingness to have any Correspondence with him) to refuse so much as Audience to his Ambassadors; It is an interpretative Repulsing him; so of old he expressed it; *I*, saith he, *spake unto you, rising early, and speaking, but ye heard not; I called you, but ye answered not*; so under the Gospel, *He*, saith our Lord, *that heareth you, heareth me*; and *he that despiseth* (or regardeth not) *you, despiseth me*; and, *We are Ambassadors of Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God.* It is a starving our Souls, depriving them of that Food, which God hath provided for them; It is keeping our selves at distance from any Means or Possibility of being well informed and quickened to the Practice of our Duty, of being reclaimed from our Errours, and Sins; it is the way to become hardened in Impiety, or sinking into a reprobate Sense: This is the first Step to Obedience; for *how can we believe, except we hear?* this is that, which St. *James* urgeth; *Let every man be quick to hear*; and, which St. *Peter* thus enjoineth, *Like new-born Babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that we may grow thereby*; We should especially be quick and ready to hear those, whom God hath authorized and appointed to speak; we should *desire to suck the milk of the word* from those, who are our spiritual Parents and Nurses.

Neh. 9. 29. Prov. 1. 24. Isa. 65. 12. 66. 4. Jer. 7. 13. Zech. 7. 11. Acts 13. 46. Mat. 10. 14. Luke 8. 37. Psal. 58. 4, 5. Jer. 7. 13. Luke 10. 16. 2 Cor. 5. 20. Jam. 1. 19. 1 Pet. 2. 2.

2. We should hear them with serious, earnest Attention, and Consideration; so that we may well understand, may be able to weigh, may retain in Memory, and may become duly affected with their Discourses; We must not hear them drowsily and slightly, as if we were nothing concerned, or were hearing an impertinent Tale; their Word should not pass through the Ears, and slip away without effect; but sink into the Understanding, into the Memory, into the Heart; like the *good seed* falling into *a depth of earth*, able to afford it Root and Nourishment; therefore we must attend diligently thereto: περισσοτέρως ἔν δεῖ προσέχειν, *we should therefore give more abundant heed*, as the Apostle saith, *to the things we hear, lest at any time we should let them slip.* This Duty the Na-

Mat. 13. 5. Heb. 2. 1.

Nature and Importance of their Word requireth: *It is the word, not of men*, but *in truth the word* of the great *God*, (his Word as proceeding from him, as declaring his Mind and Will, as tendring his Overtures of Grace and Mercy) which as such challengeth great Regard and Awe; it informeth us of our chief Duties, it furthereth our main Interests, it guideth us into, it urgeth us forward in the Way to eternal Happiness; 'tis the Word that is *able to save our souls*; to render *us wise unto salvation*; It therefore claimeth and deserveth from us most earnest Attention; it is a great Indignity and Folly not to yield it. 1 Thess. 2. 13. Jam. 1. 21.

3. We should to their Instructions bring good Dispositions of Mind, such as may render them most effectual and fruitful to us: Such as are right Intention, Candour, Docility, Meekness.

We should not be induced to hear them out of Curiosity (as *having itching ears*) being desirous to hear *some new things*, some fine Notions, some taking Discourse; somewhat to fansie or talk pleasantly about; (as the *Athenians* heard St. *Paul*, not out of Censoriousness, or Inclination to criticize, and find fault (as the *Pharisees* heard our Saviour, *Laying wait for him, and seeking to catch something out of his mouth, that they might accuse him*) not out of design to gratifie our Passions in hearing them, to reprove other Persons; or for any such corrupt and sinister Intention, but altogether out of pure Design that we may be improved in Knowledge, and excited to the practice of our Duty. Acts 17. 21. Luke 11. 54.

We should not come to hear them with Minds imbued with ill Prejudices and partial Affections, which may obstruct the Virtue and Efficacy of their Discourse; or may hinder us from judging fairly, and truly about what they say; but with such Freedom and Ingenuity as may dispose us readily to yield unto, and acquiesce in any profitable Truth declared by them; like the generous *Beræans*, who *received the word* μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, *with all* Alacrity and *readiness of mind, searching the scriptures daily whether these things were so*; ὡς ἀρτιγέννητα βρέφη, *like infants newly born*, that come to the Dugg without any other Inclination than to suck what is needful for their Sustenance. Acts 17. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 2.

We should be docile and tractable; willing and apt to learn; shaking off all those Indispositions of Soul (all Dulness and Sluggishness, all Peevishness and Perverseness, all Pride and Self-conceitedness, all corrupt Affection and Indulgence, to our Conceits, our Humours, our Passions, our Lusts and inordinate Desires) which may obstruct our Understanding of the Word, our yielding Assent to it, our receiving Impression from it: There were those, concerning whom the *Apostle* said, that he could not proceed in his Discourse, because they were νωθροὶ τῇ ἀκοαῖς, *dull of hearing* (or sluggish in hearing) who were indisposed to hear, and uncapable to understand, because they would not be at the pains to rouse up their Fancies, and fix their Minds upon a serious Consideration of things: there were those, who had *a spirit of slumber, eyes not to see, and ears not to hear; who did hear with the ear, but not understand; seeing did see, but not perceive; for their heart had waxed gross, their ears were dull of hearing*; *and their eyes were closed*; Such indocile Persons there always have been, who being stupified and perverted by corrupt Affections became uncapable of bettering from good Instruction: All such we should strive to free our selves from; that we may perform this Duty to our Guides, and *In meekness receive the ingrafted word*. Heb. 5. 11. τῇ ἀκοῇ 1 Cor. 3. 2. Isa. 29. 10. Rom. 11. 8. Isa. 6. 9. Acts 28. 26. John 12. 40. Jam. 1. 21.

These Practices of hearing, of attending, of coming well disposed to Instruction are at least Steps and Degrees necessarily pre-requisite to the Obedience prescribed; and farther to press them all together upon us, we may consider that it is strictly incumbent on them (under Danger of heavy

1 Cor. 9. 16. heavy Punishment and *woe*) *willingly*, earnestly, with all Diligence and
2 Cor. 5. 14. Patience to *labour* in teaching and admonishing us; they must *give at-*
1 Pet. 5. 2. *tendance*, and *take heed unto their doctrine*, that it may be *sound* and profi-
Rom. 12. 3. table; they *must preach the word*, and *be instant in season, out of*
1 Tim. 5. 17. *season*, (that is, not only taking, but seeking and snatching all Occasions
1 Tim. 4. 13, 16. to do it) *reproving, rebuking, exhorting with all long-suffering, and do-*
2 Tim. 4. 2. *ctrine*; they *must warn every man, and teach every man in all wisdom, that*
Col. 1. 28. *they may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:* as they are obliged in such manner to do these things, so there must be correspondent Duties lying upon us to receive their Doctrine readily, carefully, patiently, sincerely and fairly: As they must be faithful Dispensers of God's heavenly
1 Cor. 4. 2. Truth and holy Mysteries, so we must be obsequious Entertainers of them: imposing such Commands on them doth imply reciprocal Obligatioos in their Hearers and Scholars; otherwise their Office would be vain, and their Endeavours fruitless; God no less would be frustrated in his Design than we should be deprived of the Advantages of their Institution.

But farther, it is a more immediate Ingredient of this Duty, that,

4. We should effectually be enlightened by their Doctrine, be convinced by their Arguments persuading Truth and Duty, be moved by their Admonitions and Exhortations to good Practice: We should open our Eyes to the Light, which they shed forth upon us; we should surrender our Judgment to the Proofs, which they alledge; we should yield our Hearts and Affections pliable to their mollifying, and warming Discourses: It is their Part to subdue our Minds to *the obedience of faith*, and to subject our
2 Cor. 10. 5. Wills to the Observance of God's Commandments (*Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*) It must therefore answerably be our Duty not to resist, not to hold out, not to persist obstinate in our Errours, or Prejudices; to submit our Minds to the Power of Truth, being willingly and gladly conquered by it; it must be our Duty to subjugate our Wills, to bend our Inclinations, to form our Affections to a free Compliance of Heart with the Duties urged upon us; we should not be like those Disciples, of whom our Lord complaineth thus:
Luke 24. 25. *O fools, and slow of heart, to believe all that the prophets have spoken*; nor
Acts 7. 51. like the *Jews*, with whom St. *Stephen* thus expostulates: *Ye stiff-necked and*
1 Cor. 4. 20. 2. 4. *uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.* They should speak with Power and Efficacy; we therefore should not by our
2 Cor. 1. 24. Indispositions (by Obstinacy of Conceit, or hardness of Heart) obstruct their
1 Cor. 3. 5. Endeavours; they should be *co-workers of your joy* (that is, working in us that Faith and those Vertues, which are productive of true Joy and Comfort to us) we therefore should co-work with them toward the same End; they should edifie us in Knowledge, and Holiness; we should therefore yield our selves to be fashioned and polished by them.

5. We should, in fine, obey their Doctrine by conforming our Practice thereto; this our Lord prescribed in regard even to the *Jewish* Guides
Mat. 23. 3. and Doctors; *The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses his seat; all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do*; the same we may well conceive that he requireth in respect to his own Ministers, the Teachers of a better Law, authorized to direct us by his own Commission, and thereto more specially qualified by his Grace: This is indeed the Crown and Completion of all; to hear signifieth nothing; to be convinced in our Mind, and to be affected in our Heart will but aggravate our Guilt, if we neglect Practice: Every Sermon we hear, that sheweth us our Duty will in effect be an Indictment upon us, will ground a sentence

tence of Condemnation, if we transgress it: For, as *The Earth which drinketh in the Rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God, so that which* Heb. 6. 7, 8. 10. 26. *beareth thorns and briars, is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, and its end is to be burned:* and, *not the hearers of the law are just with God, but the* Rom. 2. 13. *doers of the law shall be justified.* And it is a good Advice, that of St. *James; Be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves*; 'tis Jam. 1. 22. he intimateth, a Fallacy some are apt to put upon themselves to conceit they have done sufficiently when they have lent an Ear to the Word; this is the least part to be done in regard to it, Practice is all in all; what is it to be shewed the Way, and to know it exactly, if we do not walk in it, if we do not by it arrive to our Journey's End, the Salvation of our Souls? To have waited upon our Lord himself, and hung upon his Discourse, was not available; for when in the Day of Accompt, some shall begin to alledge, *We have eaten, and drank before thee, and thou hast taught in our streets*; Luke 13. 26, *Our Lord will say, I know ye not, whence ye are, depart from me all ye work-* 27. *ers of iniquity.* And, it is our Lord's Declaration in the Case, *Whosoever* Mat. 7. 21. *heareth these sayings of mine and doth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; but every one that heareth these say-* (Joh. 14. 21.) *ings of mine, and doth them not, shall be likned unto a foolish man, that built his house upon the sand.*

Many are very earnest to hear, they *hear gladly*, as *Herod* did Saint Mark 6. 20. *John Baptist*'s Homilies; they *receive the word with joy*, as the *temporary* Mat. 13. 20. *believers* in the Parable did: They do as those Men did in the *Prophet*, *delight to know God's ways, do ask of God the ordinances of justice, do take* Isa. 58. 2. *delight in approaching God*; Or as those in another *Prophet*; *Who speak one* Ezek. 33. 31, 32. *to another, every one to his brother, saying, Come, I pray you, and hear what is the word that cometh forth from the Lord; And they come unto thee as the people cometh, and they sit before thee as my people; and they hear thy words, but will not do them; for with their mouth they shew much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness: And lo, thou art to them as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice, and can play well on an instrument; for they hear thy words, but they do them not:* They for a time *rejoice in the light of God's messengers*, as those *Jews* did in the Light of that *burning* John 5. 35. *and shining lamp*, St. *John* the *Baptist*; but all comes to nothing; but they are backward and careless to perform, at least, more than they please themselves, or what suteth to their Fancy, their Humour, their Appetite, their Interest: Many Hearers will believe only what they like, or what suteth to their Prejudices and Passions; many of what they believe will practise that only which sorteth with their Temper, or will serve their Designs, they cannot conform to unpleasant and unprofitable Doctrines: Sometimes Care choaketh the Word, sometimes Temptation of Pleasure, of Profit, of Honour allureth, sometimes Difficulties, Hazards, Persecutions, discourage from Obedience to it:

These Particulars are obvious, and by most will be consented to; there is one Point which perhaps will more hardly be admitted, which therefore I shall more largely insist upon: 'Tis this:

6. That as in all cases it is our Duty to defer much Regard to the Opinion of our Guides, so in some cases it behoveth us to rely barely upon their Judgment and Advice; those especially among them who excel in Dignity and Worth; who are approved for Wisdom and Integrity; their Definitions, or the Declarations of their Opinion (especially such as are exhibited upon mature Deliberation and Debate, in a solemn manner) are ever very probable Arguments of Truth and Expediency; they are commonly

monly the beſt Arguments which can be had in ſome Matters, eſpecially to the meaner and ſimpler ſort of People. This upon many Accompts will appear reaſonable.

It is evident to Experience, that every Man is not capable to judge, or able to guide himſelf in Matters of this Nature (concerning divine Truth and Conſcience.) There are *Children in underſtanding*, there are Men *weak in faith* (or Knowledge concerning the Faith) there are *Idiots*, ἄκροις (Men not bad, but *ſimple*) Perſons *occupying the room of the unlearned, unskilful in the word of righteouſneſs*, who (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *need that one ſhould teach them which be the firſt principles of the oracles of God.*

Rom. 14. 1. 15. 1. &c. Rom. 16. 18. 2 Cor. 14. 16. 3. 2. 8. 10.

Vulgo non judicium, non veritas. Tac.

The Vulgar ſort of Men are as undiſcerning and injudicious in all things, ſo peculiarly in Matters of this nature, ſo much abſtracted from common Senſe and Experience; whence we ſee them eaſily ſeduced into the fondeſt Conceits and wildeſt Courſes by any ſlender Artifice or fair Pretence; *like children toſſed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſlight of Men, and cunning craftineſs, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.*

Ἄκειτον ὁ δῆμος, M. Ant. Eph. 4. 14.

There are alſo ſome particular Caſes, a competent Information and skill in which muſt depend upon Improvements of Mind acquired by more than ordinary Study and Experience: So that in them moſt People do want ſufficient means of attaining Knowledge requiſite to guide their Judgment, or their Practice: And for ſuch Perſons in ſuch Caſes it is plainly the beſt, the wiſeſt, and the ſafeſt way to rely upon the Direction of their Guides, aſſenting to what they declare, acting what they preſcribe, going whither they conduct.

Ἀλλ' εἰδότες ἑτέροις ἕλκιον εἶ πᾶς ἑαυτῶν ἡνίας ἐνδιδόναι τεχνικωτέροις, ἢ ἄλλων ἡνίοχυς εἶ ἀνεπιστήμονας, ἢ ἀκολουθοπαθέναι μᾶλλον εὐγνώμονα, ἢ γλῶσαν κινεῖν ἀπαίδευτον. Naz. *Or.* 1. ——*ſide calidus, & virtute robuſtus, &c.* Cypr. *Ep.* 23. *de* Luciano.

The very Notion of Guides, and the Deſign of their Office doth import a difference of Knowledge, and a need of reliance upon them in ſuch caſes; it ſignifieth that we are in ſome meaſure ignorant of the way, and that they better know it, and if ſo, plain Reaſon dictateth it fit that we ſhould follow them; and indeed what need were there of Guides, to what purpoſe ſhould we have them if we can ſufficiently ken the way, and judge what we ſhould do without them?

In the ſtate of Learning (in which the aſſigning us Teachers ſuppoſeth us placed) whatever our Capacity may be, yet our Judgment at leaſt (for want of a full Comprehenſion of things, which muſt be diſcovered in order, and by degrees) is imperfect; in that State therefore it becometh us not to pretend Exerciſe of Judgment, but rather eaſily to yield aſſent to what our Teachers, who ſee farther into the thing, do aſſert; *The Learner* (as *Seneca* ſaith) *is bound to be ruled, while he beginneth to be able to rule himſelf.*

Regi debet, dum incipit ſe poſſe regere. Sen. *Ep.* 94.

Δεῖ μανθάνοντα πιστεύειν, *A Learner ſhould in ſome meaſure be credulous*; Otherwiſe as he will often fail in his Judgment, ſo he will make little Progreſs in Learning; for if he will admit nothing on his Maſter's Word, if he will queſtion all things, if he will continually be doubting and diſputing, or contradicting and oppoſing his Teacher, how can Inſtruction proceed? He that preſently will be his own Maſter, is a bad Scholar, and will be a worſe Maſter. He that will fly before he is fledged, no wonder if he tumble down.

There are divers obvious, and very conſiderable Caſes, in which Perſons moſt contemptuous of Authority, and refractary toward their Guides, are conſtrained to rely upon the Judgment of others, and are contented to do it, their Conſcience ſhewing them unable to judge for themſelves; In

In admitting the litteral Sense of Scripture according to Translations; in the Interpretation of difficult Places, depending upon the Skill of Languages, Grammar, and Criticism, upon the Knowledge of Humane Arts and Sciences, upon Histories and ancient Customs; in such cases all illiterate Persons (however otherwise diffident, and disregardful of Authority) are forced to see with the Eyes of other Men, to submit their Judgment to the Skill and Fidelity of their learned Guides, taking the very Principles and Foundations of their Religion upon Trust; And why then consonantly may they not do it in other Cases; especially in the Resolution of difficult, sublime, obscure and subtil Points, the Comprehension whereof transcendeth their Capacity?

SERMON XXVII.

Of Obedience to our Spiritual Guides and Governours.

HEB. XIII. 17.

Obey them that have the Rule over you.

BUT farther,

The more to engage and incline us to the performing this part of our Duty (the regarding, prizing, confiding in the Judgment of our Guides) we may consider the great Advantages, both natural and supernatural, which they have to qualifie them in order to such purposes.

1. They may reasonably be presumed more intelligent and skilful in Divine Matters than others; for as they have the same natural Capacities and Endowments with others (or rather commonly somewhat better than others, as being designed and selected to this sort of Employment) so their natural Abilities are by all possible means improved: It is their Trade and Faculty, unto which their Education is directed: in acquiring Ability toward which they spend their time, their Care, their Pains; in which they are continually versed and exercised (*having*, as the *Apostle* speaketh, Heb. 5. 14. *by reason of use their senses exercised to discern both good and evil*) for which also they imploy their Supplications and Devotions to God.

Many special Advantages they hence procure, needful or very conducible to a more perfect Knowledge of such Matters, and to Security from Errors; such as are conversing with Studies, which enlarge a Man's Mind, and improve his Judgment; a Skill of Disquisition about things of sifting and canvasing Points coming under Debate; of weighing the Force of Arguments, and distinguishing the Colours of things; the Knowledge of Languages, in which the *Divine Oracles* are expressed, of

Hiſtories, of Practices ſerving to the Diſcovery and Illuſtration of the Truth, exerciſe in Meditation, Reading, Writing, Speaking, Diſputing and Conference, whereby the Mind is greatly enlightened, and the Reaſon ſtrengthened, Acquaintance with Variety of Learned Authors, who with great Diligence have expounded the Holy Scriptures, and with moſt Accuracy diſcuſſed Points of Doctrine, eſpecially with *Ancient Writers*, who living near the *Apoſtolical* times, and being immediately, (or within few Degrees mediately) their Diſciples may juſtly be ſuppoſed moſt helpful toward informing us what was their genuine Doctrine, what the true ſenſe of their Writings: By ſuch means as in other Faculties, ſo in this of *Theology*, a competent Skill may be obtained; there is no other ordinary, or probable Way; and no extraordinary Way can be truſted, now that Men appear not to grow learned or wiſe by ſpecial Inſpiration or Miracle; after that all Pretences to ſuch By-ways have been detected of Impoſture, and do ſmell too rank of Hypocriſie.

Since then our Guides are ſo advantageouſly qualified to direct us; it is in Matters difficult and doubtful (the which require good Meaſure of Skill and Judgment to determine about them) moſt reaſonable that we ſhould rely upon their Authority, preferring it in ſuch Caſes to our private Diſcretion; taking it for more probable, that they ſhould comprehend the Truth, than we (unaſſiſted by them, and judging merely by our own glimmering Light) can do; deeming it good odds on the ſide of their Doctrine againſt our Opinion or Conjecture.

They have alſo another peculiar Advantage toward judging ſincerely of things, by their greater Retirement from the World and Diſengagement from ſecular Intereſts; the which ordinarily do deprave the Underſtandings, and pervert the Judgments of Men; diſpoſing them to accommodate their Conceits to the *Maxims* of worldly Policy, or to the vulgar Apprehenſions of Men: many of which are falſe and baſe; by ſuch Abſtraction of Mind from worldly Affairs, together with faſtning their Meditation on the beſt things, which their Calling neceſſarily doth put them upon) more than is uſual to other Men, they commonly get Principles and Habits of Simplicity and Integrity, which qualifie Men both to diſcern Truth better, and more faithfully to declare it.

2 Tim. 2. 4.

Seeing then in every Faculty the Advice of the Skilful is to be regarded, and is uſually relied upon; and in other Affairs of greateſt Importance, we ſcruple not to proceed ſo; ſeeing we commit our Life and Health (which are moſt precious to us) to the *Phyſician*, obſerving his Preſcriptions commonly without any Reaſon, ſometimes againſt our own Senſe; we entruſt our Eſtate, which is ſo dear, with the *Lawyer*, not conteſting his Advice; we put our Goods and Safety into the Hands of a *Pilot*, ſleeping ſecurely whilſt he ſteereth us, as he thinketh fit; ſeeing in many ſuch Occaſions of common Life we adviſedly do renounce, or wave our own Opinions, abſolutely yielding to the Direction of others; taking their Authority for a better Argument or ground of Action, than any which our Conceit or a bare Conſideration of the Matter can ſuggeſt to us; admitting this *Maxim* for good, that it is a more adviſeable and ſafe Courſe in Matters of Conſequence to follow the Judgment of wiſer Men than to adhere to our own Apprehenſions: Seeing it is not Wiſdom (as every Man thinks) in a doubtful Caſe to act upon Diſadvantage, or to venture upon odds againſt himſelf, and it is plainly doing thus to Act upon our own Opi-

Ὃν ἂν ἡγήσωνται περὶ τῶν συμφέροντα ἑαυτοῖς φρονιμώτερον ἑαυτῶν εἶ), τοῦτο ἀνδρωποι ὑπερδέως πείθονται. Xen. Pæd. I.

Ἐν μὲν τῷ πλεῖν πειθεσθαι δεῖ τῷ κυβερνήτῃ, ἐν δὲ τῷ ζῆν τῷ λογισμῷ δυναμένῳ βέλτιον. Ariſtonymus *apud* Stob. *Tom.* 2. *Tit.* 3.

Opinion, againſt the judgment of thoſe who are more improved in the way, or better ſtudied in the Point than our ſelves; ſeeing in other caſes theſe are the common and approved Apprehenſions and Practices; and ſeeing in this Caſe there is plainly the ſame reaſon, for that there are Difficulties and Intricacies in this no leſs than in other Faculties, which need good Skill to reſolve them; for that in theſe Matters we may eaſily ſlip, and by Error may incur huge Danger and Damage; why then ſhould we not here take the ſame courſe, following (when no other clearer Light, or prevalent Reaſon occurreth) the conduct and advice of our more skilful Guides? eſpecially conſidering, that beſide ordinary, natural and acquired Advantages, they have other ſupernatural, both Obligations to the well diſcharging this Duty, and aſſiſtances toward it: For,

2. We may conſider, that they are by God appointed, and impowered to inſtruct and guide us: It is their ſpecial Office, not aſſumed by themſelves, or conſtituted by human Prudence, but ordained and ſettled by divine Wiſdom for our edification in Knowledge, and direction in Practice: They are God's Meſſengers purpoſely ſent by him, ſelected and *ſeparated*, by his Inſtinct, *for this work*; they are by him *given for the perfecting of the Saints, and edifying the body of Chriſt*: It is by God's warrant, and in his Name that they ſpeak, which giveth eſpecial weight to their Words, and no mean ground of aſſurance to us in relying upon them: for who is more likely to know God's Mind and Will, who may be preſumed more faithful in declaring them, than God's own Officers, and Agents? thoſe whoſe great Duty, whoſe main concernment it is to ſpeak not their own ſenſe, but the Word of God? They are God's Mouth, by whom alone, ordinarily, he expreſſeth his Mind and Pleaſure; by whom *he entreateth us to be reconciled* in Heart and Practice to him; what they ſay therefore is to be received as God's Word, except plain Reaſon, upon due examination, do forbid.

Jer. 3. 15. I will give you Paſtors according to mine Heart, which ſhall feed you with Knowledge and Underſtanding. Cypr. *Ep.* 55.

Rom. 10. 15. Acts 13. 2. Eph. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 28. 1 Tim. 1. 11, 12. 2. 7. Tit. 1. 3. 1 Theſſ. 2. 4.

2 Cor. 5. 20.

If they by Office are Teachers, or Maſters in Doctrine, then we anſwerably muſt in obligation be Diſciples, which implies admitting their Doctrine, and proficiency in knowledge thereby; If they are appointed Shepherds, then muſt we be their Sheep, to be led and fed by them; if they are God's Meſſengers, we muſt yield ſome Credence, and embrace the Meſſage uttered by them; ſo the *Prophet* telleth us: *The Prieſt's Lips ſhould keep Knowledge, and they ſhould ſeek the Law at his Mouth, for he is the Meſſenger of the Lord of Hoſts*; ſo the Law of old enjoined;----*According to the ſentence of the Law, which they ſhall teach thee, and according to the Judgment, which they ſhall tell thee, thou ſhalt do; thou ſhalt not decline from the ſentence which they ſhall ſhew thee to the right hand, nor to the left*; ſo our *Lord* alſo in regard to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* ſaith, *The Scribes and Phariſees ſit in Moſes his Chair, all therefore whatſoever they bid you obſerve, that obſerve and do*; upon account of their Office, whatever they direct to (not repugnant to the divine Law) was to be obſerved by the People; and ſurely in doubtful Caſes, when upon competent inquiry no clear light offereth it ſelf, it cannot be very dangerous to follow their guidance, whom God hath appointed and authorized to lead us; if we err doing ſo, we err wiſely in the way of our Duty, and ſo no great blame will attend our Error.

Mal. 2. 7. Deut. 17. 11. Matt. 23. 3. (Eze. 34. 16.)

3. We may conſider that our Guides, as ſuch, have ſpecial aſſiſtance from God; to every vocation God's aid is congruouſly afforded; but to this (the principal of all others, the moſt important, moſt nearly related to God, and moſt peculiarly tending to his Service) it is in a ſpecial manner moſt aſſuredly and plentifully imparted.

1 Pet. 4. 10. They are *ſtewards of God's various grace*; and they who diſpence Grace
1 Cor. 3. 9. to others cannot want it themſelves; they are *co-operatours with God*, and
God conſequently doth co-operate with them; it is *God* who doth *ἱκάνωσεν*
2 Cor. 3. 5. *render them ſufficient to be miniſters of the New Teſtament*; and they *mini-*
Phil. 2. 13. *ſter of the ability which God ſupplieth*; Every ſpiritual Labourer is obliged
to ſay with St. *Paul*; *By the grace of God I am what I am —— I have labou-*
1 Pet. 4. 11. 1 Cor. 15. 10. *red, yet not I, but the grace of God, which was with me.*

God's having *given them* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) to the Church, doth imply
Eph. 4. 11, 12. 1 Cor. 12. 28. that God hath endowed them with ſpecial Ability, and furthereth them (in
their conſcionable Diſcharge of their Miniſtry) with aid requiſite to the
Deſigns of *perfecting the Saints and edifying the Body* in Knowledge in Ver-
tue, in Piety.

As the Holy Ghoſt doth conſtitute them in their Charge (according to
Acts 20. 28. that of St. *Paul* in the *Acts*; *Take heed unto your ſelves, and to all the flock,*
over which the Holy Ghoſt hath made you overſeers) ſo queſtionleſs he doth
1 Tim. 4. 14. enable and aſſiſt them in adminiſtring their Function. There is *a gift* (of
2 Tim. 1. 6. ſpiritual Ability, and divine Succour) imparted by their Conſecration to
this Office, with *the laying on the hands of the presbytery*, joined with hum-
ble Supplications for them, and ſolemn Benedictions in God's Name upon
them. The divine Spirit, which *diſtributeth, as he ſeeth good, unto every*
member of the church needful Supplies of Grace doth *beſtow* on them in
1 Cor. 12. 7. &c. Eph. 4. 16. Rom. 12. 5, 6. competent meaſure the *word of wiſdom*, and the *word of knowledge* requi-
ſite for their Employment.

God of old did in extraordinary ways viſibly communicate his Spirit
unto his *Prophets* and Agents; the ſame he did liberally pour out upon
the *Apoſtles* and firſt Planters of the *Goſpel*; the ſame queſtionleſs he hath
not withdrawn from thoſe, who under the *Evangelical* Diſpenſation which
2 Cor. 3. 8. is peculiarly the *miniſtration of the Spirit*, (unto which the Aid of God's
Spirit is moſt proper and moſt needful) do ſtill by a ſetled Miniſtry
ſupply the room of thoſe extraordinary Miniſters; but imparteth it to
them, in a way although more ordinary and occult, yet no leſs real and
effectual, according to Proportions anſwerable to the Exigencies of Need
and Occaſion; And by the Influence hereof upon the Paſtours of his
Mat. 28. 20. Church it is, that our Lord accompliſheth his Promiſe to be *with it until*
the end of the world.

Luke 7. 52. *Clavis ſcientiæ, the key of knowledge* ſpiritual, is one of thoſe Keys which
he hath given to them, whereby they are enabled to open the Kingdom
of Heaven.

Great Reaſon therefore we have to place an eſpecial Confidence in their
Direction; for whom can we more ſafely follow, than thoſe, whom (up-
on ſuch grounds of divine Declarations and Promiſes) we may hope that
God doth guide; ſo that conſequently in following them we do in effect
follow God himſelf? *He that heareth you, heareth me*, might be ſaid not
only becauſe of their relation unto Chriſt; but becauſe their Word pro-
ceedeth from his Inſpiration, being no other than his Mind conveyed
through their Mouth.

4. We may alſo for our Encouragement to confide in our Guides con-
ſider, that they are themſelves deeply concerned in our being rightly gui-
ded; their preſent Comfort, their Salvation hereafter depending upon the
faithful, and careful Diſcharge of their Duty herein: they muſt render
an Accompt for it; ſo that if by their wilful, or negligent Miſcarriage
we do fall into dangerous Errour or Sin, they do thence not only forfeit
rich and glorious Rewards (aſſigned to thoſe, *who turn many unto righteouſ-*
neſs) but incur woful Puniſhment; this doth aſſure their Integrity, and

ren-

render our confidence in them very reasonable; for as we may safely trust a Pilot, who hath no less interest than our selves in the safe conveyance of the Vessel to Port; so may we reasonably confide in their Advice, whose Salvation is adventured with ours in the same bottom, or rather is wrapped up, and carried in ours: It is not probable they will (at least designedly) misguide us to their own extreme damage, to their utter ruine: *If they do not warn the wicked from his wicked way to save his Life, God hath said that he will require his Blood at their hands*; and is it likely they should wittingly run such a hazard, that they should purposely cast away the Souls, for which they are so certainly accomptable? It is our *Apostle*'s enforcement of the Precept in our *Text*, *Obey them that guide you; for they watch for your Souls, as they that must give an accompt*; which Argumentation is not only grounded upon the obligations of Ingenuity and Gratitude, but also upon considerations of Discretion and Interests; we should obey our Guides in Equity and Honesty; we may do it advisedly, because they in regard to their own Accompts at the final Judgment are obliged to be careful for the good of our Souls. Ezek. 3. 18. 33. 2, 8.

Upon these Considerations it is plainly reasonable to follow our Guides in all Matters, wherein we have no other very clear and certain light of Reason or Revelation to conduct us: The doing so is indeed (which is farther observable) not only wise in it self, but safe in way of Prevention, that we be not seduced by other treacherous Guides; it will not only secure us from our own weak Judgments, but from the Frauds of those *who lie in wait to deceive*. The simpler sort of Men will in effect be always led not by their own Judgment, but by the Authority of others; and if they be not fairly guided by those whom God hath constituted and assigned to that end, they will be led by the Nose by those who are concerned to seduce them: So reason dictateth that it must be, so Experience sheweth it ever to have been; that the People, whenever they have deserted their true Guides, have soon been hurried by Impostors into most dangerous Errors, and extravagant Follies; being *carried about with divers and strange Doctrines*; being *like Children tossed to and fro with every wind of Doctrine*. Eph. 4. 14. Heb. 13. 9. Eph. 4. 14.

It is therefore a great Advantage to us, and a great Mercy of God, that there are (by God's Care) provided for us such Helps, upon which we may commonly for our guidance in the way to Happiness more safely rely, than upon our own Judgments, liable to Mistake, and than upon the Counsel of others, who may be interested to abuse us; very foolish and very ungrateful we are, if we do not highly prize, if we do not willingly embrace this Advantage.

I farther add, that as Wisdom may induce, so Modesty and Humility should dispose us to follow the direction of our Guides: *Ye younger* (saith St. *Peter*) *submit your selves unto the Elder* (that is, ye Inferiors to your Superiors, ye that are the Flock to your Pastors) *and* (subjoineth he immediately) *be cloathed with Humility*; signifying, that it is a point of Humility to yield that Submission: Every modest and humble Person is apt to distrust his own, and to submit to better Judgments: And, *Not to lean to our Understanding, not to be wise in our own Eyes; not to seem to know any thing*, not *to seem any body to ones self, in humility to prefer others before our selves*, are divine Injunctions, chiefly applicable to this Case, in reference to our spiritual Guides; for if it be Pride or culpable Immodesty to presume our selves wiser than any Man, what is it then to prefer our selves in that respect before our Teachers; as indeed we do, when without evident reason we disregard, or dissent from their Opinion? 1 Pet. 5. 5. Prov. 3. 5, 7. Rom. 12. 6, 10. Gal. 6. 3. Phil. 2. 3. 1 Cor. 8. 2. 1 Tim. 6. 6.

It

It is then a Duty very reasonable, and a very commendable Practice to rely upon the guidance of our Pastors in such Cases, wherein surer direction faileth, and we cannot otherwise fully satisfie our selves.

Neither in doing so (against some appearances of Reason, or with some violence to our private Conceits) do we act against our Conscience, but rather truly according to it; for Conscience (as the word in this Case is used) is nothing else but an Opinion in practical Matters, grounded upon the best Reason we can discern; if therefore, in any case, the authority of our Guides be a reason outweighing all other reasons apparent, he that in such a case, notwithstanding other Arguments less forcible, doth conform his Judgment and Practice thereto, therein exactly followeth Conscience; yea, in doing otherwise, he would thwart and violence his own Conscience, and be self-condemned, adhering to a less probable Reason in opposition to one more probable.

I do not hereby mean to assert, that we are obliged indifferently (with an implicit Faith or blind Obedience) to believe all that our Teachers say, or to practise all they bid us: For they are Men, and therefore subject to Error and Sin; they may neglect or abuse the advantages they have of knowing better than others; they may sometimes by Infirmity, by Negligence, by pravity fail in performing faithfully their Duty towards us: they may be swayed by Temper, be led by Passion, be corrupted by Ambition or Avarice, so as thence to embrace and vent bad Doctrines: We do see our Pastors often dissenting and clashing among themselves, sometimes with themselves, so as to change and retract their own Opinions.

Isa. 3. 12. *O my People, they which lead thee, cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.*

(Jer. 2. 8.) Isa. 28. 7. Jer. 10. 21. 12. 10. Jer. 23. 11. (Jer. 18. 18. 5. 31. 6. 13.) Zeph. 3. 4. Ezek. 22. 26. Mal. 1. 6. Ezek. 7. 26. Mic. 3. 11. Mal. 2. 8, 9. Jer. 23. 11. 12. 10.

We find the *Prophets* of old complaining of *Priests*, of *Pastors*, of *Elders*, and *Prophets*, who *handled the Law, yet were ignorant of God*; who *erred in Vision, and stumbled in Judgment*; who *were profane, brutish, light, and treacherous Persons*; *who polluted the Sanctuary, and did violence to the Law*, *and profaned holy Things*; who *handled the Law, yet knew not God*; from *whom the Law and Counsel did perish*; *who taught for Hire, and divined for Money*; *who themselves departed out of the way, and caused many to stumble, and corrupted the Covenant of* Levi; *who destroyed and scattered the Sheep of God's Pasture.*

Matt. 16. 6, 12. Luke 12. 1. Matt. 15. 2, 6. Luke 11. 52. Matt. 15. 14.

There were in our *Saviour*'s Time Guides, *of the ferment of whose Doctrine* good People were *bid to beware*; who *transgressed and defeated the Commandment of God by their Traditions*; who *did take away the key of Knowledge, so that they would not enter themselves into the Kingdom of Heaven, nor would suffer others to enter*; *blind Guides*, who both themselves did fall, and drew others into the ditch of noxious Error, and wicked Practice: Matt. 15. 9. The followers of which Guides did *in vain worship God, observing for Doctrine the Precepts of Men.*

There have not, since the primitive Times of the Gospel, wanted those who (indulging to Ambition, Avarice, Curiosity, Faction, and other bad Affections) have depraved and debased Religion with noxious Errors, and idle Superstitions; such as St. *Bernard* describeth, *&c.* *Kid. Apol. Eccl. Ang.*

We are, in matters of such infinite concernment to our eternal welfare, in Wisdom and Duty obliged, not only without farther heed or care, to trust the Diligence and Integrity of others, but to consider and look about us, using our own Reason, Judgment, and Discretion, so far as we are capable; we cannot in such a case be blamed for too much Circumspection and Caution.

We

We are not wholly blind, not void of Reason, not destitute of fit Helps; in many Cases we have competent Ability to judge, and Means sufficient to attain Knowledge; we are therefore concerned to use our eyes, to employ our reason, to embrace and improve the advantages vouchsafed us.

We are accomptable personally for all our actions as agreeable or cross to reason; if we are mistaken by our own default, or misled by the ill guidance of others, we shall however deeply suffer for it, and *die in our iniquity*; the Ignorance, or errour of our Guides will not wholly excuse us from guilt, or exempt us from punishment; it is fit therefore that we should be allowed, as to the sum of the matter, to judge and chuse for our selves: for if our salvation were wholly placed in the hands of others, so that we could not but in case of their Errour or Default miscarry: our Ruin would be inevitable, and consequently not just; we should perish without blame, if we were bound as a blind and brutish Herd, to follow others. Ezek. 3. 18.

We, in order to our Practice (which must be regulated by Faith and Knowledge) and toward preparing our selves for our grand Accompt, are obliged to get a Knowledge and Perswasion concerning our Duty; *to prove* (or search and examine) *what is that good and acceptable, and perfect will of God*; for Ignorance (if any wise by our Endeavour vincible) will not secure us: *He that* (saith our *Lord* and *Judge*) *knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes* (few; not in themselves, but comparatively to those, which shall be inflicted on them, who transgress against Knowledge and Conscience.) Rom. 12. 2. Eph. 5. 10. Luke 12. 48.

We are bound to study Truth, to improve our Minds in the Knowledge and Love of it, to be firmly perswaded of it in a rational Way; so that we be not easily shaken or seduced from it.

The *Apostles* do charge it upon us, as our Duty and Concernment; that we *abound in faith and knowledge*; that we *be rooted and built up in Christ, and stablished in the faith, so as to be steadfast and unmovable*, not to *be soon shaken in mind or troubled*; *to grow up and increase in all divine knowledge*; that *the word of God should dwell richly in us in all wisdom*; that we should *be filled with all knowledge, so as to be able to teach, and admonish one another*; that *our love should abound more and more in knowledge and all judgment, that we may approve things excellent* (or scan things different) that we *be enriched in all the word* (that is, in all the Doctrine of the Gospel) *and in all knowledge*; that *we be filled in the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding*; that we should not be *unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is*; That we should *be perfect and compleat in all the will of God* (that is, first, in the Knowledge of it; then in compliance with it) that *in understanding we should not be children, but perfect men.* 2 Cor. 8. 7. Col. 2. 7. 1 Cor. 15. 58. 2 Thess. 2. 2. Col. 1. 10. 2 Pet. 3. 18. 2. 2. Eph. 4. 15. Col. 1. 16. Rom. 5. 14. Heb. 5. 12. Phil. 1. 9, 10. 2 Cor. 1. 5. Col. 1. 9. Eph. 5. 17. Col. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 14. 20. Heb. 9. 12.

We are likewise by them commanded to *take heed of false Prophets*, to *try the spirits, whether they are of God, to see that no man deceive us*; to *look that no man spoil us by vain deceit, to try all things, and hold fast that which is good*; which Precepts imply that we should be furnished with a good Faculty of Judgment and competent Knowledge in the principal matters of Christian Doctrine, concerning both the Mysteries of Faith, and Rules of Practice. Our *Lord* himself and his *Apostles* did not upon other Terms than of rational Consideration and Discussion exact Credit and Obedience to their Words, they did not insist barely upon their own Authority, but exhorted their Disciples to examine strictly, and judge faithfully concerning the Truth and Reasonableness of their Doctrine: *Search the Scriptures*, for *they testifie of me: If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe me not, believe the works*: so our Mat. 7. 15. 1 John 4. 1. Mat. 24. 4. Eph. 5. 6. Col. 2. 8, 18. 1 Thess. 5. 21. John 5. 39. John 10. 37, 38. 15. 22, 24. 12. 48.

Lord

Lord appealed to their reason, proceeding upon grounds of Scripture, and
1 Cor. 10. 15. common Sense: and, *I speak to wise men, judge ye what I say*; so Saint *Paul* addressed his Discourse to his Disciples; otherwise we should be uncapable to observe them.

We are also bound to defer the principal Regard to God's Wisdom and Will, so as without Reservation or Exception, to embrace whatever he doth say, to obey what he positively doth command: whatever Authority doth contradict his Word, or cross his Command, in such Cases we may
Acts 4. 19. remonstrate with the *Apostles*, *If it be just before God to hearken unto you rather than unto God, judge ye:* and *we ought to obey God rather than men*; we may denounce with St. *Paul*, *If an angel from heaven preach any other Gospel, let him be accursed.*
Acts 5. 29.
Gal. 1. 8.

Rom. 14. 23. We are obliged always to act *with faith* (that is, with a Perswasion concerning the Lawfulness of what we do) for *Whatever is not of faith*, is
Rom. 14. 22 *sin: We should never condemn our selves in what we try* or embrace.

These things considered, we may, and it much behoveth us, reserving due respect to our Guides, with Humility and Modesty to weigh and scan their Dictates and their Orders; lest by them unawares we be drawn into
Acts 17. 11. Errour or Sin; like the ingenuous *Bereans*, who did ἀνακρίνειν τὰς γραφὰς, *search and examine the Scriptures if those things were so.* Our Guides are
2 Cor. 1. 24. but the *helpers*, they are not Lords of our Faith; the *Apostles* themselves were not.

We may, and are bound, if they tell us things evidently repugnant to God's Word, or to sound Reason and common Sense, to dissent from them; if they impose on us things evidently contrary to God's Law, to forbear
Isa. 8. 20. Compliance with them; we may in such Cases ap-
Plebs timens Dominum separare se debet à peccatore præposito. Cypr. peal *ad legem & testimonium*; we must not admit a *non obstante* to God's Law.

If other Arguments (weighed in the Balance of honest and impartial Reason, with cautious and industrious Consideartion) do overpoize the Authority of our Guides; let us in God's Name adhere to them; and follow our own Judgments; it would be a Violation of our Conscience, a Prevarication toward our own Souls, and a Rebellion against God to do otherwise; when against our own Mind, so carefully informed, we follow the Dictates of others, we like Fools rashly adventure and prostitute our Souls.

This Proceeding is no wise inconsistent with what we delivered before; for this due Wariness in examining, this Reservation in assenting, this Exception in Practice, in some cases, wherein the Matter hath Evidence, and we a Faculty to judge, doth no-wise hinder, but that we should defer much Regard to the Judgment of our Guides; that we should in those cases, wherein no Light discovereth it self out-shining their Authority, rely upon it; that where our Eyes will not serve clearly to direct us, we should use theirs; where our Reason faileth to satisfie us, we should acquiesce in theirs; that we should regard their Judgments so far, that no petty Scruple emerging, no faint Semblance of Reason should prevail upon us to dissent from their Doctrine, to reject their Advice, to disobey their Injunctions.

In fine, let us remember, that the Mouth of Truth which bid us to *beware of the* bad *doctrine* of those who *sate in Moses's Chair*, did also charge
Mat. 15. 14. 33. 8. us *to observe all they taught and enjoined*; that is, all not certainly repugnant to the Divine Law. In effect, if we discost from the Advices of our sober Teachers, appointed for us by God; we shall in the end have Occasion to bewail with him in the *Proverbs*, *How have I hated instruction, and*
Pro. 5. 12, 13. *my heart despised reproof? And have not obeyed the voice of my Teachers, nor inclined mine ear to them that instructed me?*

To

To these things I shall only add one Rule, which we may well suppose comprised in the Precept we treat upon; which is, that at least we forbear openly to dissent from our Guides, or to contradict their Doctrine; except only, if it be not so false (which never, or rarely can happen among us) as to subvert the Foundations of Faith, or Practice of Holiness. If we cannot be internally convinced by their Discourses, if their Authority cannot sway with us against the prevalence of other Reasons, yet may we spare outwardly to oppose them, or to slight their Judgment; for doing thus doth tend as to the disgrace of their Persons, so to the Disparagement of their Office, to an obstructing the Efficacy of their Ministry, to the infringement of Order and Peace in the Church: For when the inconsiderate People shall see their Teachers distrusted and disrespected; when they perceive their Doctrine may be challenged, and opposed by plausible Discourses; then will they hardly trust them, or comply with them in Matters most certain and necessary; than which Disposition in the People there cannot happen any thing more prejudicial or baneful to the Church.

But let thus much serve for the Obedience due to the Doctrine of our Guides: let us consider that which we owe to them in reference to their Conversation and Practice,

The following their Practice may well be referr'd to this Precept; for that their Practice is a kind of living Doctrine, a visible Law or Rule of Action; and because indeed the Notion of a Guide primarily doth imply Example; that he which is guided should respect the Guide as a Precedent, being concerned to walk after his Footsteps.

Most of the Reasons which urge Deference to their Judgment in teaching, do in proportion infer Obligation to follow their Example, (which indeed is the most easie and clear way of Instruction to vulgar Capacity; carrying with it also most efficacious Encouragement and Excitement to Practice?) They are obliged, and it is expected from them to live with especial Regularity, Circumspection, and strictness of Conversation; they are by God's Grace especially disposed and enabled to do so; and many common Advantages they have of doing so; (a more prefect Knowledge of things, Firmness of Principles, and Clearness of Notions; a deeper Tincture, and more savoury Relish of Truth, attained by continual Meditation thereon; consequently a Purity of Mind and Affection, a Retirement from the World and its Temptation, Freedom from Distraction of worldly Care, and the Incumbrances of Business, with the like.)

They are often charged to be exemplary in Conversation (as we before shewed) and that involveth a correspondent Obligation to follow them. They must (like St. *John Baptist*) *be burning and shining lights*; *stars in God's right hand*; *lights of the world*; *whose light should shine before men*, *that men may see their good works*; and by their light direct their steps. Joh. 5. 35. Apoc. 16. 20. Mat. 5. 14, 16.

They are proposed as Copies, which signifies that we must in our Practice transcribe them.

We are often directly commanded to imitate them; ὧν μιμεῖσθε τὴν πίστιν, *whose Faith imitate ye* (that is, their faithful Perseverance in the Doctrine and Practice of Christianity) saith the *Apostle* in this Chapter.

Their Conversation is safely imitable in all Cases, wherein no better Rule appeareth, and when it doth not appear discordant from God's Law, and the Dictates of sound Reason; for supposing that Discordance, we cease to be obliged to follow them; as when our Lord prescribeth with respect to the Pharisees; *Whatever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not after their Works; for they say and do not.* Mat. 23. 3.

It is indeed easier for them to speak well than to do well; their Doctrine therefore is more commonly a sure Guide than their Practice; yet when there wanteth a clearer guidance of Doctrine, their Practice may pass for instructive; and a probable Argument or Warrant of Action.

SERMON XXVIII.

Of Self-love in general.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For Men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

Καιροὶ χαλεποὶ ἐνστήσουν.

SAINT *Paul* in this place out of a prophetical Spirit instructing or warning his Disciple *Timothy*, concerning *difficult times*, or the calamitous state of things, which should ensue; induced upon the World, as it useth to happen, by a general prevalency of vitious Dispositions and Practices among Men, doth thence take occasion by a specification of their Vices to characterize the Persons, who should concur to produce that hard state.

Hæc omnia mala ab eo velut fonte manantia, quod primum posuit, seipsos amantes. Augustin. *in* Joh. *Tract.* 123.

Among those Vices he placeth Self-love in the Van, as the capital and leading Vice; intimating thereby, that it is of all in its nature most heinous, or in its influence most noxious.

This indeed is of all Vices the most common, so deeply radicated in our Nature, and so generally over-spreading the World, that no man throughly is exempted from it, most men are greatly tainted with it, some are wholly possessed and acted by it; this is the Root, from which all other Vices do grow, and without which hardly any Sin could subsist; the chief Vices especially have an obvious and evident dependance thereon.

All impiety doth involve a loving our selves in undue manner and measure; so that we set our selves in our esteem and affection before God; we prefer our own conceits to his Judgment and Advice; we raise our Pleasure above his Will and Authority; we bandy Forces with him, and are like the prophane *Belshazzar*, of whom it is said, *Thou hast lifted up thy self against* (or above) *the Lord of Heaven.*

From hence particularly by a manifest extraction are derived those chief and common vices, Pride, Ambition, Envy, Avarice, Intemperance, Injustice, Uncharitableness, Peevishness, Stubbornness, Discontent and Impatience. For,

We over-value our Selves, our Qualities and Endowments, our Powers and Abilities, our Fortunes and external Advantages; hence are we so proud, that is, so lofty in our Conceits, and fastuous in our Demeanour.

We

We would be the only Men or moſt conſiderable in the World; hence are we ambitious, hence continually with unſatiable greedineſs we do affect and ſtrive to procure encreaſe of Reputation, of Power, of Dignity.

We would engroſs to our ſelves all ſorts of good things in higheſt degree; hence enviouſly we become jealous of the Worth and Vertue, we grudge and repine at the Proſperity of others; as if they defalked ſomewhat from our Excellency, or did eclipſe the brightneſs of our Fortune.

We deſire to be not only full in our Enjoyment, but free and abſolute in our Dominion of things; not only ſecure from needing the Succour of other Men, but independant in regard to God's Providence; hence are we ſo covetous of Wealth, hence we ſo eagerly ſcrape it, and ſo carefully hoard it up.

We can refuſe our dear ſelves no Satisfaction, although unreaſonable or hurtful; therefore we ſo readily gratifie ſenſual Appetites in unlawful or exceſſive enjoyments of Pleaſure.

Being blinded or tranſported with fond dotage on our ſelves, we cannot diſcern, or will not regard what is due to others; hence are we apt upon occaſion to do them wrong.

Love to our ſelves doth in ſuch manner ſuck in and ſwallow our Spirits, doth ſo pinch in and contract our Hearts, doth according to its computation ſo confine and abridge our Intereſts, that we cannot in our Affection, or in real expreſſion of Kindneſs tend outwards; that we can afford little Good-will, or impart little Good to others.

Deeming our ſelves extremely wiſe and worthy of regard, we cannot endure to be contradicted in our Opinion, or croſſed in our Humour; upon any ſuch occaſion our Choler riſeth, and eaſily we break forth into violent Heats of Paſſion.

From the like Cauſes it is, that we cannot willingly ſtoop to due obeiſance of our Superiours, in reverence to their Perſons, and obſervance of their Laws; that we cannot contentedly acquieſce in the ſtation or portion aſſigned us by Providence; that we cannot patiently ſupport our Condition, or accept the Events befalling us.

In fine, if ſurveying all the ſeveral kinds of naughty Diſpoſitions in our Souls, and of Miſcarriages in our Lives, we do ſcan their particular Nature, and ſearch into their original Cauſes; we ſhall find inordinate Self-love to be a main Ingredient, and a common Source of them all: ſo that a *Divine* of great Name had ſome reaſon to affirm, that *Original Sin* (or that innate Diſtemper from which Men generally become ſo very prone to Evil, and averſe to Good) doth conſiſt in Self-love, diſpoſing us to all kinds of irregularity and exceſs: St. *Paul* therefore might well ſet this in the Front of all thoſe Sins, which depraved the Age he ſpake of; they having all ſuch a dependence on it.

Eſt ergò iſta ad peccandum amore ſui propenſio, peccatum originale, &c. Zuingl. *apud* Bell. *de Amiſſ grat.* 4. 2.

It is therefore very requiſite that we ſhould well underſtand this Fault, that we may be the better able to curb and correct it; to which purpoſe I ſhall endeavour, by God's help, ſomewhat to declare its Nature.

The Word *Self-love* is ambiguous; for all Self-love is not culpable; there is a neceſſary and unavoidable, there is an innocent and allowable, there is a worthy and commendable Self-love.

There is a Self-love, originally implanted by God himſelf in our Nature, in order to the preſervation and enjoyment of our Being; the which is common to us with all Creatures, and cannot any-wiſe be extirpated; for *No man* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *ever yet hated his own Fleſh, but nouriſheth, and cheriſheth it:* Every Man living, by a natural and Eph. 5. 29.

Panis ematur, olus, vini sextarius; adde
Quæ humana sibi doleat natura negatis.
Hor. *Serm.* I. 1.

necessary instinct, is prompted to guard his Life, shunning all Dangers threatning its destruction; to pourvey for the support and convenience of it; to satisfie those natural Appetites, which importunately crave Relief, and without intolerable pain cannot be denied it; to repel or decline whatever is very grievous and offensive to Nature; the Self-love that urgeth us to do these things, is no more to be blamed than it can be shunned.

Τὸν μὲν ἀγαθὸν δεῖ φίλαυτον εἶ-ναι· ᾗ γὰρ αὐτὸς ὀνήσει τὰ καλὰ πράττων, καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ὠφελήσει. Ὁ δὲ μοχθηρὸν οὐ δεῖ φιλαυτεῖν· ᾗ γὰρ καὶ ἑαυτὸν καὶ τοὺς πέλας, φαύλοις πάθεσιν ἐπόμενον. Arist. *Eth.* 9. 8.

Reason farther alloweth such a Self-love, which moveth us to the pursuance of any thing apparently good, pleasant, or useful to us, the which doth not contain in it any essential turpitude or iniquity; doth not obstruct the attainment of some true or greater Good; doth not produce some over-balancing Mischief; doth not infer harm to the World, or wrong to other Men.

Πᾶς γὰρ νοῦς αἱρεῖ τὸ βέλτιστον ἑαυτῷ, ὁ δ' ἐπιεικὴς πειθαρχεῖ τῷ νῷ. Arist. *Eth.* 9. 8.

Reason dictateth and prescribeth to us, that we should have a sober regard to our true Good and Welfare; to our best Interest, and solid Content; to that, which (all things being rightly stated, considered and computed) will in the final event prove most beneficial, and satisfactory to us: a Self-love working in prosecution of such things common Sense cannot but allow and approve.

God himself hath to these suggestions of Nature and dictates of Reason, adjoyned his own suffrage, having in various ways declared it to be his Will and Pleasure, that we should tender our real and final Good. He, as the Author of Nature, and Fountain of Reason, may be supposed to ordain that, unto which Nature doth so potently incline, and which Reason so clearly prescribeth. He plainly hath to every Man committed himself in charge, so as to preserve his Being from ruine, and to enjoy it with comfort. He by making so rich a provision for the sustenance of our Lives, and satisfaction of our Appetites, by framing our Bodies to relish Delight, and suiting so many accommodations in wondrous correspondence to our Senses, hath sufficiently intimated it to be his pleasure, that we should in reasonable measure seek them and enjoy them; otherwise his Care would have been vain, and his Work useless; yea, he might seem to have laid an ill Design to tempt and ensnare us: he certainly had no such intent, but as he made us out of Goodness, as he made us capable of tasting Comfort, as he hath furnished us with means of attaining it, so he meaneth that we should partake thereof.

Quia tutela certissima ex proximo est, sibi quisque commissus est.
Sen. *Ep.* 121.

He also expressly hath commanded us to love all Men, not excluding our selves from the number; to love our Neighbour, and therefore our selves; who of all are nearest to our selves; who occur as the first Objects of Humanity and Charity; whose Needs we most sensibly feel; whose Good is in it self no less considerable, than the single Good of any other Person; who must first look to our own Good before we can be capable to love others, or do any good to our Neighbour.

He therefore hath made the love of our selves to be the Rule and Standard, the Pattern, the Argument of our Love to others; imposing on us those great Commands of *loving our neighbours as our selves*, and *doing as we would be done unto*; which imply not only a Necessity, but an Obligation of loving our selves.

He doth enforce Obedience to all his Commands, by promising Rewards, yielding immense Profit and transcendant Pleasure to us; and by threatning Punishments grievous to our Sense; which Proceeding is grounded upon a suppo-

Matt. 16. 26.

ſuppoſition that we do and ought greatly to love our ſelves, or to regard our own Intereſt and Pleaſure.

He doth recommend Wiſdom or Vertue to us, as moſt agreeable to Self-love; moſt eligible, becauſe it yieldeth great benefit to our ſelves; becauſe (as the *Wiſe-man* ſaith) *he that getteth it, doth love his own ſoul; he that keepeth it, ſhall find good.* Prov. 15. 8. 16. 11. 17.

Ariſtotle ſaith of a vertuous Man, that he is the greateſt *ſelf-lover*; Δόξειε δ' ἂν ὁ τοιῦτος εἶναι μᾶλλον φίλαυτος· ἀπονέμει γὰρ ἑαυτῷ τὰ κάλλιστα, καὶ μάλιστα ἀγαθὸν, καὶ χαρίζεται ἑαυτῷ τῷ κυριωτάτῳ. Ethic. 9. 8.

He diſſuadeth from Vice, as therefore deteſtable, becauſe the embracing it doth imply hatred of our ſelves, bringing miſchief and damage to us; becauſe (as the *Wiſe-man* doth expreſs it) *he that ſinneth, wrongeth his own ſoul; he that deſpiſeth inſtruction, deſpiſeth his own ſoul; he that committeth injury, hateth his own ſoul.* Prov. 8. 36. × 15. 36. 29. 24. 32

He commendeth his Laws to our obſervance, by declaring them in their deſign and tendency chiefly to regard our good and advantage; made apt to preſerve the ſafety and quiet, to promote the wealth and proſperity of our lives; to bring eaſe and comfort to our Minds, grace and ornament to our Names, ſalvation and happineſs to our Souls. Deut. 10. 12. Mic. 6. 8. Neh. 9. 13. Prov. 3. & 4, &c.

In fine, God chargeth and encourageth us to affect and purſue the higheſt Goods whereof we are capable; moſt ample Riches, moſt ſublime Honours, moſt ſweet Pleaſures, moſt complete Felicity; *He* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *will render to them, who by patient continuance in well-doing ſeek for glory, and honour, and immortality, eternal life*; to ſeek ſuch things is the higheſt inſtance, is the ſureſt argument of Self-love, that can be; he therefore, who obligeth, who encourageth us thereto, doth plainly ſhew his approbation of a Self-love. Rom. 2. 7.

So it appeareth, that all Self-love is not culpable, but that ſome kind thereof is very commendable; how then ſhall we diſtinguiſh; how ſhall we *ſever* (to uſe the Prophet's Language) *the precious from the vile?* Jer. 15. 19.

To this we may anſwer in general, that all Love of our ſelves, which is unreaſonably grounded, or which is exceſſive in its degrees and limits; or which venteth it ſelf in wrong inſtances; or which driveth our Mind, Will and Affections toward bad Objects; or which produceth effects noxious to our ſelves or others; is culpable. If we eſteem our ſelves for things not true, or really for things indifferent or mean, for things nowiſe excellent or valuable; if we affect our ſelves beyond compaſs, ſo as to poſtpone the Love of God, or exclude the Love of our Neighbour; if out of regard to our ſelves we do things baſe, or miſchievous; if thence we dote upon vain Profits, embrace foul Pleaſures, incur ſinful Guilt, expoſe our ſelves to grievous Danger, Trouble, Remorſe and Puniſhment; if thereby we are engaged to forſake our true Intereſt, and forfeit our final Happineſs; then aſſuredly it is a fooliſh and vicious Self-love; it is indeed not a proper, but a falſe and equivocal Love, uſurping that goodly Name; it is a real Hatred, or Enmity diſguiſed under the ſemblance of Friendſhip; it more properly may be called Cruelty, Treachery, Flattery, Mockery, Deluſion, and Abuſe of our ſelves.

But for a more diſtinct and clear reſolution of the Caſe, we may do well to conſider the proper Acts of Love, which do conſtitute it, or inſeparably do adhere thereto; ſuch as theſe, a good eſteem of the Perſon, which is the Object of our Love; an earneſt Good-will toward him, or deſire of his Good; a complaiſance in Good, and diſſatisfaction in Evil arriving to him; a readineſs to yield, or procure Good to him; a deſire of Union

Union and Enjoyment, that is, of intimate converſation and entercourſe with him, a deference of regard to him, a complyance with his Deſires, and care to pleaſe him. Now if theſe Acts toward our ſelves are in their kind, in their grounds, in their meaſures conformable to Reaſon, Piety and Juſtice, then is our Self-love innocent or worthy: if they are not ſo, it is criminal and vicious.

If we do rightly eſteem our ſelves (both abſolutely, and in compariſon to others;) if we deſire to our ſelves what is fit and juſt; if we are pleaſed with true Goods, and diſpleaſed at real Evils incident to us; if we do in lawful ways endeavour to procure things truly convenient, and beneficial to us; if we maintain a faithful and chearful Correſpondence with our ſelves; if we have a ſober regard to our ſelves agreeable to our Nature and State; if we comply with the Dictates of our Reaſon, and ſatisfie our Deſires conforming thereto; then do we love our ſelves innocently, then are we true Friends to our ſelves.

But if we over-value our ſelves; if we do wiſh to our ſelves things incommodious or hurtful, if we are delighted or diſſatisfied in falſe Shows of Good or Evil befalling us; if we ſtrive to acquire for our ſelves things bad or miſchievous; if our converſe with our ſelves is naughty or vain; if we make indecent Applications to our ſelves; if we ſtoop to our fond Humours, or ſooth our unreaſonable deſires; then is our Self-love ſpurious; then are we indeed Enemies to our ſelves.

Farther, toward an exact diſcuſſion and trial of this caſe, we ſhould do well, deveſting our ſelves of Selfiſhneſs, to conſider our ſelves, as other Perſons, or abſtractedly as mere Objects of thoſe Acts which Love doth imply; for what rectitude, or what obliquity there would be in them in regard to any Object, the ſame would be in reference to our ſelves. For inſtance,

If we ſhould value any Perſon juſtly according to his real Worth, allowing a juſt rate to his Vertue, to his Parts, to his Endowments, to his Advantages of Nature or Fortune; not aſcribing to him things which belong not to him, nor over-prizing thoſe he hath, nor preferring him in any reſpect before thoſe which are his Superiours or Equals therein; we ſhall herein do wiſely and juſtly; but if (having our Judgment any-wiſe perverted) we do admire a Perſon beyond his worth, and advance him above his Rank; if we overlook his apparent Defects and Blemiſhes, or take them for Excellencies, and yield them applauſe; what is this but folly and dotage, tempered with iniquity? and if it be ſuch in regard to another, it is no leſs ſuch in reſpect to our ſelves,

If to any Perſon we ſhould wiſh things ſuitable, commodious, and advantageous, by obtaining which, he, without any wrong or prejudice to others, might be conſiderably benefitted, we ſhall herein act humanely, and like good Friends; but if we deſire things to him, which do not become or befit him; which will do him miſchief, or which he cannot have without injury and damage to others, are we not herein notoriouſly unkind or unjuſt? the Caſe is the ſame transferred to our ſelves.

If we ſhould obſerve any Man by Occurrences happening to him well improved in his condition, thriving in an honeſt way, proſperous in good Undertakings, growing in worthy accompliſhments of Soul, to find ſatisfaction therein would be greatly laudable; and ſo it would be to condole, if we ſhould ſee any Man to fall into any grievous Diſaſter or Calamity; but ſhould we behold a Man (although in falſe appearance bettered, yet really) prejudiced and endamaged (as when one is enriched by cozenage or rapine, is advanced by flattery or ſycophantry, is famed

for

for base or vain Exploits, is immersed into Care and Trouble, is exposed to Danger and Temptation, is fallen into the Enchantments of Pleasure) are we not, if we take Pleasure therein, very silly, or very cruel? and if we should observe good Physick administred to a sick Neighbour, or that he is engaged in painful Exercise for his health, should it not be absurd for us to be sorry thereat? for the same Reasons we are blameable, if we do rejoice when that we prosper in bad Courses, or enjoy sinful Pleasures, or fall into dangerous Temptations; if we distaste the wholsom Physick of Adversity dispensed by Providence, or dislike the needful Exercises of Duty by God prescribed to us.

If we do yield our Advice and Aid to our Neighbour, in furtherance of any Design, which is honest and beneficial to him, we then unquestionably do well; but if we do abet or encourage him in unjust or mischievous Enterprizes; if we render our selves Pandars to his unlawful Desires, Factors for his unjust Profits, Complices of his wicked Practices, Advocates of his Sins, is this true Love, is this faithful Friendship? no surely; nor is it such towards our selves, when we employ our Faculties in contrivance or achievement of any unlawful Designs, however satisfactory to our Desires.

If we should indifferently (without regard to the Laws of Piety, Justice, Humanity, or Decency) espouse the interest of any Person, so that for the promoting his Designs, advancing his Profit, gratifying his Humour or Pleasure, we should violate the Commands of God, we should neglect the Publick Good, we should work injury or mischief to our Neighbour, would this Dealing be allowable; neither would it be so, if for our own sake, in regard to our private Interest we should thus behave our selves.

2. If we do affect to hold free, sincere, chearful, kind Conversation with any Person for mutual instruction and comfort, this is sociable and friendly; but if we maintain frothy, foul, malicious, any-wise pestilent Discourse, apt to corrupt, or to annoy him, this is loathsom; and so it is, if we keep such entercourse with our selves, harbouring vain, impure, unjust, uncharitable Thoughts in our Minds.

If we should defer regard to any Man, answerable to his worth, we should thereby practise according to the good Rules of Humanity; but should we so affect or fansie any Man that we should care for no Man else, should pay no due Respect, or perform any Office of Kindness otherwhere; should take no Man's Word, or mind any Man's Opinion beside, nor care to converse with any other; would this be Love? would it not be ridiculous Fondness? it is no less if in regard to our selves, we are so morose, surly, or neglectful,

If we should comply with any Man's reasonable Desire, this were fair and courteous; if we should confide in the probable assistance of any Person, this were modest Prudence; but if we should entirely conform our Practice to the Will or Humour of another, against the Dictates of our own Reason, and to the Harm of our selves or others; would this be Love, would it not rather be vile and pitiful slavery? if we should without any ground, yea against plain Reason relie upon the help or direction of another, would this be Love, would it not rather be wild presumption; the same therefore it must be in us, if we in like manner are devoted to our own Will, or confident in our own Ability.

If we should commend any man for good Qualities or good Deeds, this is honest; if we should encourage him in good Undertakings, this is charitable; but to applaud his Defects, to bolster him in ill Practice, this is flattery

Flattery and Treachery; and in so doing towards others, we are not Friends to our selves, but Traytors and Parasites.

By such Reflections and Comparisons we may, I think, competently understand the Nature of that Bastard-self-love, which is so vicious in it self, and productive of so many Vices: But more fully to display, and withal todiswade us from this Vice, I shall particularly insist upon the common sorts thereof, shewing the peculiar unreasonableness of each, and the Mischiefs consequent from it: They are indeed usually combined and complicated in Practice; and have much Affinity both in their Nature and Fruit; but I shall as well as I can abstract them one from the other, and so treat on them distinctly; they are these, *Self-conceit*, *Self-confidence*, *Self-complacence*, *Self-will*, *Self-interest*. These I shall handle in the following Discourses.

SERMON XXIX.

Of Self-Conceit.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For Men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

1. THE first and most radical kind of vicious Self-Love is *Self-conceitedness*; that which St. *Paul* calleth τὸ ὑπερφρονεῖν, to overween, or *to think highly of ones self beyond what he ought to think.* This doth consist in several Acts or Instances.

Sometimes we in our Imagination assume to our selves Perfections not belonging to us in kind or in degree; we take our selves to be other Men than we are; to be wise, to be good, to be happy when we are not so, at least, to be far wiser, better and happier than we are. The Pleasure naturally springing from a good Opinion of our selves doth often so blind our Eyes, and pervert our Judgment, that we see in us what is not there, or see it magnified or transformed into another Shape than its own; any Appearance doth suffice to produce such Mistakes, and having once entertained them, we are unwilling to depose them; we cannot endure by severe Reflection on our selves to correct such pleasant Errours; hence commonly we presume our selves to be very considerable, very excellent, very extraordinary Persons, when in truth we are very
Gal. 6. 3. mean and worthless; so did St. *Paul* suppose when he said, *If a man think himself to be something when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself*; such was the Case of that Church in the *Apocalypse*; *Thou sayest I am rich and en-*
Apoc. 3. 17. *creased in goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched and miserable*; they were like Men in a Dream or in a Frenzy, who

who take themſelves for great and wealthy Perſons, when indeed they are in a ſorry and beggarly Condition; into the like extravagancies of Miſtake we are all likely to fall, if we do not very carefully and impartially examine and ſtudy our ſelves.

Again, ſometimes we make vain judgments upon the things we do poſſeſs, prizing them much beyond their true Worth and Merit; conſequently overvaluing our ſelves for them; the moſt trivial and pitiful things (things which in themſelves have no worth, but are meer Tools, and commonly ſerve bad Purpoſes; things which do not render our Souls any-wiſe better, which do not breed any real Content, which do not conduce to our Welfare and Happineſs) we value at a monſtrous rate, as if they were the moſt excellent and admirable things in the World: Have we Wit? how witleſs are we in prizing it, or our ſelves for it; although we employ it to no good end, not ſerving God, not benefiting Men, not furthering our own Good, or any-wiſe bettering our Condition with it; although we no otherwiſe uſe it, than vainly to pleaſe our ſelves or others, that is, to act the part of Fools or Buffoons. Have we Learning or Knowledge? then are we rare Perſons; not conſidering that many a bad, many a wretched Perſon hath had much more than we, who hath uſed it to the abuſe of others, to the torment of himſelf; that Hell may be full of learned Scribes, and ſubtile Diſputers, of eloquent Orators and profound Philoſophers; who *when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful, but became vain in their Imaginations, and their fooliſh Heart was darkned,* not conſidering alſo how very defective our Knowledge is, how mixt with Error and Darkneſs; how uſeleſs and vain, yea how pernicious it is, if not ſanctified by God's Grace, and managed to his Service. Have we Riches? then are we brave Men, as fine and glorious in our Conceit as in our outward attire; although the vereſt Fools, the baſeſt and moſt miſerable of Men, that go on the Ground, do exceed us therein; although (as *Ariſtotle* ſaith) *Moſt either not uſe it, or abuſe it.* Although our Wealth affordeth us no real Benefit or Comfort, but expoſeth us to numberleſs Snares, Temptations, and Miſchiefs; although it hath no ſtability, but eaſily may be taken from us. Have we Reputation? how doth that make us highly to repute our ſelves in a ſlaviſh imitation of others? yet nothing is leſs ſubſtantial, nothing is leſs felt, nothing is ſo eaſily loſt, nothing is more brittle and ſlippery than it; a Bubble is not ſooner broken, or a Wave ſunk, than is the Opinion of Men altered concerning us. Have we Power? what doth more raiſe our Minds? yet what is that commonly but a dangerous Inſtrument of Miſchief to others, and of Ruine to our ſelves; at leaſt an engagement to Care and Trouble? What but that did render *Caligula*, *Nero*, and *Domitian* ſo hurtful to others, ſo unhappy themſelves? what but that hath filled the World with Diſaſters, and turned all Hiſtory into Tragedy? Have we proſperous Succeſs in our Affairs? then we boaſt and triumph in our Hearts; not remembring what the *Wiſe-man* ſaith, *The proſperity of Fools deſtroyeth them*; and that Experience ſheweth, Proſperity doth either uſually find or make us Fools; that the wiſeſt Men (as *Solomon*) the beſt Men (as *Hezekiah*) have been befooled by it: Thus are we apt to overvalue our things, and our ſelves for them.

Rom. 1. 21.

Ardua res hæc eſt, epibus non tradere mores.

Mat. 11. 6.

Τῶν πολλῶν οἱ μὲν ἃ χρῶνται τῷ πλέτῳ διὰ μικρολογίαν, οἱ δ' οὐ παρασκεύονται δι' ἀσωτίαν. Ariſt. *apud* Plut. *in Peiop.*

Prov. 1. 32.

Rarus enim fermè ſenſus communis in illa Fortuna——— Juv. *Sat.* 8.

2 Chron. 32. 25.

There is no way indeed, wherein we do not thus impose upon our selves, either assuming false, or misrating true Advantages; the general ill consequences of which Misdemeanor are, that our Minds are stuft with Dreams and phantastick Imaginations, instead of wise and sober Thoughts; that we misbehave our selves toward our selves treating our selves, like other Men than we are, with unseemly regard; that we expect other Men should have like Opinions, and yield answerable deferences to us; and are, if we find it otherwise, grievously offended; that we are apt to despise or disregard others, demeaning our selves insolently and fastuously toward them; that we are apt to seek and undertake things, which we cannot attain or atchieve; that we neglect the Succours needful to help, or comfort us, and the like; which will appear more plainly, by considering the several Objects or Matters, in which self-conceit is exercised: they are especially three; *Intellectual Endowments*; *moral Qualities*; *advantages of body*, *fortune* and *outward State*.

1 Cor. 3. 18. Μωρὸς γενέσθω, ἵνα γένηται σοφός. *Vid.* Chrys. *in* Phil. *Or.* 7.

1. We are apt to conceit highly of our selves, upon presumption of our *intellectual Endowments* or Capacities, whether *natural*, (as *Wit*, *Fancy*, *Memory*, *Judgment*) or *acquired* (as *Learning*, *Skill*, *Experience*) especially of that which is called *Wisdom*, which in a manner comprehendeth the rest, and manageth them; whereby we rightly discern what is true, and what is fit to be done in any case proposed: This we are prone in great measure to arrogate, and much to pride our selves therein: The World is full as it can hold of Wise-men, or of those who take themselves to be such; not only absolutely, but comparatively, in derogation and preference to all others: May it not be said to us, as *Job* did to his Friends, *No doubt but ye are the People, and Wisdom shall die with you*; do we not fancy our selves incomparably wise, so that all our Imaginations are deep and subtile, all our Resolutions sound and safe, all our Opinions irrefragably certain; all our Sayings like so many Oracles, or indubitable Maxims? Do we not expect that every Man's Judgment should stoop to ours? Do we not wonder that any Man should presume to dissent from us? Must any Man's Voice be heard, when we speak? Do we not suppose that our Authority doth add huge weight to our words, that 'tis unquestionably true because we say it; that it is presumption, 'tis temerity, 'tis rudeness hardly pardonable to contest our Dictates? this is a common practice, and that which is often prohibited and blamed in Scripture; *Be not wise in thine own Eyes*, saith the *Wiseman*; And, *Be not wise in your own Conceits*, saith the *Apostle*: And, *I say, through the Grace given unto me, to every Man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every Man the measure of Faith.*

Job 12. 2.

Οἱ πάντως τοῖ ὑ σχεῖ δίκαιοι.

Prov. 3. 7.

Rom. 12. 16.

12. 3.

The great reasonableness of which Precepts will appear, by considering both the absurdity and the inconveniences of the Practice which they forbid.

If we do reflect either upon the common nature of Men, or upon our own Constitution, we cannot but find our conceits of our Wisdom very absurd: For how can we take our selves for wise, if we observe the great blindness of our Mind, and feebleness of humane Reason, by many palpable Arguments discovering it self? If we mark how painful the search, and how difficult the comprehension is of any truth; how hardly the most sagacious can descry any thing, how easily the most judicious Mistake; how the most learned everlastingly Dispute, and the wisest irreconcilably Clash about Matters seeming most familiar and facile; how often the most wary and steady do shift their Opinions; how the wiser a Man is, and the more Experience he gaineth, the less confident he is in his own

own Judgment, and the more sensible he groweth of his Weakness; how dim the Sight is of the most perspicacious, and how shallow the Conceptions of the most profound; how narrow is the *Horizon* of our Knowledge, and how immensely the region of our Ignorance is distended; how imperfectly and uncertainly we know those few things, to which our Knowledge reacheth; how answerably to such Experience we are told in *sacred Writ*, that *Every Man is brutish in his Knowledge*; that *the Lord knoweth the Thoughts of Man, that they are Vanity*; that *Vain Man would be wise, though he be born like an Asses Colt* (that is, he is naturally wild and stupid) that *Wisdom is hid from the Eyes of all Men, and is not found in the Land of the Living*; that *The Thoughts of mortal men are miserable, and our Devices uncertain*; if we, I say, do consider such things, how can we but find it strange, that any Man should admire his own Wisdom, seeing that he thereby doth exempt himself from the common adjunct of his Nature, and forgetteth himself to be a Man.

Quamcunque partem rerum humanarum divinarumque comprehenderis, ingenti copiâ quærendarum ac discendarum fatigaberis. Sen. *Ep.* 88.

Jer. 10. 14. Psal. 94. 11. 1 Cor. 3. 20. Job 11. 12. Job 28. 21, 22. Sap. 9. 14.

If also a Man particularly reflecteth on himself, the same practice must needs appear very foolish; for that every Man thence may discover in himself peculiar impediments of Wisdom; every Man in his complexion and in his condition, may find things apt to pervert his Judgment, and obstruct his acquisition of true Knowledge: Is his Temper sanguine? thence becometh he quick, rash, credulous, confident, and peremptory, slippery and fickle: Is it phlegmatick? thence is he slow and heavy, diffident, pertinacious, and stiff in his Conceits: His Mind is either soft and limber, so as easily to receive the impressions of Falshood speciously represented; or hard and tough, so that he cannot readily admit instruction in Truth, or correction of Error. His Wealth distracteth, or his Poverty disturbeth his Thoughts; Prosperity swelleth his Mind up into vain Presumptions and Satisfactions; or Adversity sinketh it down into unreasonable despondencies and dislikes of things; Plenty breedeth Sloth, Want createth Trouble, indisposing him to think well; Ease doth rust his Parts, and Business weareth them out; Inclination, Interest, Company, Prejudice do forcibly sway his Apprehensions; so that no Man can get himself into, or keep himself steady in a perfect Balance, requisite for exact Judgment of things; no Man therefore can obtain a degree of Wisdom, whereof he may with any reason be conceited; the wisest Men surely upon such Experience have been little satisfied with their share; *Surely* (saith one) *I am more brutish than any man, and I have not the understanding of a man*: and, *So foolish* (said another) *was I and ignorant, I was as a beast before thee*: This Conceitedness therefore is very absurd, and an argument of notable Ignorance and Folly; neither is there perhaps any more plain instance or demonstration of general Folly reigning among Men, than this, that commonly we are so blind and stupid as not to discern and resent our own Folly; *If any man* (saith St. *Paul*) *thinketh that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth not any thing yet as he ought to know*: that is, If any Man conceiteth himself to be considerably wise or intelligent, 'tis a plain sign, that he is very ignorant, and understandeth little to any purpose.

Prov. 30. 2. Psal. 73. 22. 1 Cor. 8. 2.

So it is if we consider our selves singly; and it is more so, in comparison to others; for what ground can a Man have of arrogating to himself a peculiarity of Wisdom or Judgment? to deem himself extraordinary in that, to which there are no other than ordinary means of arriving? to fancy himself wiser than any other, when as (secluding accidental Differences, that cannot be accompted for) all Men have the same Parts and Faculties of Soul, the same means and opportunities of improvement; the

Zech. 12. 1. same right and liberty of judging about things? did not he, who *formeth the spirit of man within him*, put into every Man that heavenly mark, whereby we discern and judge of things? Is not every Man concerned in that saying of *Elihu*; *there is a Spirit in men, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding?* Do not the fountains of knowledge (natural Delight, divine Revelation, humane Instruction, continual Experience) stand open to all; and are no less common to Men, than is the Air they breathe, and the Sun, which equally shineth on them all? is God, the donor of Wisdom, partial in the distribution of it; doth not that Overture reach indifferently to all, *If any man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally,——and it shall be given him?* may not others be as Inquisitive, as Industrious, as Sincere as we in the search of Truth, why not then as successful in finding it? Is there any private Chink, through which Light shineth only upon us, or Truth may be espied? Is there any cunning by-path, in which we alone, with more expedition and security than others, in the common Roads, can travel on toward Knowledge? What Patents have we to shew for monopoly of Reason? What right have we to engross any Knowledge? Who hath granted us a privilege of sure Judgment, or an exemption from Error? How can we in trial of Things claim more than a single Vote? or, Why should our word, have more weight than any other? May not any Man, with as much reason, prefer his Judgment before ours, as we before his; and if we blame him for it, do we not thereby condemn our selves for doing the like? If we do know but the same Things, or frame the same Judgments with others, how can we be conceited of that which is promiscuous; if we pretend to abstruse Notions, or hold forth Paradoxes, how can that be ground of boasting, seeing the Cause standeth contested by Authority, no less than our own, and that it is vain to triumph over the Opinions of others before we have conquered them? why in such cases is it not reasonable to presume that among the many Dissenters from us, there are some who have as much sense as we, and who have weighed the Matter with no less Care, no less Indifference? In fine, may not any Man with good

Ἐν βεγτοῖς. LXX.

Job 32. 8.

Jam. 1. 5.

Job 15. 8. cause, propound to us that expostulation in *Job: Hast thou heard the secret of God, and dost thou restrain Wisdom to thy self? what knowest thou that we know not? what understandest thou which is not in us?*

Such conceitedness therefore is very absurd; and it is no less hurtful; for many great Inconveniences, many sad Mischiefs spring from it, such

Isa. 5. 21. as gave the *Prophet* cause to denounce, *Wo unto them that are wise in their own Eyes, and prudent in their own conceit:* It hath many ways bad influence on our Souls, and on our Lives; it is often our case, which was the

Isa. 47. 10. case of *Babylon*, when the *Prophet* said of it, *Thy Wisdom and thy Knowledge hath perverted thee; for thou hast said in thy Heart, I am, and none else beside me.*

Hæc est hominis vera sapientia imperfectum esse se nosse. Hier. *contra* Pelag. 1. 5.

It is a great bar to the getting Wisdom, to the receiving instruction and right information about things; for he that taketh himself to be abundantly Knowing, or incomparably Wise, will not care to learn, will scorn to be taught; he thence becometh more incapable of Wisdom, than a meer Idiot; so did *Solomon* observe, *Seest thou*, said he, *a man wise in his*

Prov. 20. 12. *own conceit? there is more hope of a Fool than of him*; of a Fool that is sensible of his own Ignorance, there may be hope, that he may by Instruction become Wise; but he that taketh himself to want no Instruction, or to be above Learning, is in a desperate condition.

Puto multos potuisse ad sapientiam pervenire, nisi putâssent se pervenisse. Sen. *de tranq. an.* 1.

It

It rendreth Men in doubtful or difficult Cases, unwilling to seek, and unapt to take Advice; he will not care for, or admit any Counsellor but himself; hence he undertaketh and easily is deceived, and incurreth disappointment, damage, disasters in his Affairs. As it is most incident to weak, inconsiderate, lazy Persons, who have not a Capacity, will not yield attention, or take pains to get right notions of Things, so it doth smother all Industry, Consideration, and Circumspection; for such Persons think they need no labour in searching Truth, no care in weighing Arguments, no diligence in observing Things; they can easily, at first sight, descry all, and penetrate to the bottom of Things; they have at easie rates the pleasure of fancying themselves wise; why should they spend farther pains to dispossess themselves of that pleasure, or to introduce another less satisfactory? thus *is the Sluggard* (as *Solomon* saith) *wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason.* Prov. 26. 16.

It rendreth us very rash and precipitant in judging; for the first shews of Things, or the most slender Arguments, which offer themselves, being magnified, and aggravated from Opinion concerning our selves, do sway our Judgment, and draw forth a sudden resolution from us; it must, we presently suppose, be very reasonable, because it seemeth reasonable to us.

Hence also we persist, obstinate and incorrigible in Error; for what Reason can be efficacious to reclaim him, whose Opinion is the greater Reason? What Argument can be ponderous enough to outweigh his Authority? How can he (the Man of Wisdom, the perspicacious and profound Person) yield that he hath erred? How can he part with the satisfaction of being always in the right, or endure the affront of being any time baffled?

It rendreth Men peevish and morose, so as to bear no body that dissenteth from them, nor to like any thing which doth not hit their Fancy, to cross their Opinion and Humour, is to derogate from their Wisdom; and being in their apprehension so injured, they find cause to be angry.

It rendreth them insolent and imperious in Conversation, so as to dictate, and impose their Conceits upon others. He that is conceited of his own Wisdom, will imagine, that upon that advantage he hath a right to prescribe, others an Obligation to submit; *eo ipso* he becometh a common Master and Judge; and they are culpable, who will not yield him a credulous Ear, who will not stand to his decision.

Hence also do Men become so carping and censorious; for if any Man's Words do not jump with their Notions, if any Man's Actions be not conformable to their Rules, they straightway rise up to condemn them of Folly, of Faultiness.

Yea, hence Men become intolerably pragmatical; for they conceit themselves better to know another's Concernment than he himself doth, and so will intrude his Advice, will be angry if his Advice be not followed.

To such Inconveniences and Iniquities this ill-disposition exposeth us, and to many others; for it is indeed that in effect, which the Holy Scripture representeth as the source of all impious and wicked Courses; to which Men betray themselves, while taking themselves to be wise, they do stiffly adhere to their own Imaginations and Devices, although contrary to the prescriptions of divine Wisdom, to the dictates of common Reason, to the admonitions of sober and good Men: *We will* (say they in the *Prophet*) *walk after our own Devices, and we will every one do the imagination of his evil Heart*; and, *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious People: Which walketh in a way that is not good, after their own Thoughts.* Jer. 13. 10. & 18. 12. Isa. 65. 2. 5.

And,

Deut. 29. 18. Pſal. 81. 12. Prov. 1. 30, 31. Iſa. 66. 4. And, *If he bleſſeth himſelf, ſaying, I ſhall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my Heart:* and, *So I gave them unto their own Hearts Luſts, and they walked in their own Counſels:* Theſe are deſcriptions of bad Men, implying Self-conceit to be the root of their Impiety.

2. Again, we are apt to conceit highly and vainly of our moral Qualities and Performances; taking ourſelves for Perſons rarely good, perfect and blameleſs; apprehending no defects in our Souls, or miſcarriages in our Lives, although indeed we are as full of blemiſhes, we are as guilty of Faults as others; *There is* (ſaith the *Wiſeman*) *a Generation that are pure in their own Eyes, and yet is not waſhed from their filthineſs*; to this Generation we belong if we admire our Vertues, if we juſtifie our Lives, if (as it is ſaid of the *Phariſee*) we *truſt in our ſelves, that we are Righteous.*

Prov. 30. 12. Luke 18. 9. 16. 15. 10. 29.

This practice doth include great Folly, and it produceth great Miſchiefs.

'Tis very fooliſh; and argueth the greateſt Ignorance that can be; for ſuch is the Imperfection, the Impotency, the Impurity of all Men, even of the wiſeſt and beſt Men (diſcernable to them who ſearch their Hearts, and try their ways, ſtrictly comparing them to the rules of Duty, God's Laws, and the dictates of Reaſon) that no Man can have reaſon to be ſatisfied in himſelf, or in his Doings: Every Man looking into himſelf, ſhall find his Mind ſo peſtered with vain and filthy Thoughts; his Will ſo perverſe, ſo froward, ſo weak, ſo unſteady; his Deſires ſo fond and unwarrantable; his Paſſions ſo diſorderly and ungovernable; his Affections ſo miſplaced, or at leaſt ſo cold, and dull in regard to their right Objects; his Reſolutions toward Good ſo weak and ſlack; his Intentions ſo corrupt, or mixt with oblique regards; he that obſerveth his Actions, ſhall in the beſt of them (as to the Principles whence they riſe, as to the ends they drive at, as to the manner of their performance) find ſo many great defailances, that he will ſee cauſe rather to abhor than admire himſelf.

Hier. *in* Lucif. *cap.* 6. Who, let me ask, doth love God with all his Soul, ſo as to place in him his total Content and Delight, ſo as to do all things out of love to him, with a regard to his Honour and Service? ſo as to be willing and glad to part with all things for his ſake? Who hath that conſtant and lively ſenſe of God's Benefits and Mercies that he ſhould have? Who hath a perfect reſignation of Will to his Pleaſure, ſo as to be diſpleaſed with no event diſpenſed by his Hand? Who hath ſuch a vigour of Faith and Confidence in him, as will ſupport him in all Wants, in all Diſtreſſes, in all Temptations, ſo as never to be diſquieted, or diſcouraged by them, ſo as to *caſt on God* (as he is commanded) all the *cares* of his Soul, and *burthens* of his Life? who conſtantly maintaineth a fervour of Spirit, a ſteadineſs of Reſolution, a clear and calm frame of Soul, an abſtractedneſs of Mind from worldly Deſires and Delights? Who continually is fervent and undiſtracted in his Devotion? Who with an unwearied and inceſſant diligence doth watch over his Thoughts? Who doth entirely command his Paſſions, and bridle his Appetites? Who doth exactly govern his Tongue? Who is perpetually circumſpect over his Actions? Who loveth his Neighbour as himſelf, ſeeking his good, and delighting therein as in his own; being ſorry for his Adverſities, as if they had befallen himſelf? Who feeleth that contrition of Spirit, that Shame, that remorſe for his Sins, or that deteſtation of them, which they deſerve? Who is duly ſenſible of his own unworthineſs? very few of us ſurely, if we examine our Conſciences, can anſwer, that we are they who perform theſe Duties; and if not, where is any ground of ſelf-conceit? how much cauſe rather is there of dejection, of diſpleaſure, of deſpiſing and deteſting our ſelves?

There

There have indeed been Sects of Men (such as the *Novatians*, and the *Pelagians*) who have pretended to Perfection and Purity; but these Men one would think did never read the Scripture, did never consult Experience, did never reflect on their Minds, did never compare their Practice with their Duty; had no Conscience at all, or a very blind and stupid one. *Who can say, I have made my Heart clean, I am pure from my sin?* was a Question of *Solomon*, to which he thought no Man could answer affirmatively of himself: *If I justifie my self, my own Mouth shall condemn me; if I say I am perfect, it shall prove me perverse*; was the asseveration of that Person, whose Vertue had undergone the severest Trials; *In many things we offend all*; was the confession of an *Apostle* in the name of the wisest and best Men.

The Donatists —— remissionem peccatorum sic dati, quasi nullum habeatis ipsi peccatum, &c. Opt. lib. 2. Prov. 20. 9. Eccl. 7. 20. Job 9. 20. 15. 15. 25. 4. 4. 18. 9. 2. (Psal. 143. 2.) Jam. 3. 2.

Such Men indeed (in contemplation of themselves, and of their doings) have ever been ready to think meanly of themselves, to acknowledge and bewail their unworthiness, to disclaim all Confidence in themselves, to avow their hope wholly to be reposed in the Grace and Mercy of God; (in his Grace for ability to perform somewhat of their Duty, in his Mercy for Pardon of their Offences;) to confess themselves (with *Jacob*) *Less than the least of God's Mercies*; with *David*, that they *are Worms, and no Men*; with *Job*, that they are *vile, and* unable *to answer God*, calling them to accompt, *in one case of a thousand*; that they *abhor themselves, and repent in Dust and Ashes*; that *after they have done all, they are unprofitable Servants*: And is he not very blind, who doth see in himself those Perfections, which the greatest Saints could not descry in themselves? Is he not infinitely vain, that fancieth himself more worthy, than they did take themselves to be?

Job 40. 4. 42. 6. 9. 2. Luke 17. 10.

In fine, Every Man is in some kind and degree bad, sinful, vile; it is as natural for us to be so, as to be frail, to be sickly, to be mortal: There are some bad Dispositions common to all, and which no Man can put off without his Flesh; there are some, to which every Man (from his temper, inclination and constitution of Body or Soul) is peculiarly subject; the which by no care and pain can be quite extirpated; but will afford, during Life, perpetual matter of conflict and exercise to curb them; conceit therefore of our Vertue is very foolish.

And it breedeth many great Mischiefs.

Hence doth spring a great security, and carelessness of correcting our Faults; for taking our selves to be well, we see not any need of Cure, thence seek none, nor admit any.

Matt. 9. 12. John 9. 41.

Yea, hence riseth a contempt of any means conducible to our amendment, such as good Advice, and wholsome Reproof; to advise such an one is to accuse him wrongfully, to reprove him is to commit an outrage upon his presumed integrity of Vertue. Hence also proceedeth a neglect of imploring the Grace and Mercy of God; for why should Persons of so great strength crave succour; how should they beg pardon, who have so little sense of Guilt? It is for a weak Person to cry, Lord help me; it is for a *Publican* to pray, *God be merciful unto me a Sinner.*

Luke 18. 13.

It breedeth arrogance and presumption even in Devotions, or addresses to God, inducing such Persons in unseemly manner to justifie themselves before God, to claim singular Interest in him, to mind him, and as it were to upbraid him with their worthy Deeds, to thank him for their imaginary Excellencies; like the conceited *Pharisee*; *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other Men, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers —— I fast twice a Week, I give tythes of all that I possess.* They cannot demean themselves toward God as miserable Sinners, who fansie themselves as admirable Worthies and Gallants in Vertue.

Luke 18. 11.

Also,

Also, a natural result thereof is a haughty contempt of others, venting it self in a supercilious and fastuous demeanour: So it was in the *Pharisees, who* (saith St. *Luke*) *trusted in themselves, that they were righteous, and despised others.* Such Persons observing, or suspecting Defects and Misbehaviours in others, but discerning none in themselves, do in their Opinion advance themselves above their Brethren, and accordingly are prone to behave themselves toward them: Such Men as they are the especially good Men, the Godly, the Saints, the Flower of Mankind, the Choice ones, the Darlings of God, the Favourites of Heaven; the special Objects of divine Love and Care: Others are impure and profane, rejectaneous and reprobate People, to whom God beareth no good-will or regard; hence proceedeth a contemptuous disregard or estrangedness toward other Men; like that of those *Separatists* in the *Prophet*, who notwithstanding they were *a People provoking God to anger continually to his face*, were yet in conceit of their own special purity ready to say, *Stand by thy self, come not near to me, for I am holier than thou:* Whereas those who soberly reflecting on their Nature, their Hearts, their Ways, do frame a right Judgment of themselves, can hardly esteem any Man worse than themselves; they perceive themselves so frail, so defectuous, so culpable, as to find great reason for their compliance with those *Apostolical* Precepts; *In lowliness of Mind, let each Man esteem others better than himself; In honour prefer one another.*

Luke 18. 9.
Isa. 65. 5.
Phil. 2. 3.
Rom. 12. 10.

This likewise disposeth Men to expect more than ordinary regard from others; and they are much displeased, if they find it not in degree answerable to their conceit of themselves; taking them for silly, envious, or injurious Persons, who forbear to yield it: Such excellent Persons must in all things be humoured, and cockered, otherwise you greatly wrong them.

Hence also such Men easily become discontented and impatient; for if they be crossed in any thing, if any misfortune toucheth them, they take it very ill; supposing they deserve it not, but are worthy of better Usage and Fortune.

In fine, as this causeth a Man to behave himself untowardly in respect to all others (toward God, and toward his Neighbour (so thence he most unbeseemingly carrieth himself toward himself, he is no faithful Friend, no good Companion to himself, but a fond *Mignon*, a vile Flatterer, or a profane Idolater of himself: for (like *Narcissus*) being transported with conceit of his own incomparable Beauty or Excellency, he maketh love to, and courteth himself; finding delight in such Conceit, he by all means cherisheth it, glozing and *flattering himself* (as the *Psalm* hath it) *in his own Eyes*; representing his Qualities to his Imagination in false shapes, he devoutly adoreth those Idols of his Brain. Farther,

Psal. 36. 2.

3. Self-conceit is also frequently grounded upon other inferior Advantages; upon gifts of Nature (as Strength, Activity, Beauty) upon gifts of Fortune (so called) as Birth, Wealth, Dignity, Power, Fame, Success; upon these things Men ordinarily much value themselves, and are strangely puffed up with vain Opinion; taking themselves from them to be great and happy Persons; but seeing (as we touched before) these things are in themselves little valuable (as serving no great Purpose, nor furthering our true happiness) seeing they are not commendable (as not depending on our free Choice, but proceeding from Nature or Chance) seeing they are not durable or certain, but easily may be severed from us; the vanity of Self-conceit founded on them is very notorious, and I shall not insist more to declare it; I shall only recommend the *Prophet*'s Advice concerning

cerning such things; *Let not the wise Man glory in his Wisdom; neither let the mighty Man glory in his Might; let not the rich Man glory in his Riches; but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord, which exercise loving-kindness, judgment and righteousness in the Earth:* that is, Nothing within us, or about us, should elevate our Minds, excepting the assurance, that God doth govern the World, being ready to protect and succour us; to dispense Mercy and Justice to us; so that how weak and helpless soever in our selves, yet confiding in him, we shall never be overwhelmed by any Wrong or Misfortune. Jer. 9. 23, 24.

So much concerning Self-Conceit, the other Parts of vitious Self-Love may be reserved to another Occasion.

SERMON XXX.

Of Self-Confidence, Self-Complacence, Self-Will, and Self-Interest.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For Men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

Of Self-Confidence.

II. ANother like culpable kind of Self-Love, is that of *Self-Confidence*; when Men beyond Reason, and without regard unto God's Providence, do rely upon themselves, and their own Abilities, imagining that, without God's direction and help, by the contrivances of their own Wit and Discretion, by the prevalency of their own Strength and Courage, by their industrious Care, Resolution and Activity they can compass any design, they can attain any good, they can arrive to the utmost of their desires, and become sufficiently happy, not considering that of God (*in whose hand our Breath is, and whose are all our ways; in whose hand is the Soul of every living thing, and the Breath of all Mankind*) all our Being, and all our Ability do absolutely depend; that he manageth and turneth all things, dispensing Success according to his pleasure; that no good thing can be performed without the supply and succour of his Grace, nothing can be atchieved without the concurrence of his Providence; that, *The way of Man is not in himself, it is not in Man that walketh to direct his Steps*; that, *The preparations of the Heart in Man, and the answer of the Tongue is from the Lord*; that, although, *A Man's Heart deviseth his way, yet the Lord directeth his Steps*; that, *No King is saved by the multitude of an Host, a mighty Man is not delivered by much strength, a Horse is a vain thing for safety; The Race is not to the swift, nor the Battel*

Ὅστις γὰρ αὐτὸς ἢ φρονεῖν μόνῳ δοκεῖ,
Ἢ γλῶσσαν ἢν μὴ ἄλλος ἢ ψυχὴ ἔχῃ.
Οὗτοι διαπτυχθέντες ὤφθησαν κενοί.
Soph. Antig.

Dan. 5. 23.
Job 12. 10.
Jer. 10. 23.
Prov. 16. 1.
Prov. 16. 9.
19. 21. 20. 24.
Psal. 33. 16, 17.
Eccles. 9. 11.

tel to the ſtrong: that (as St. *Paul*, one abundantly furniſhed with Abilities ſuting his Deſigns as any Man can be, doth acknowledge) *we are not ſufficient of our ſelves to think any thing, but our ſufficiency is of God:* theſe oracles of Truth, and even dictates of Reaſon, no leſs than Principles of Religion they conſider not, who confide in their own Abilities, with which Nature or Fortune do ſeem to have furniſhed them.

2 Cor. 3. 5. 2. 16.

This is that inſtance of Self-Love, which the *Wiſe-man* biddeth us to beware of: *Truſt* (ſaith he) *in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not to thine own Underſtanding; In all thy Ways acknowledge him, and he ſhall direct thy Paths.* This is that which he condemneth as fooliſh, and oppoſite to wiſe proceeding; *He that truſteth in his own Heart, is a Fool; but whoſo walketh wiſely, ſhall be delivered.*

Prov. 3. 5, 6.

Prov. 28. 26.

This is that which ſmothereth Devotion, and keepeth Men from having recourſe to God; while they think it needleſs to ask for that, which they have in their Power, or have means of obtaining; this conſequently depriveth them of Divine Aid, which is afforded only to thoſe who ſeek it, and confide therein.

...aquum mi animum ipſe parabo.

This often engageth Men to attempt things raſhly, and cauſeth them to come off unhappily; God interpoſing to croſs them, with purpoſe to cure their Error, to confound their Preſumption.

From hence, if God ever ſuffereth their Attempt to proſper, they ſacrilegiouſly and profanely arrogate to themſelves the Succeſs, *ſacrificing to their own Net*, and ſaying with him in the *Prophet*, *By the ſtrength of my Hand have I done it, and by my Wiſdom, for I am prudent.*

Iſa. 10. 13.

This cauſeth moſt Men to fail of true Content here, and of Happineſs finally; while taking them to be, where they are not, at home, within their own hand, or reach, they neglect to ſearch after them abroad, there where they only do lie, in the hand and diſpoſal of God.

Of Self-Complacence.

III. A like act of blameable Self-Love, is *Self-Complacence*, that is, greatly delighting in ones ſelf, or in the Goods, which he fanſieth himſelf to enjoy, or in the Works which he performeth: When Men in contemplation of their Works and Atchievements go ſtrutting about, and ſaying, with that vain *Prince*, *Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?* when reflecting on their Poſſeſſions they applaud and bleſs themſelves, like the *Rich Man* in the Goſpel, *Soul* (ſaith he, looking upon his accumulated ſtore) *thou haſt much Goods laid up for many Years:* Such vain Soliloquies do Men ordinarily make: Thou haſt (ſaith a Man to himſelf) rare endowments of Soul; a wonderful Skill and Ability in this and that Matter; thou art Maſter of excellent things; thou haſt managed very important Buſineſs, haſt accompliſhed hard Deſigns, haſt atchieved brave Feats, with great dexterity and admirable ſucceſs, by thy Wit and Induſtry; thou haſt framed and vented very curious Orations, very facetious Speeches, very nervous and pithy Diſcourſes; thou haſt put Obligations upon this Man, and that; thou haſt got much Credit and Intereſt amongſt Men; the World much looketh on thee, loveth and prizeth thee hugely, reſoundeth with thy Fame and Praiſe; ſurely thy Worth is notable, thy Deſerts are egregious; how happy art thou in being ſuch a Perſon, in performing ſuch Things, in enjoying ſuch Advantages? Thus, with a ſpurious and filthy Pleaſure do Men reflect upon and revolve in their Minds the Goods they deem themſelves to poſſeſs, and the favourable Occurrences that ſeem to befall them; being fond of their own Qualities and Deeds as of their Chil-

Dan. 4. 30.

Luke 12. 19.

Children, which however they are in themſelves, do always appear handſome and towardly unto them; any little thing is great and eminent, any ordinary thing is rare, any indifferent thing is excellent to them, becauſe it is theirs; out of any thing, how dry and inſipid ſoever it is in it ſelf, they ſuck a vain and fooliſh pleaſure.

Hence is that honeſt and pure delight, which they ſhould taſte in faith and love toward God, in the hope of future celeſtial things, in the enjoyment of ſpiritual Bleſſings, in the conſcience of vertuous practice, quite choaked or greatly damped.

Hence alſo that hearty contrition, and ſober ſadneſs, which by reflexion upon their great Defects, and frequent Miſcarriages they ſhould continually maintain in their Souls, is utterly ſtifled.

Hence alſo that charitable complacency in the welfare, and condolency with the adverſities of their Brethren is ſuppreſſed; Hence cannot they be ſatisfied with any thing done by others, they cannot apprehend the worthy Deſerts, they cannot render due commendation to the good Deeds of their Neighbour; for while Men are ſo pleaſed with their own imaginary Felicities, they cannot well diſcern, they will not be duly affected with the real Advantages, or Diſaſters of themſelves, or of others.

Of Self-Will.

IV. Another culpable kind of Self-Love is *Self-Will*; (αὐθάδεια, pleaſing ones ſelf in his Choice, and proceeding without, or againſt Reaſon) when a Man unaccountably or unreaſonably, with obſtinate Reſolution, purſueth any courſe offenſive to others, or prejudicial to himſelf, ſo that he will not hearken to any Advice, nor yield to any Conſideration diverting him from his Purpoſe, but putteth off all, with a ----*Stat pro ratione voluntas:* Say what you can, let what will come on it, I will do as I pleaſe, I will proceed in my own way; ſo I am reſolved, ſo it ſhall be.

Περὶ ὧν ἂν ἅπαξ τι εἴπω, μηκέτι με αὖθις πύθῃ. Nero *apud* Dion. Caſſ.
Οἱ ἁμαθεῖς ἰσχυρογνώμονες. Syneſ. Calv.
Vid. Sen. *Ep.* 23. *de Ben.* 438. Arr. 2. 15.

This is that generally which produceth in Men the wilful commiſſion of ſin; although apparently contrary to their own Intereſt and Welfare, depriving them of the beſt Goods, bringing on them moſt heavy Miſchiefs; this cauſeth them irreclaimably to perſiſt in Impenitence. Hence do they ſtop their Ears againſt wholſome Counſel, they harden their Hearts againſt moſt pathetical, and ſoftning Diſcourſes, they *withdraw their Shoulder, they ſtiffen their Neck* againſt all ſober Precepts, Admonitions, and Reproofs; they defeat all means and methods of Correction; they will not hear God Commanding, Entreating, Promiſing, Threatning, Encouraging, Chaſtiſing; they will not regard the advices and reprehenſions of Friends; the moſt apparent conſequences of Damage, Diſgrace, Pain, Perdition upon their ill Courſes will not ſtir them; their Will is impregnable againſt the moſt powerful attempts to win and better them: Let all the Wiſdom in the World ſollicit them, with a *Turn at my Reproof*, it ſhall have occaſion to complain; *They would none of my Counſel, they deſpiſed all my Reproof.*

Neh. 9. 28. Jer. 7. 26. 5. 3. Deut. 31. 27. Prov. 1. 25.

Prov. 1. 23, 25, 29.

This is that alſo more particularly, which breedeth ſo much Miſchief to the Publick, which peſtereth and diſturbeth private Converſation: This maketh Converſation harſh, and Friendſhip intolerable.

——τέτῳ δ' ἀνδρὶ μήτ' εἶλω φίλον,
Μήτε ξυνείλω, ὅστις αὐτάρκη φρονεῖν
Πέποιθε, δῆλος τοῦ φίλους ἡγεμὼν. Eurip.

Hence are Men in their demeanour ſo peeviſh and froward, ſo perverſe and croſsgrain'd, ſo ſtiff and ſtubborn; with much inconvenience to others, and commonly with more to themſelves.

Αὐθάδεια ἐ-ρημία ξύνοι-κος. Plat. *ad* Dionem. *Ep* 4.

Hence will they not ſubmit to the Commands of their Superiors; they will not comply with the Cuſtoms of their Country, they will not be complaiſant in Converſation; but every where raiſe factious Oppoſitions, kindle fierce Contentions, maintain diſorderly Singularities: they care not how, for enjoying their Humour, they break the peace of the World, they diſturb the order of things, they create tumults and troubles in any Society; they bring Vexations and Miſchiefs on others, on themſelves. They do not conſider, or value the great harm they bring upon the Publick, nor how much themſelves do ſuffer by it; ſo they have their Will, what if the State be plunged into confuſion and trouble; what if their Neighbours be ſorely incommoded; what if themſelves loſe their Eaſe and Pleaſure?

It muſt be juſt as they will have it; what if ten to one think otherwiſe; what if generally the wiſeſt Men are agreed to the contrary, what if the moſt preſſing neceſſity of Affairs do not admit it; what if publick Authority (thoſe whom all equity doth conſtitute Judges, and to whom God himſelf hath committed the arbitration thereof) do not allow it; yet ſo it muſt be, becauſe they fancy it, otherwiſe they will not be quiet; ſo do they ſacrifice the greateſt benefits of Society (publick Order and Peace, mutual Love and Friendſhip, common Safety and Proſperity) to their private Will and Humour.

This is that, which St. *Paul* ſo often did forbid in Word, and diſcountenanced in Practice: For the edification of others, to procure advantage to his Endeavours, to ſhun Offence, to preſerve Concord and Amity, he waved pleaſing his own Deſire and Fancy, he complied with the Conceits and Humours even of thoſe, who were moſt ignorant and weak in Judgment; he even ſubjected and *enſlaved* himſelf to the pleaſure of others, directing us to do the like: *We then* (ſaith he) *that are ſtrong, ought to bear the Infirmities of the weak, and not to pleaſe our ſelves: Let every one of us pleaſe his Neighbour for his good to Edification: For even Chriſt pleaſed not himſelf* (he adjoineth the great Example of our Lord to enforce his own.) Again; *Give none Offence*, ſaith he, *Even as I pleaſe all Men in all things, not ſeeking mine own Profit, but the Profit of the many, that they may be ſaved: Be ye* (herein) *followers of me, as I am of Chriſt*; and again, *To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak; I am made all things to all Men, that I might by all means ſave ſome: Though I be free from all Men* (that is, although I have no Superiour, that can Command me, or oblige me in theſe Matters) *yet have I made my ſelf Servant to all, that I might gain the more.* What this excellent Perſon was in this Inſtance of managing Eccleſiaſtical Diſcipline, and promoting the Goſpel, that both in the ſame Caſes, and in the proſecution of all other Deſigns, in all our Converſation and Practices ſhould we likewiſe be.

Rom. 15. 1, 2, 3.

1 Cor. 10. 33. 11. 1.

1 Cor. 9. 22, 19.

We ſhould in no caſe indulge our own Humour or Fancy, but ever look to the reaſon of the thing, and act accordingly, whatever it requireth.

We ſhould never act, without ſtriving with competent application of Mind to diſcern clearly ſome reaſon why we act; and from obſerving the dictates of that Reaſon no unaccountable Cauſe ſhould pervert us: Blind Will, head-ſtrong Inclination, impetuous Paſſion ſhould never guide, or draw, or drive us to any thing; for this is not to act like a Man, but as a Beaſt, or rather worſe than a Beaſt; for Beaſts operate by a blind inſtinct indeed, but ſuch as is planted in them by a ſuperiour Wiſdom, unerringly directing them to a purſuit of their true Good; but Man is left *in manu conſilii ſui*, is obliged (under ſore Penalties) not to follow blind

Sap. 1. 12. Deut. 30. 19.

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Inclinations or Instinct; but to act with serious Deliberation and Choice, to observe explicite rules and resolutions of Reason. 1 Cor. 10. 24.

Of Self-Interest.

V. Another culpable sort of Self-Love is that of *Self-Interest*; when Men inordinately or immoderately do covet and strive to procure for themselves these worldly Goods, meerly because profitable or pleasant to themselves, not considering or regarding the good of others, according to the rules of Justice, of Humanity, of Christian Charity; when their Affections, their Cares, their Endeavours do mainly tend to the advancement, advantage, or delight of themselves; they little caring what cometh on it, who loseth, who suffereth thereby. *Vid.* Chrys. in 1 Cor. Or. 25.

They look upon themselves as if they were all the World, and no Man beside concerned therein, or considerable to them; that the good state of things is to be measured by their Condition; that all is well, if they do Prosper and Thrive; all is ill, if they are disappointed in their Desires and Projects.

The good of no Man, not of their Brethren, not of their Friends, not of their Country doth come with them under consideration; what Scandals do arise, what Disorders are committed, what Mischiefs are caused they matter not, if they get somewhat thereby: What if the *Church*, or *State* be reproached, what if the Neighbourhood be offended, or disturbed, what if the World cry out and complain, if they become richer by it, or have their Passion gratified, or find some pleasure in it?

This is the chief spring of Injustice: For from hence it is, that oftentimes Men regard not what Courses they take, what means they use, (how unjust, how base soever they be) toward the compassing their Designs: Hence they trample upon Right, they violate all Laws and Rules of Conscience, they falsify their Trusts, they betray their Friends, they supplant their Neighbour; they flatter and collogue, they wind about and shuffle any way, they detract from the worth and vertue of any Man, they forge and vent odious Slanders, they commit any sort of Wrong and Outrage, they (without regard or remorse) do any thing which seemeth to further their Design.

This is the great source of Uncharitableness, for from hence Men affect no Man otherwise, than he seemeth able to serve their turn; the Poor therefore is ever slighted and neglected by them as unserviceable, the Rich only is minded and respected as capable to promote their Ends, they become hard-hearted toward others; not considering or commiserating their Case; they will part with nothing from themselves to those who need their Relief; they delight in nothing which doth not make for their advantage: All their shews of Friendship and Respect are mercenary, and mere Trade; they do nothing *gratis*, or for Love.

This is the great Root of all the Disorders and Mischiefs in the World; this Self-love prompteth Men to those turbulent scramblings and scufflings, whereby good Order is confounded; this engageth them to desert their Stations, to transgress their Bounds; to invade and encroach upon others with Fraud and Violence: Did Men with any conscionable moderation mind and pursue their own private Interest, all those fierce Animosities, those fiery Contentions, those *bitter Emulations*, those rancorous Grudges, those calumnious Supplantings, those perfidious Cozenages, those outrageous Violences, those factious Confederacies, those seditious Murmurings and tumultuous Clamours would vanish and cease; Self-Interest it is that gives

----nullum furor egit in arma. Bella petunt magnâ victi mercede.----

gives life and nouriſhment to all ſuch Practices, the which embroil the World in diſcord and diſorder. It is not out of pure Madneſs or wanton Humour that commonly Men engage themſelves and others in thoſe baſe and troubleſome Courſes, but out of deſign to get by it; hope of Gain to be raked out of publick Ruines and Diſorders, is the Principle that moveth them, the Reward they propound to themſelves for their pains in medling, toward the promoting them; like thoſe who ſet fire on the Town, that they may get opportunity to rifle and pillage.

Ut quiſque maximè ad ſuum commodum refert quæcunque agit, ità minimè eſt vir bonus; ut qui virtutem præmio metiantur, nullam virtutem niſi malitiam putant, &c. Cic. *de Leg.* 1.

He that taketh himſelf to be as but one Man (naturally like and equal to others) conceiving that he ought to conſider the intereſt and right of other Men in the ſame rank with his own, that he in reaſon ſhould be contented with that ſhare, which ariſeth to him by fair means; who thence reſolveth to be ſatisfied with his own Lot, to abide quiet in his Station, to yield the ſame deference and compliance to others which he can preſume, or pretend to receive from them; who deſires only to enjoy the gifts of Providence, and the fruits of his Induſtry, in a due ſubordination to the publick Peace and Welfare; he will not eaſily ſtrive or ſtruggle for Preferments, he will not foment Emulations or Factions for his advantage, he will never deſign to cozen or ſupplant, to detract or calumniate for advancement of his Ends; he thence will not contribute to the Miſchiefs and Troubles in the World.

Self-Intereſt therefore is the great enemy to the Common-weal; that which perverteth all Right, which confoundeth all Order, which ſpoileth all the convenience and comfort of Society.

It is a practice indeed (this practice of purſuing Self-Intereſt ſo vehemently, ſo eſpecially above all things) which is looked upon and cried up as a clear and certain point of Wiſdom; the only ſolid Wiſdom, in compariſon whereto thoſe Precepts, which preſcribe the practice of ſtrict Juſtice, ingenuous Humanity, free Charity, are but pedantical Titles, or Notions merely chimerical; So the World now, more than ever, ſeemeth to judge; and accordingly to act; and thence is the ſtate of things viſibly ſo bad, and calamitous; thence ſo little honeſty in Dealings, thence ſo little ſettlement in Affairs are diſcernible. But how falſe that Judgment is, will appear, if the Caſe be weighed in the balance of pure Reaſon; and moſt fooliſh it will appear, being ſcanned according to the Principles of Religion.

In Reaſon, is it not very abſurd, that any Man ſhould look upon himſelf as more than a ſingle Perſon; that he ſhould prefer himſelf before another, to whom he is not in any reſpect ſuperiour; that he ſhould advance his own Concernment above the publick Benefit, which comprehendeth his Good, and without which his Good cannot ſubſiſt? Can any Man rationally conceive, that he can firmly Thrive, or perſiſt in a quiet and ſweet condition, when he graſpeth to himſelf more than is due or fitting, when he provoketh againſt himſelf the emulation, the competition, the oppoſition, the hatred and obloquy of all, or of many other Perſons?

May not any Man reaſonably have the ſame Apprehenſions and Inclinations, as we may have? may not any Man juſtly proceed in the ſame manner as we may do? Will they not, ſeeing us mainly to affect our private Intereſt, be induced, and in a manner forced to do the like? thence what end can there be of proging, and ſcrambling for things? and in the confuſion thence ariſing, what quiet, what content can we enjoy?

Again;

Again; Doth not Nature, by implanting in our Constitution, a love of Society, and aversation from Solitude, inclinations to Pity and Humanity, pleasant complacencies in obliging and doing Courtesies to others, appetites of Honour and good Esteem from others, aptness to approve and like the practices of Justice, of Fidelity, of Courtesie, of Beneficence, Capacities to yield succour and benefit to our Brethren dictate unto us, that our Good is inseparably connected and complicated with the Good of others, so that it cannot, without its own impairing, subsist alone, or be severed from the Good of others; no more than a Limb can, without suffering and destruction, be torn from the whole?

Is there not to all Men in some measure, to some Men in a higher degree, a Generosity innate, most lovely and laudable to all; which disposeth Men, with their own pain, hazard, and detriment, to succour and relieve others in Distress, to serve the Publick, and promote the benefit of Society; so that inordinately to regard private Interest, doth thwart the reason and wisdom of Nature?

Nec sibi, sed toti natum se credere mundo.
——nullôsque Catonis in actus
Subrepsit, partémque tulit sibi nata voluptas.
St. *Paul*, Rom. 9.

The frame of our Nature indeed speaketh, that we are not born for our selves; We shall find Man, if we contemplate him, to be a nobler thing, than to have been design'd to serve himself, or to satisfy his single pleasure; his Endowments are too excellent, his Capacities too large for so mean and narrow Purposes. How pitiful a Creature were Man, if this were all he was made for; how sorry a faculty were Reason, if it served not to better Uses? he debaseth himself, he disgraceth his Nature, who hath so low Conceits, and pursueth so petty Designs.

Nay, even a true regard to our own private Good, will engage us not inordinately to pursue Self-Interest; it being much hugged, will be smothered and destroyed.

As we are all born Members of the World, as we are compacted into the Common-wealth, as we are incorporated into any Society, as we partake in any Conversation or Company, so by mutual support, aid, defence, comfort, not only the common welfare first, but our particular benefit consequently doth subsist; by hindring or prejudicing them, the publick first, in consequence our particular doth suffer: Our thriving by the common prejudice, will in the end turn to our own loss. As if one Member sucketh too much Nourishment to it self, and thence swelleth into an exorbitant bulk, the whole thence incurreth Disease, so coming to perish, or languish; whence consequently that irregular Member will fall into a participation of ruine or decay; so it is in the state of humane Corporations, he that in ways unnatural, or unjust (for Justice is that in humane Societies, which Nature is in the rest of things) draweth unto himself the Juice of Profit or Pleasure, so as thence to grow beyond his due size, doth thereby not only create Distempers in the publick Body, but worketh Mischief and Pain to himself; he must not imagine to escape feeling somewhat of the inconvenience and misery which ariseth from publick Convulsions and Disorders.

So doth Reason plainly enough dictate; and Religion with clearer evidence, and greater advantage discovereth the same.

Its expreis Precepts are; that we should aim to love our Neighbour as our selves, and therefore should tender his Interests as our own; that we should not in competition with the greater Good of our Neighbour, regard our own lesser Good; that we should not seek our own things, but concern our selves in the good of others; that we should not consult our own

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Ease and Pleasure, but should contentedly bear the burthens of our Brethren: *Look not every Man to his own things, but every Man also to the things of others; Let no Man seek his own, but every Man another's Wealth; Bear one anothers Burthens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ: Charity seeketh not its own*; these are Apostolical Precepts and Aphorisms; these are fundamental Rules and Maxims of our Holy Religion.

Phil. 2. 4. 1 Cor. 10. 24. Gal. 2. 6. 1 Cor. 13. 5.

It chargeth us industriously to employ our Pains, liberally to expend our Goods, yea (in some Cases) willingly to expose and devote our Lives for the benefit of our Brethren.

It recommendeth to us the Examples of those who have underwent unspeakable Pains, Losses, Disgraces, Troubles, and Inconveniences of all kinds for the furthering the good of others; the Examples of our Lord, and of his Apostles, who never in any case regarded their own Interests, but spent and sacrificed themselves to the publick welfare of Mankind.

It representeth us not only as Brethren of one Family, who should therefore kindly favour, assist, and grace one another, but as Members of one spiritual Body (*Members one of another*) compacted by the closest Bands of common Alliance, Affection, and Interest, whose Good much consisteth in the Good of each other, who should together rejoice, and condole with one another; who should care for one anothers Good as for our own; looking upon our selves to gain by the Advantage, to thrive in the Prosperity, to be refreshed with the Joy, to be graced with the Honour, to be endamaged by the Losses, to be afflicted with the Crosses of our Brethren; so that *If* (as St. *Paul* saith) *one Member suffer, all the Members suffer with it; if one Member be honoured, all the Members rejoice with it.*

Rom. 12. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 25. Rom. 12. 15. 1 Cor. 12. 26.

These which I have already handled are the principal kinds of vitious Self-Love; there are farther some special acts of kin to them, sprouting from the same Stock; which I shall touch: Such as *Vain-glory*, *Arrogance*, *Talking of ones self*, *Thinking about ones self*. Of these I shall treat more briefly.

SER-

SERMON XXXI.

Of Vain-glory, Arrogance, Talking and Thinking of ones Self.

2 TIM. III. 2.

For Men shall be lovers of themselves, &c.

Of Vain-glory.

WHEN a regard to the Opinion, or the desire of the Esteem of Men is the main Principle from which their Actions do proceed, or the chief end, which they propound to themselves: Instead of conscience of Duty, love and reverence of God, hope of the Rewards promised, a sober regard to their true Good, this is *Vain-glory*. Such was the vain-glory of the *Pharisees*, who Fasted, who Prayed, who gave Alms, who *did all their works that they might be seen of Men*, and from them obtain the reward of Estimation and Applause: This is that which St. *Paul* forbiddeth; *Let nothing be done out of strife, or vain-glory.* Mat. 6, &c. Matt. 23. 5. Phil. 2. 3.

When Men affect and delight in Praise, from mean or indifferent things; as from secular Dignity, Power, Wealth, Strength, Beauty, Wit, Learning, Eloquence, Wisdom or Craft: as, *There are many* (saith the *Psalmist*) *that boast themselves in the multitude of their Riches.* *Nebuchadnezzar* was raised with the conceit of having built a Palace for the glory of His Majesty. *Herod* was puff'd with Applause for his Oration, the *Philosophers* were vain in the esteem procured by their pretence to Wisdom, the *Pharisees* were elevated with the Praise accruing from external acts of Piety (Fasting twice a Week, making long Prayers, tithing Mint and Cumin;) all which things being in themselves of little worth, the affecting of Praise from them is manifestly frivolous and vain. Honour should be affected only from true Vertue, and really good Works. Psal. 49. 6. Φάσκοντες εἶναι σοφοί. Rom. 1. 22. Rom. 2. 7.

Those who seek Glory from evil things (*who glory in their shame*) from presumptuous transgression of God's Law (*Hectorly* Profaneness and Debauchery) from outrageous Violence, from over-reaching Craft, or from any bad Quality, are not only Vain-glorious, but Impudent.

When Men affect Praise immoderately, not being content with that measure of good Reputation, which naturally doth arise from a vertuous and blameless Life.

As all other Goods, so this should be affected moderately.

It is not worth Industry, or a direct Aim.

When they are unwilling to part with the esteem of Men, upon any accompt, but rather will desert their Duty, than endure Disgrace; prizing the Opinion of Men before the Favour and Approbation of God: As it is said of those *Rulers*, who *believed in our Lord, but because of the* Joh. 12. 43.

Pharisees did not confess him, that they might not be put out of the Synagogue, for they loved the glory of Men, rather than the glory that is of God. And those to whom our Saviour said; *How can ye believe, who receive glory from one another, but do not seek the glory that is of God?*

John 5. 44.

When they pursue it irregularly, are cunning and politick to procure it; hunt for it in oblique ways, lay Gins, Traps, and Baits for it; such are Ostentation of things commendable, fair Speeches, kind Looks and Gestures, devoid of Sincerity, *&c.* such ways ambitious and popular Men do use.

Τὸ εὐτελὲς τῆτο δοξάειον καὶ ἀπόπνυσον. Naz. Ep. 63.

This Practice is upon many accompts vain and culpable, and it produceth great Inconvenience.

1. It is vain, because unprofitable. Is it not a foolish thing for a Man to affect that which little concerneth him to have, which having he is not considerably benefited? Such manifestly is the good opinion of Men; how doth that reach us; do we feel the commotions of their Fancy; doth their Breath blow us any good?

Qui dedit hoc hodie, cras auferat idem.

2. It is vain, because uncertain. How easily are the Judgments of Men alter'd? how fickle are their Conceits? the Wind of Heaven is not more fleeting and variable than the wind of popular Air. In a trice the case is turned with them; they admire and scorn, they approve and condemn, they applaud and reproach, they court and persecute the same Person, as their fancy is casually moved, or as fortune doth favour a Person. Histories are full of instances of Persons, who have been now the favourites of the People, presently the objects of their hatred and obloquy.

—Stultus honores Sæpe dat indignis.

3. It is vain, because unsatisfactory. How can a Man be satisfied with the Opinion of bad Judges; who esteem a Man without good grounds, commonly for things not deserving regard; who cannot discern those things which really deserve esteem, good Principles, and honest Intention? these only God can know, these only wise and good Men can well guess at; it is therefore vain much to prize any Judgment but that of God, and of wise Men, which are but few. *Praise becometh not the Mouth of a Fool.*

Falsus honor juvat, &c. Quem nisi mendosum?

How also can a Man rationally be pleased with the commendation of others, who is sensible of his so great Defects, and conscious to himself of so many Miscarriages? which considering he should be ashamed to receive, he should in himself blush to own any praise.

4. It is vain, because fond. It is ugly and unseemly to Men; they despise nothing more than acting out of this Principle. It misbecometh a Man to perform things for so pitiful a Reward, or to look upon it as a valuable recompence for his Performances; there being considerations so vastly greater to induce and encourage him; the satisfaction of Conscience, the pleasing God, and procuring his Favour; the obtaining eternal Happiness.

5. It is vain, because unjust. If we seek glory to our selves, we wrong God thereby, to whom the glory thereof is due. If there be in us any natural endowment considerable (Strength, Beauty, Wit,) it is from God, the author of our Being and Life? Is there any supervenient or acquisite perfection (as Skill, Knowledge, Wisdom) it is from God, who gave us the means and opportunities of getting it, who guided our proceeding and blessed our industry: Is there any advantage of Fortune belonging to us (as Dignity, Power, Wealth,) it is the gift of God, who dispenceth these things, who disposeth all things by his Providence: Is there any vertuous disposition in us, or any good work performed by us; it is the production of God, *who worketh in us to will, and to do according to his good pleasure:* Have we any good that we can call our own; that we have

Phil. 2. 13.

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independently and absolutely made, or purchased to our selves; if not any, why do we assume to our selves the glory of it, as if we were its Makers or Authors? 'tis St. *Paul's* expostulation; *who made thee to differ? What hast thou, which thou didst not receive? And if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?* 1 Cor. 4. 7. John 3. 27.

This is that which maketh this Vice so odious to God, who is sensible of the Injury done him, in robbing him of his due Honour: how sensible he is he shewed in that great Instance of smiting *Herod* with a miraculous Vengeance; because he did not *give the glory to God*, but arrogated glory to himself, receiving with complacence, the profane Flatteries of the People. He hath said, *I will not give my Glory to another.* Acts 12. 23.

6. It is vain, because mischievous. It corrupteth our Mind with a lewd Pleasure, which choaketh the purer Pleasures of a good Conscience, spiritual Joy and Peace.

It incenseth God's displeasure, who cannot endure to see us act out of so mean and base a Principle.

It depriveth us of the Reward due to good Works, performed out of pure Conscience, and other genuine Principles of *Piety.* Ἀπέχουσι τὸν μισθὸν· *They have their Reward.* Matt. 6. 1.

7. It is vain, because unbeseeming us.

It is observable, that the Word יְהַלֵּל signifieth to Praise or Applaud, and also to infatuate or make mad.

Glory doth sit unhandsomely upon us, who are so weak and frail, who are so impure and sinful, who are so liable to reproach and blame: 'tis like Purple on a Beggar——a *Panegyrick* upon a Fly. When all is said that can be well of us, we are ridiculous, because a thousand times more might be said to our disparagement and disgrace. For one good Quality, we have many bad; for one good Deed, we have done numberless Evil. The best things we have or do, yield greater matter of dispraise than commendation, being full of imperfection and blemish. Job 12. 17. Isa. 44. 25. Eccles. 7. 8. 2. 2.

Absolutely so; comparatively much more; what are we in comparison to God; whose excellency if we consider, and our distance from his Perfections, how can we admit Commendation? how can we take any share of that which is wholly his due?

If we consider even the blessed Angels and Saints, and how far short we come of them; what can we say, but praise them who are so worthy, and abhor our selves who are so vile?

Seeing there are such objects of Praise, how can it be conferred on a mortal, vile, wretched Creature?

Of Arrogance.

When a Man (puffed up with conceit of his own Abilities, or unmeasurably affecting himself) doth assume to himself, that which doth not belong to him; more than in reason and justice is his due, in any kind, more Honour, more Power, more Wisdom, &c.)

When he encroacheth on the Rights, invadeth the Liberties, intrudeth into the Offices, intermedleth with the businesses, imposeth on the Judgments of others. When he will be advising, teaching, guiding, checking, controlling others without their leave or liking.

When he will unduly be exercising Judgment and Censure upon the Persons, Qualities, and Actions of his Neighbour.

These are Instances and Arguments of vitious Self-Love. He that doth rightly understand, and duly affect himself, will contain himself within his own bounds, will mind his own Affairs, will suffer every Man undisturbedly to use his own right and liberty in judging and acting.

The effects of this practice are; dissentions, dissatisfactions, grudges, &c. for Men cannot endure such fond and unjust usurpations upon their Rights, their Liberties, their Reputations.

Of Talking of ones self.

Περιαυτολογία, *Talking about ones self*, is an effect and manifest sign of immoderate Self-Love.

It may seem a very slender and particular Matter, but is of great use to be considered and corrected.

To talk much of ones self; of his own Qualities, of his Concernments, of his Actions; so as either down-rightly to commend ones self, or obliquely to insinuate grounds of commendation; to catch at praise; or however to drive on our own Designs and Interests thereby.

'Tis an argument of Self-Love; proceeding from a fulness of thought concerning ones self; and a fond affection to ones own things, *Out of the abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh*; assuredly we think much of that, and we like it greatly, concerning which we are prompt to discourse: the Imaginations and Affections discharge themselves at the Mouth.)

This is a foolish and hurtful practice. For,

1. It is vain, and hath no effect. We thereby seek to recommend our selves to the Opinion of Men; but we fail therein; for our words gain no belief. For no Man is looked upon as a good Judge, or a faithful Witness in his own Case; A good Judge, and a faithful Witness must be indifferent, and disinterested; but every Man is esteemed to be favourable, to be partial in his Opinion concerning himself; to be apt to strain a point of Truth and Right in passing testimony or sentence upon himself: He therefore that speaketh of himself is not believed, his Words have no good effect on the Hearers: It is true what the *Wiseman* observeth: *Most Men will proclaim every one his own Goodness, but a faithful Man who can find?* (but it is hard to find one, who in making report, or passing judgment concerning himself will be faithful and just.) Καυχᾶσθαι ὐ συμφέρει μοί.

Prov. 20. 6.

2 Cor. 12. 1.

2. Yea it usually hath a contrary effect, and destroyeth that which it aimeth at. Self-commendation is so far from procuring a good Opinion, that it breedeth an evil one.

Men have a prejudice against what is said, as proceeding from a suspected witness; one who is biassed by Self-Love, and bribed by Self-Interest to impose upon them. *Not he that commendeth himself is approved.*

2 Cor. 10. 18.

2 Cor. 10. 13. ἐχὶ τὰ ἄμετρα καυχησόμεθα.

It is fastidious, as impertinent, insignificant, and insipid; spending time, and beating their Ears to no purpose; they take it for an Injury to suppose them so weak as to be moved by such words, or forced into a good conceit.

It is odious and invidious: for all Men do love themselves, no less than we our selves: and cannot endure to see those who affect to advance themselves, and reign in our Opinion.

It prompteth them to speak evil of us; to search for Faults to cool and check us.

It is therefore a preposterous and vain way to think of gaining credit and love: Men thereby infallibly lose or depress themselves.

Of

Of all words, those which express our selves, and our things; *I*, and *mine*, &c. are the least pleasing to Mens Ears.

It spoileth Conversation: For he that loveth to speak of himself, doth least love to hear others speak of themselves; and so is not attentive.

If a Man have worthy Qualities, and do good Deeds; let them speak for him; they will of themselves extort commendation; his silence about them, his seeming to neglect them will enhance their worth in the opinion of Men. Prating about them, obtruding them upon Men will mar their Credit; inducing Men to think them done not out of love to vertue, but for a vain-glorious design. Thus did *Cicero*, thus have many others blasted the glory of their vertuous Deeds. τέρατα δόξαν καυχώμενοι. 2 Cor. 12. 11.

3. Supposing you get the belief, and the praise you aim at, to have complacence therein is bad, or dangerous; 'tis a fond satisfaction, 'tis a vitious pleasure; it puffeth up, it befooleth. 2 Cor. 11. 17.

4. It is against Modesty. It argueth the Man hath a high Opinion of himself; If he believe himself what he saith, he hath so; if not, why would he persuade others to have it?

Modesty cannot without Pain hear others speak of him; nor can with any grace receive Commendations; it is therefore great impudence to speak of himself, and to seek Praise.

5. We may observe it to be a great temptation to speak falsely. Men when they affect Commendation, will gladly have it to the utmost; are loth to wrong themselves, or to lose any thing; they will therefore at least speak to the extreme bounds of what may be said in their own behalf; and while they run upon the extreme borders of Truth, it is hard to stop their Carriere, so as not to launch forth into Falshood: 'Tis hard to stand upon the brink, without falling into the Ditch.

It is therefore advisable in our Discourse to leave our selves out as much as may be; never, if we can help it, to say, *I*, *mine*, &c. never seeking, commonly shunning, and declining occasion to speak of our selves: It will bring much convenience and benefit to us.

Our Discourse will not be offensive; we shall decline Envy, and Obloquy; we shall avoid being talked of; we shall escape temptations of Vanity; we shall better attend to what others say, &c.

If we will be speaking of our selves, it is allowable to speak sincerely and unaffectedly concerning our Infirmities and Faults; as St. *Paul* does of himself. 2 Cor. 12. 5. 11. 30.

There are some Cases wherein a Man may commend himself; as in his own defence; to maintain his Authority; to urge his Example, &c. so doth St. *Paul* often. He calleth it folly to Boast (because generally such it is) yet he doth it for those Ends. Plut. πῶς τις ἑαυτὸν ἐπαινέσει.

Let another praise thee, and not thine own Mouth, a Stranger, and not thine own Lips. Prov. 27. 6.

Thinking of our selves.

Thinking of our selves, with glee and pleasure; this is a great nourisher of immoderate Self-Love, for the more they indulge to a gazing upon themselves with delight, the more they grow in love, the more passionately they come to dote on themselves.

It is good to reflect inward, and to view our Souls; but we should do it so, as to find a wholsome displeasure and regret in beholding our selves so foul and impure, so weak and defectuous, so ugly and deformed; if we do thus, we shall not over-love our selves.

Some

Some general Remedies of Self-Love.

1. To reflect upon our selves seriously and impartially, considering our natural Nothingness, Meanness, Baseness, Imperfection, Infirmity, Unworthiness: the meanness and imperfection of our Nature, the defects and deformities of our Souls, the failings and misdemeanors of our Lives. He that doth this cannot surely find himself lovely; and must therefore take it for very absurd to dote on himself. He will rather be induced to dislike, despise, abhor and loath himself.

2. To consider the loveliness of other Beings superiour to us; comparing them with our selves, and observing how very far in Excellency, Worth, and Beauty they transcend us; which if we do, we must appear no fit objects of Love, we must be checked in our dotage, and diverted from this fond affection to our selves. It cannot but dazle our Eyes, and dull our Affections to our selves.

If we view the Qualities and Examples of other Men, who in Worth, in Wisdom, in Vertue, and Piety do far excell us; their noble Endowments, their heroical Atchievements; what they have done and suffered in obedience to God (their strict Temperance and Austerity, their laborious Industry, their Self-denial, their Patience, *&c.*) how can we but in comparison despise and loath our selves?

If we consider the blessed Angels and Saints, in Glory and Bliss; their Purity, their Humility, their Obedience, how can we think of our selves without Contempt and Abhorrence?

Especially if we contemplate the Perfection, the Purity, the Majesty of God, how must this infinitely debase us in our Opinion concerning our selves, and consequently diminish our fond Affection toward things so vile and unworthy?

3. To study the acquisition and improvement of Charity toward God and our Neighbour. This will employ and transfer our Affections; these drawing our Souls outward, and settling them upon other Objects will abolish or abate the perverse love toward our selves.

4. To consider, that we do owe all we are and have to the free Bounty and Grace of God; hence we shall see that nothing of Esteem or Affection is due to our selves; but all to him, who is the Fountain and Author of all our Good.

5. To direct our Minds wholly toward those things which rational Self-Love requireth us to regard and seek: To concern our selves in getting Vertue, in performing our Duty, in promoting our Salvation, and arriving to Happiness: This will divert us from Vanity: A sober Self-Love will stifle the other fond Self-Love.

SER-

SERMON XXXII.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

ROM. XII. 17.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

THE World apparently is come to that paſs, that Men commonly are afraid or aſham'd of Religious Practice, hardly daring to own their Maker, by a conſcientious obſervance of his Laws. While Profaneneſs and Wickedneſs are grown outrageouſly bold, ſo that many *declare their ſin as Sodom*; Piety and Vertue are become pitifully baſhful; Iſa. 3. 9. ſo that how few have the Heart and the Face openly to maintain a due regard to them; Men in nothing appear ſo reſerved and ſhy, as in avowing their Conſcience, in diſcovering a ſenſe of their Duty, in expreſſing any fear of God, any love of Goodneſs, any concern for their own Soul. 'Tis Wiſdom, as they conceive, to compound with God, and to collude with the World; reſerving for God ſome place in their Heart, or yielding unto him ſome private acknowledgement; while in their publick demeanor they conform to the World, in commiſſion of Sin, or neglect of their Duty; ſuppoſing, that God may be ſatisfied with the inviſible part of his Service, while Men are gratified by viſible compliance with their ungracious Humors.

Such proceeding is built on divers very fallacious, abſurd, and inconſiſtent grounds or pretences; whereby Men egregiouſly do abuſe themſelves, and would impoſe on others; namely, theſe, and the like:

They would not by a fair ſhew and ſemblance of Piety give cauſe to be taken for Hypocrites; whereas by diſſembling their Conſcience, and ſeeming to *have no fear of God before their Eyes*, they incur an Hypocriſie, no leſs criminal in Nature, but far more dangerous in conſequence, than is that which they pretend to decline.

They would not be apprehended Vain-glorious for affecting to ſerve God in the view of Men; whereas often at the bottom of their demeanor a moſt wretched and worſe than *Phariſaical* Vain-glory doth lie; They forbearing the performance of their Duty merely to ſhun the cenſure, or to gain the reſpect of the vileſt and vaineſt Perſons.

They would be deemed exceedingly honeſt and ſincere, becauſe forſooth all their Piety is cordial, pure, and void of ſiniſter regards to popular Eſteem; whereas partial Integrity is groſs Nonſenſe; whereas no pretence can be more vain, than that we hold a faithful Friendſhip, or hearty reſpect for God, whom we openly diſclaim, or diſregard; whereas alſo it is eaſily diſcernible, that although their Piety is not, yet their Impiety is popular, and affected to ingratiate with Men.

They

They would be taken for Men of brave, courageous, and maſculine Spirits, exalted above the weakneſſes of Superſtition and Scrupuloſity; whereas indeed out of the baſeſt Cowardiſe, and a dread to offend ſorry People, they have not a Heart to act according to their Duty, their Judgment, their beſt Intereſt.

They would ſeem very modeſt in concealing their Vertue; while yet they are moſt impudent in diſcloſing their want of Conſcience; while they are ſo preſumptuous toward God, as *to provoke him to his face* by their diſobedience; while they are not aſhamed to wrong and ſcandalize their Brethren by their ill behaviour.

Iſa. 65. 3. Jer. 6. 17. 8. 12.

They would not be uncivil or diſcourteous in thwarting the Mind and pleaſure of their Company; as if in the mean time they might be moſt rude toward God in affronting his Will and Authority; as if any rule of Civility could oblige a Man to forfeit his Salvation; as if it were not rather moſt cruel Diſcourteſie, and barbarous Inhumanity to countenance or encourage any Man in Courſes tending to his Ruine.

They would not be ſingular and uncouth in diſcoſting from the common road, or faſhion of Men; As if it were better to leave the common Duty, than the common Faults of Men; as if Wiſdom and Vertue were ever the moſt vulgar things; as if the way to Heaven were the broadeſt and the moſt beaten way; as if Rarity ſhould abate the price of good things; as if Conſpiracy in Rebellion againſt God might juſtifie or excuſe the Fact; as if it were adviſeable to march to Hell in a troop, or comfortable to lie there for ever among the damned Crew of aſſociates in Wickedneſs.

They cannot endure to be accounted Zealots or *Bigots* in Religion; As if a Man could love or fear God too much; or be over-faithful and careful in ſerving him; As if to be moſt earneſt and ſolicitous (not in promoting our own Fancies, but) in diſcharging our plain Duties could be juſtly reproachable; or were not indeed highly commendable.

Theſe things I may hereafter fully declare; in the mean time it is manifeſt that ſuch a practice is extreamly prejudicial to Religion and Goodneſs; ſo that it may be very uſeful to employ our Meditations upon this *Text* of the *Apoſtle*, which directly doth oppoſe and prohibit it.

The ſame *Text* he otherwhere (in his Second *Epiſtle* to the *Corinthians*) doth repeat, in the ſame terms (only inſerting a Clauſe more fully explaining his ſenſe) backing his Precept with his own Example; for, We (ſaith he there) did ſo manage the buſineſs of collecting and diſpenſing Alms, as *to avoid that any Man ſhould blame us in this abundance, which is adminiſtred by us; providing for honeſt things, not only in the ſight of the Lord, but in the ſight of Men.*

2 Cor. 8. 21.

The words do imply a Precept of very large extent, and touching a great part of our Duty; even all thereof which is publick and viſible; for which we are accomptable to the World, whereof Man can take any cogniſance; which concerneth all our Speech and Converſation, all our Dealing and Commerce, all our deportment relating to humane Society, civil or ſpiritual.

I ſhall firſt a little conſider its meaning and deſign; then I ſhall propoſe Reaſons and Inducements to its obſervance; then I ſhall declare the Folly of thoſe Principles and Pretences which obſtruct that obſervance.

I. The meaning of it is, that we ſhould have a ſpecial care of our external Demeanor and Converſation, which cometh under the view and obſervation of Men; that it be exempted from any Offence or Blame, yea, that it be comely and commendable.

Ἀμεμπτοι. Phil. 2. 15. Ἀνέγκλητοι. Col. 1. 22.

The

The Terms, in which it is expreſſed, are notably emphatical: We are directed προνοεῖν, *to provide*, to uſe a Providence and Forecaſt in the Caſe: E'er we undertake any Deſign, we ſhould deliberate with our ſelves, and conſider on what Theatre we ſhall act, what Perſons will be Spectators, what Conceits our Practice may raiſe in them, and what Influence probably it will have on them. We ſhould not ruſh on into the publick view, with a precipitant Raſhneſs, or blind Negligence, or contemptuous Diſregard, not caring who ſtandeth in our way, who marketh what we do, what Conſequence our Proceeding may have on the ſcore of its being publick and viſible: We ſhould adviſe before-hand, lay our Buſineſs, and on ſet Purpoſe order our Behaviour with a regard to thoſe, to whoſe Sight and Notice we expoſe it; foreſeeing how our Actions may affect or incline them. So we muſt provide; what Things? καλὰ, Things fair and handſome; Things not only good, innocent, and inoffenſive to the ſight of Men; but goodly, pleaſant, and acceptable to well-diſpoſed Beholders; ſuch as our *Apoſtle* doth otherwhere recommend, when he chargeth us to regard, ὅσα σεμνὰ, *whatever things are venerable*, ὅσα προσφιλῆ, *whatever things are lovely*, ὅσα εὔφημα, *whatever things are of good report*, εἴ τις ἔπαινος —— *whatever things are laudable*? and when he doth exhort us *to walk* εὐσχημόνως, *handſomly* and decently, in a comely Garb and Faſhion of Life: This may add an Obligation to ſome things not directly preſcribed by God, which yet may ſerve to adorn Religion; but it cannot detract any thing from what God hath commanded: It doth comprehend all Inſtances of Piety and Vertue, practicable before Men; it certainly doth exclude all commiſſion of Sin, and omiſſion of Duty; for that nothing can be fair or handſome, which is ugly in God's ſight, which doth not ſuit to his Holy Will. Phil. 4. 8. Rom. 13. 13. 1 Theſſ. 4. 12.

Such things we muſt provide, ἐνώπιον πάντων ἀνθρώπων, *before all Men*; not only before ſome Men; to whom we bear a particular reſpect, of whom we ſtand in awe, upon whom we have a deſign; but univerſally before all Men; as having a due conſideration of all thoſe, upon whom our Deportment may have influence; not deſpiſing or diſregarding the obſervation of the meaneſt or moſt inconſiderable Perſon whatever.

But in this Practice, to avoid Miſapprehenſions, we muſt diſtinguiſh; for it is not required, that we ſhould do all things openly, nor intended that we ſhould do any thing vainly; but that we ſhould act conſtantly according to the Nature and Reaſon of things, with upright and pure Intention: The *Apoſtle* doth not mean, that in our Practice we ſhould reſemble the *Phariſees*, whom our Lord reproveth for *doing their Alms before Men*, for loving *to pray ſtanding in the Synagogues*, for *doing all their Works to be ſeen of Men*; performing thoſe Acts of Piety openly *in the Corners of the Street*, which ſhould have been done ſecretly *in the Cloſet*; and ſo doing them out of Vanity, and ambitious Deſign, to procure the good Opinion and Praiſe of Men: He doth not intend, that we ſhould aſſume a formal Garb of ſingular Vertue; that we ſhould aim to ſeem better than we are, counterfeiting any point of Religion, or Vertue; that we ſhould affect to appear even as good as we are, expoſing all our Piety to common view: That we ſhould *ſound a Trumpet before us*, making an Oſtentation of any good Deeds, catching at Reputation, or Applauſe for them; that we ſhould do any commendable thing chiefly to obtain the good Opinion of the World, or to eſcape its Cenſure; infinitely far it was from the *Apoſtle*'s Intention, that we ſhould be *like thoſe whited Sepulchers, which appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead mens Bones and all Uncleanneſs*: that is, like thoſe *Phariſees*, who *did outwardly appear Righteous, but within were full of Hypocriſie and Iniquity*: No; Matt. 6. 1, 2. Matt. 23. 5. Matt. 6. 2. Matt. 23. 27, 28.

In ſome Caſes we muſt be reſerved, and keep our Vertue cloſe to our ſelves; and ever under a fair Shew there muſt be a real Subſtance of Good, together with an honeſt intention of Heart; a good Conſcience muſt always lie at the bottom of a good Converſation; the outſide muſt be good, but the beſt ſide muſt be inward; we muſt endeavour to ſanctifie our Life and Converſation, but we muſt eſpecially labour to purifie our Hearts and Affections.

Τὸ σεμνὸν ἁπλόσως— Τὸ ἔνσημον ἀφελῆ. *Ant.* 1. §. 9. 2. §. 5.

Join the Precept with others duly limiting it, and it doth import, that with pure Sincerity, and unaffected Simplicity (void of any ſiniſter, or ſordid Deſign) we ſhould in all Places, upon all Occaſions, in all Matters carefully diſcharge that part of our Duty which is publick, according to its Nature, Seaſon, and Exigency, that is publickly; not abſtaining from the practice of thoſe good Deeds, which cannot otherwiſe than openly be well performed; or the conſpicuous performance whereof is abſolutely needful in regard to God's Law and the ſatisfaction of our Conſcience, is plainly ſerviceable to the Glory of God, is very conducible to the Edification of our Neighbour, or which may be uſeful to good Purpoſes concurrent with thoſe principal Ends: We ſhould, as *good Trees*, from a deep root of true Piety, in due *ſeaſon* naturally, as it were ſhoot forth good Fruits, not only pleaſant to the ſight, but ſavoury to the taſte, and wholſome for uſe; as St. *Paul*, who, as he ſaith of himſelf, that he *did provide things honeſt in the ſight of all men*, ſo he alſo doth affirm, that *his Rejoicing was this, the Teſtimony of his Conſcience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity--- he had his Converſation in the World.*

Matt. 7. 17. Luke 6. 44. Pſal. 1. 3. 2 Cor. 8. 21. 2 Cor. 1. 12.

There are indeed ſome Duties, or Works of Piety and Vertue, the Nature whereof directeth, that in the practice of them we ſhould be reſerved; ſuch as thoſe wherein the World is not immediately concerned, and which may with beſt advantage be tranſacted between God and our own Souls; as private Devotion, meditation on God's Word and Will, the diſcuſſion of our Conſciences, voluntary Exerciſes of Penitence, and the like; ſuch alſo be thoſe, wherein the intervention or notice of few Perſons is required; as Deeds of particular Charity in diſpenſing Alms, good Advice, friendly Reproof; the which ſort of Duties our Lord hath taught us to perform *in ſecret*, or as cloſely as we may; ſtudiouſly keeping our Obſervance of them from the Eyes of Men; thereby aſſuring our Sincerity to our ſelves, and guarding our Practice from any Taint of Vanity, or Suſpicion of Hypocriſie; as alſo in ſome Caſes avoiding to cauſe Prejudice or Offence to our Neighbours: *Take heed* (ſaith our Lord) *that ye do not your Alms before Men*; and *Thou when thou prayeſt, enter into thy Cloſet*; and *Thou when thou faſteſt, anoint thine Head, and waſh thy Face, that thou appear not unto Men to faſt*; and, *If thy Brother ſhall treſpaſs againſt thee, go and tell him his Fault between thee and him alone.*

Ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ. Matt. 6. 4, 6. Mat. 6. 1. Matt. 6. 6. Matt. 6. 17. Matt. 18. 15.

But there are divers other Duties, the diſcharge whereof neceſſarily is notorious and viſible; the Publick being the Stage on which they are to be acted; the tranſaction of them demanding the entercourſe of many Perſons, who are the Objects or Inſtruments of them, or are ſomewiſe concerned in them: Such is that negative Duty, of a general Nature, and vaſt Comprehenſion, which we may call Innocence: that is a total abſtinence from Sin, or forbearance to tranſgreſs any divine Command; which is a part of *Job*'s Character, *That Man was perfect and upright, one that feared God, and eſchewed Evil*; the which Duty being to be practiſed at all times in every place, cannot avoid being obſervable.

Pſal. 34. 14. Job 1. 1, 2, 3.

Such

Such are alſo divers poſitive Duties; for ſuch is the Profeſſion of our Faith in God, and acknowledgment of his heavenly Truth, revealed in the Goſpel of our bleſſed *Saviour*; which is ſtiled *confeſſing our Lord before Men*, and is (as St. *Paul* telleth us) indiſpenſably requiſite to Salvation. Rom. 10. 10.

Such is joining in that publick Adoration, whereby the Honour and Authority of God are upheld in the World, with ſeemly Expreſſions of Reverence; the which is to be performed ſolemnly, and (as the Holy *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaketh) *in the midſt of the Congregation.* Pſa. 99. 5. 132. 7. Pſal. 22. 22.

Such is Zeal in vindication of God's Honour, when occaſion requireth, from blaſphemous Aſperſion, or from ſcandalous Offences againſt it.

Such are Juſtice, Equity, Fidelity, and Ingenuity in our Dealings; Meekneſs, Gentleneſs, Patience, Kindneſs, and Courteſie in our Converſe; Peaceableneſs in our Carriage, and charitable Beneficence; the Objects whereof are moſt general, according to thoſe *Apoſtolical* Precepts, *That our Moderation* (or our Equity and Ingenuity) *be known unto all Men*; that we *ſhew all Meekneſs to all Men*; that we *muſt not ſtrive*; *but be gentle unto all Men*; that we *be patient toward all Men*; that we *purſue Peace with all Men*; that *As we have opportunity we ſhould do good unto all Men*; ſhould *abound in Love one towards another, and towards all Men*; ſhould *ever follow that which is good both among our ſelves, and to all Men*; ſhould *liberally diſtribute to the Saints, and to all Men*; in performing which ſo general Duties, how can a Man paſs *incognito*, how can he ſo deal with all Men indiſcernibly? Phil. 4. 5. Tit. 3. 2. 2 Tim. 2. 24. 1 Theſſ. 5. 14. Heb. 12. 14. Rom. 12. 18. Gal. 6. 10. 1 Theſſ. 3. 12. 1 Theſſ. 5. 15. 2 Cor. 9. 13.

Such are likewiſe Gravity and Modeſty in our Behaviour; Sweetneſs, Soberneſs, Aptneſs to profit and edifie the Hearers in our Diſcourſe; Moderation and Temperance in our corporeal Enjoyments: Induſtry in our Buſineſs and the Works of our Calling, integrity in the Management of any Office or Truſt committed to us; a conſtant Practice of which Vertues is not only injoined to us as our particular Duty, but for publick Example. 2 Tim. 4. 12. Tit. 2. 4, 7.

Such are ſeaſonable defence of the Truth, and oppoſing of Error; the commendation of Vertue, and reprehenſion of notorious Sin, with the like.

Such things muſt be practiſed, becauſe indiſpenſable Duties; but they cannot be done out of ſight, or barring the obſervation of Men; they do involve Publickneſs; they carry a Light and Luſtre with them, attracting all Eyes to regard them; it is as impoſſible to conceal them as to hide the Sun from all the World; or to *conceal a City that is ſet upon a Hill*; for *nothing* (as St. *Chryſoſtom* ſaith) *doth render a Man ſo illuſtrious, although he ten thouſand times would be hid, as an open practice of Vertue.* Matt. 5. 14.

Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔτως ἐπίσημον ἀνδρα ποιεῖ, κἂν μυριάκις λανθάνειν βάλλῃ, ὡς ἀρετῆς ἐπίδειξις. Chryſ. *in* Matt. 5. 16.

Wherefore *the Works of Mercy* (ſaith St. *Auſtin*) *the Affection of Charity, the Sanctity of Godlineſs, the Incorruptneſs of Chaſtity, the Moderation of Sobriety, theſe are perpetually to be held, whether we are in the publick, or at home; whether before Men, or in the Cloſet, whether we ſpeak, or keep ſilence.*

Opera miſericordiæ, affectus charitatis, ſanctitas pietatis, incorruptio caſtitatis, modeſtia ſobrietatis, ſemper hæc tenenda ſunt; ſive cùm in publico ſumus, ſive cùm in domo; ſive ante homines, ſive in cubiculo; ſive loquentes, ſive tacentes, Aug. *in Ep.* 1. Joh. *Tract.* 8.

In the practice of them, 'tis true, we mainly ſhould reſpect the approving our Conſcience to God, with expectation of our Recompence from him: not being much concerned in the Judgment or Pleaſure of Men; purely conſidered in themſelves; not aiming at any Intereſt of Credit or Profit from them, as a Reward of our Work; *We ought* (as St. *Auſtin* ſaith) while we do good, *to be ſeen, but we ought not to do it, that we may be ſeen; the end of our Joy, the bound of our Comfort ſhould not be there; ſo that we ſhould think our*

non cum fama ſed cùm rerum natura deliberandum eſt. Sen. *Ep.* 81.

1 Cor. 4. 3. 1 Theſſ. 2. 4, 5. Gal. 1. 10.

Si times ſpectatores non habebis imitatores; debes ergò videri, ſed non ad hoc debes facere, ut videaris, non ibi debet eſſe finis gaudii tui, non ibi terminus latitiæ tuæ, ut putes te totum fructum conſecutum eſſe boni operis, cùm viſus fueris atque laudatus. Ibid.

ſelves to have obtained the whole fruit of a good work, when we have been ſeen and commended: No, *whatever we do*, we ſhould (as the *Apoſtle* directeth) do it, *as the Servants of Chriſt, doing the Will of God from the Heart; doing it heartily as to the Lord, and not unto Men; knowing that of the Lord we ſhall receive the reward of the Inheritance.*

Eph. 6. 6. Col. 3. 23, 24.

Yet nothing in the mean time ſhould hinder us from performing ſuch neceſſary Duties; ſtrictly and exactly, with our moſt diligent Care and Endeavour, even in that Light, which their Nature doth carry in it.

How much ſoever of our Vertue or Piety out of Humility, or Modeſty we may conceal; yet we muſt be careful of diſcovering any Vice or Irreligion; either by notoriouſly committing any thing forbidden by God, or omitting any thing commanded by him.

This we ſhould not do upon any Terms, upon any Pretence whatever; No wicked Faſhion ſhould engage us, no bad Example ſhould inveagle us, no Favour of Men ſhould allure us, no Terror ſhould ſcare us thereto; we ſhould not out of Fear, out of Shame, out of Complaiſance, out of affected Prudence, or politick Deſign; out of deference to the Quality, Dignity, or Authority of any Perſon; out of regard to any Man's Deſire, or Pleaſure; We ſhould not to decline Offence, Envy, Blame, Reproach, Ill-treatment, or upon any ſuch Accompt, comply in any ſinful Practice, wave any Duty, neglect any Seaſon of performing a good Deed, whereby we may glorifie God, or edifie our Neighbour, or promote the welfare of our own Soul.

To ſuch a Practice, according to the intent of St. *Paul*'s Injunction, we are obliged; and thereto we may be induced by divers Conſiderations; particularly by thoſe which we ſhall now propoſe.

Bona conſcientia prodire vult & conſpici, ipſos nequitiæ tenebras timet. Sen. *Ep.* 27.

1. We may conſider, that the Publick is the proper, natural, and due Place of Goodneſs: It ſhould dwell in the Light, it ſhould walk freely and boldly every-where, it ſhould expoſe it ſelf to open view, that it may receive from rational Creatures its due Approbation, Reſpect and Praiſe; it by publickneſs is advanced, and the more it doth appear, the more beautiful, the more pleaſant, the more uſeful it is; yielding the fairer Luſtre, the greater Influence, the better Effects; thereby diffuſing and propagating it ſelf, becoming exemplary, inſtructive and admonitive; drawing Lovers and Admirers to it; exciting and encouraging Men to embrace it; wherefore it is very abſurd that it ſhould ſculk or ſneak; it is a great damage to the Publick, that it ſhould retire from common notice.

Omne malum aut timore aut pudore naturæ perfudit. Tert. *Apol. cap.* 1. Job 24. 13—17.

On the other hand, it is proper for Wickedneſs never to appear, or to ſhew its Head in view; it ſhould be confined to Darkneſs and Solitude, under guard of its natural Keepers, Shame and Fear; it ſhould be exterminated from all Converſation among rational Creatures, and baniſhed to the infernal Shades: Publickneſs doth augment and aggravate it; the more it is ſeen, the more ugly, the more loathſome, the more noxious it is; its odious Shape being diſcloſed, its noiſome Steams being diſperſed, its peſtilent Effects being conveyed thereby.

Rom. 13. 12. Eph. 5. 11.

Wherefore to ſmother Vertue (that fair Child of Light) in privacy, and to vent Sin (*the works of darkneſs*) openly, is quite to tranſplace things out of their natural Situation and Order; according to which we are taught by our *Lord*, that *He that doth truth cometh to the Light, that his Deeds may be manifeſt*; and by St. *Paul*, that *Every one, who doth evil, hateth the light, neither cometh he to the light, leſt his Deeds ſhould be reproved*; So indeed it is, and will be, where Conſcience retaineth its due Sway and Force; were a due Reſpect and Reverence are preſerved for Goodneſs.

John 3. 21. Eph. 5. 13.

here

As

As that any Good cometh from detection of Sin, is an accidental Advantage; ſo that any Miſchief doth ever follow the Manifeſtation of Vertue, is an unnatural Abuſe, the which may well be prevented: There can be no Danger of acting any good moſt evidently, if we do withal act ſincerely, having purified our Hearts from diſhoneſt Intention, and from ambitious Vanity; the fear of which ſhould not wholly drive Vertue under the Hatches, and bring Vice upon the Stage. But,

2. We ſhould conſider, that we cannot really, in any competent or tolerable meaſure be good Men, without approving our ſelves ſuch in our Converſation before Men.

Whatever may be pretended, it commonly doth happen, and it ever is to be ſuſpected that the inviſible Piety, which is not accompanied with viſible Conſcientiouſneſs, is falſe, or is no Piety at all; or that they who have little Care and Conſcience to ſerve God publickly, have much leſs to ſerve him privately; or that ſuch as betray a ſcandalous Negligence of their Ways, will hardly maintain a careful Watch over their Hearts; for the ſame Cauſes (be it profane Infidelity, or looſeneſs of Principles, or ſupine Incogitancy, or Sloth, or Stupidity) which diſpoſe them to diſregard God and his Laws before the World, more effectually will incline them to neglect God, and forget their Duty by themſelves, where beſide their own Conſcience, there is no Witneſs, no Judge, no Cenſor to encourage, or reproach them: But admit it poſſible, and put caſe, that ſometimes the Heart and Converſation may not run parallel; that a Man may better govern his interiour Thoughts and Affections, than he doth manage his exteriour Behaviour and Actions, that a Man ſecretly may cleave to God, although he ſeemeth openly to deſert him; yet this will not ſuffice to conſtitute, or denominate a good Man; becauſe much of Goodneſs, as we have ſhewed, even the nobler half thereof (that part whereby God is moſt glorified, and whereby the World is moſt benefitted) doth lie in open and viſible Practice; that Vertue therefore muſt be very imperfect, that Obedience muſt be very lame, which is deficient in ſo great a part. Jam. 2. 18.

As there can be no fair pretence to Goodneſs, where ſo little thereof is conſpicuous; ſo there can be no real Integrity thereof, where ſo much of Duty is wanting.

Our Lord hath taught us, that *Every Tree is known by its Fruit*; and, St. *James* ſaith, that *Faith is ſhewed by Works*; and ſo it is, that a Man can hardly be good in any reaſonable degree without appearing ſuch; Impiety may, but Piety cannot be quite concealed: As Gold may be counterfeited for all is not Gold that gliſtereth) yet true Gold always doth look like Gold; ſo although bad Men ſometimes may ſeem good, yet good Men alſo muſt ſeem ſuch, appearing in their own native Temper and Luſtre. Luke 6. 44. Jam. 2. 18.

Goodneſs cannot be diſguiſed in the ſhape of Evil, becauſe Simplicity and Innocence are eſſential Ingredients of it; any mixture of notorious Sin, any viſible neglect of Duty aſſuring (yea formerly making) a want of it, or a real Defect therein: It may be daubed with falſe Aſperſions, it may be dimmed by the Breath of unjuſt, and uncharitable Cenſures; but wiping them off, its natural Hue certainly will appear. formally

Wherefore if we would ſatisfie our ſelves in our own Conſciences, or juſtifie our ſelves to others, that we are truly good, we muſt (without Partiality, or diſtinguiſhing between publick and private) like the Holy *Pſalmiſt*, *have reſpect unto all God's Commandments*; we, like *Zachary* and *Elizabeth*, muſt *walk in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord, blameleſs*; we muſt, like *David*, *accompliſh God's Will*; we muſt obſerve St. *Paul's* Rule, *to abſtain*, ἀπὸ παντὸς εἴδους πονηροῦ, *from* both *every kind of evil, and every bad appearance*. But farther, (Numb. 15. 39, 40. Pſal. 119. 6. Luke 1. 6. Ποιεῖν πάντα τὰ θελήματα μου. Acts 13. 22. 1 Theſſ. 5. 23. 3. A

3. A great care of our good Behaviour before Men is neceſſary in regard to Almighty God; whoſe juſt Intereſt is preſerved, whoſe due Homage is payed, whoſe Honour is promoted thereby; the ſame being greatly prejudiced and impaired by the contrary defailance.

It is a clear point of Juſtice towards God, as to render all Obedience to him, ſo particularly that which conſiſteth in an open Acknowledgment and Service of him; for as he made and doth preſerve not only the Heart, but the Tongue, the Members, the whole Man, ſo all muſt concur in rendring their Tribute of Reverence and Service to him.

Rom. 12. 1. 1 Cor. 10. 31.

The *Apoſtle* doth preſcribe, that *whatever we do, we ſhould do all to the Glory of God*; and well he might, ſeeing that to glorifie God is indeed to execute the main deſign of our Creation, to apply our Faculties to their beſt uſe, to atchieve the moſt proper and moſt excellent Work, whereof we are capable; to do that, which is the worthieſt and happieſt Employment of Angels, which all the Company of Heaven with moſt ardent Deſire, with moſt zealous Ambition, with reſtleſs endeavour doth purſue: And this we cannot better, we cannot otherwiſe do, than by an apparent good Converſation. For,

He that apparently in all his Actions maketh conſcience of obeying God's Laws, thereby doth evidence his firm Perſuaſion concerning the Exiſtence and Providence of God, doth adhere to him againſt all Adverſaries of Piety, and all Temptations to Rebellion; doth avow his Sovereign Majeſty and Authority; doth yield him due Veneration and Obedience; doth ſhew right Apprehenſions of him, and juſt Affections towards him; implying that he doth moſt highly eſteem him, doth moſt heartily love him, doth chiefly dread him, doth repoſe his Truſt and Hope in him for all his Happineſs; hath a great opinion of his Wiſdom, a great awe of his Power, a great ſenſe of his Goodneſs; the which Practice is in it ſelf a direct and formal Glorification of God, in his own Perſon.

He alſo thereby doth farther promote the Glory of God, inſtructing, exciting, and encouraging others to the like practice of deferring Reſpect and Service to God; for naturally Men have ſuch a Capacity, ſuch Aptitude, ſuch Proclivity to Religion (or to the Acknowledgment and Worſhip of their Maker) that when they behold others ſeriouſly and earneſtly purſuing it, they are eaſily drawn to conſpire therein; eſpecially thoſe who are not utterly perverted and corrupted by ill Cuſtom.

Ἀρετῆς ἄσκησις ἥμιον μὲν κλῆμα τοῦ ἔχοντι, ἥδιστον δὲ θέαμα τοῖς ὁπωσοῦν ἁπτομένοις. Baſ. *Ep.* 42.

Ὅταν δὲ ἄπιστος, &c. Chryſ. *adv. Jud.* 8. (p. 524.)

And whereas good Converſation hath a native Beauty affecting Beholders with Delight, whereas the Fruits of Vertue have a pleaſing Sweetneſs, grateful to all who taſte them; Men from that Sight and that Senſe, will preſently be moved to commend the Wiſdom, and to bleſs the Goodneſs of him, who was pleaſed to inſtitute ſo excellent a Religion, to enact ſo beneficial Laws, to preſcribe ſo wholſome Duties to us: For, *when* (ſaith the moſt divine *Father*) *an Infidel ſhall ſee thee a Believer to be* κατεσταλμένον ——*ſtaunch, ſober, orderly, he will be aſtoni'd, and will ſay, in truth great is the God of Chriſtians! What Men hath he made? What Perſons, out of what Perſons hath he made them? how from Men hath he made them Angels? If one abuſe them they do not rail; if one ſmite them, they do not reſent; if one injure them, they pray for him that doth the Offence; they know not to remember ill Turns, they skill not to be vain, they have not learnt to lie, they cannot abide to forſwear, or rather to ſwear at all, but ſooner would chuſe to have their Tongue cut out, than to let an Oath ſlip out of their Mouth.*

So may we really glorifie God; and otherwiſe than by open Practice we cannot do it; for Glory doth require a publick Stage; it implying (as

(as *Seneca* ſaith) *the conſent of many worthy Perſons* declaring their Eſteem; it being, as *Cicero* defineth it, *the agreeing Praiſe of good Men, with an incorrupted Vote, judging well of an excellent Vertue.*

Gloria conſenſum, multorum exigit—— Conſentire in hoc plures inſignes & præſtantes viri debent, ut claritas ſit. Sen. Ep. 102.

Gloria eſt conſentiens laus bonorum in corrupta voce benè judicantium de excellente virtute. Cic. 3. *Tuſc init.*

Gloria eſt frequens de aliqua fama cum laude. Cic. *de Inv.* 2. 39.

Wherefore toward our being enabled to glorifie God, two things muſt concur; that we be good Men, and that we be openly ſuch.

That we be good Men, becauſe otherwiſe our Commendation will have no worth, or weight; for *Praiſe is not comely in the mouth of Sinners*: It is no Ornament to be commended by ill Men, to whoſe Words little regard is due, little truſt can be given.

Non eſt ſpecioſa laus in ore peccatoris. Eccluſ. 15. 9.

That we be good openly, avowing God in Practice conducing to his Honour: otherwiſe no Glory can accrue to him from our Goodneſs: We may ſerve God, and pleaſe him in private; but we cannot by that Service glorifie him; at leaſt at preſent and here in this World: It is true the cloſeſt Piety will yield Glory to God at the laſt, *when our Lord ſhall come to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in them that believe*; but to deſign ſuch a future Glorification of God is not enough; it is our Duty to glorifie God now, that we may be rewarded for it, and that he may requite us with Glory hereafter.

2 Theſſ. 1. 10.

God himſelf telleth us in the *Pſalm, Whoſo offereth Praiſe, he glorifieth me.* And how can Praiſe be offered, or to what purpoſe will it be offered otherwiſe than apparently, either in Word or Deed, by oral or by real Expreſſion, to the Ears, or to the Eyes of Men, ſo as to occaſion in them the Production of worthy Conceptions and due Affections towards God? In ſuch a manner the *holy Man* did offer it, who ſaid, *I will declare thy Name unto my Brethren, in the midſt of the Congregation I will praiſe thee; I will praiſe the Lord with my whole Heart, in the Aſſembly of the Upright, and in the Congregation*; He did it ſometimes with his Mouth, which is a notable part of our Converſation; but we may do it continually by our Life; for, *He* (ſaith St. *Auſtin*) *who praiſeth God with his Tongue, cannot do that always; but he that praiſeth God by his Manners, can always do it.*

Pſal. 50. 23. Pſal. 22. 22. Pſal. 111. 1. 107. 32. 109. 30.

Qui Deum laudat lingua, non ſemper poteſt; qui moribus Deum laudat, ſemper poteſt. Aug. *in* 1 *Ep. Joh. Tr.* 8.

This Motive is by the great Maſters of our Chriſtian Practice frequently urged; for

Saint *Paul* wiſheth the *Philippians to be filled with the fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are by Jeſus Chriſt, unto the praiſe and glory of God*; He prayeth for the *Theſſalonians*, that *God would fulfil all the good pleaſure of his goodneſs, and the work of faith with power, that the name of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt might be glorified in them*: He particularly doth incite the *Corinthians* to Works of Charity, that *by that miniſtration* Men might be induced to *glorifie God*, rendring him thankful Praiſe for their beneficial Obedience.

Phil. 1. 11. 2 Theſſ. 1. 11, 12. 2 Cor. 9. 11, 13.

St. *Peter* likewiſe doth exhort all Chriſtians *to have their Converſation honeſt among the Gentiles, that they might by their good Works, which they ſhould behold, glorifie God in the day of viſitation*, (that is perhaps, when they carefully do view, and reflect on them.)

1 Pet. 2. 12. Ἐν ἡμέρᾳ ἐπισκοπῆς.

Our Lord himſelf thus chargeth his Diſciples, *Let your Light ſo ſhine before Men, that they may ſee your good Works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven*; they did obſerve his Command, and the Effect did follow, many being converted to God no leſs by the radiant Integrity of their Life, than by the perſuaſive Efficacy of their Doctrine: and, *In this* (ſaith our *Lord* again) *is my Father glorified, if ye bear much Fruit?* what Fruit was that?

Matt. 5. 16. Chryſ. John 15. 8.

that? what but of good Works viſible to the Eye, and perceptible to the taſte; otherwiſe how could Men thence find Cauſe to glorifie God?

In fine, this is declared to be the peculiar Deſign of our Religion, or of
1 Pet. 2. 9. the whole Chriſtian Inſtitution; to this end we are made *a choſen Generation, a royal Prieſthood, a holy Nation, a peculiar People, that we ſhould ſhew forth the Praiſes* (or Vertues) *of him, who hath called us out of Darkneſs to his marvellous Light*; not only by our Profeſſion, but in our Practice, declaring his Goodneſs.

On the other hand, by ſtifling our Vertue and Conſcience, in an open compliance with Sin, or neglect of our Duty, we greatly ſhall diſhonour
Tit. 1. 16. God; for thereby in effect we deny him, and deſert him; we injure his Majeſty, and diſclaim our Allegiance to him; we intimate our mean Opinion of him, and ſmall Affection to him; we betray our want of Reverence to his Excellency, of Dread to his Greatneſs, of Love to his Goodneſs; of Hope in his Promiſes, and gracious Overtures of Mercy; of Fear in regard to his ſevere Juſtice and fierce Menaces: ſo immediately we diſhonour him, and we thereby alſo do countenance Diſreſpect and Diſobedience to him: And our Behaviour tendeth to produce, or to confirm the like irreligious Diſpoſitions of Mind, and impious Practices in others; ſo that with horrible Diſengenuity we croſs the Deſign of our Creation, and violate our greateſt Obligations toward our Maker.

Indeed what greater Affront, or more heinous Indignity can we offer to
Tit. 1. 16. God, than openly before the World, *by* the moſt real Expreſſions of *our Works, to deny* and diſown *him*; than to be notoriouſly aſhamed, or afraid to avow him for our Lord and Maſter; than to expreſs no Senſe of our Duty to him, no Reverence of his Authority, no Gratitude for his Benefits to us; than viſibly to prefer any other Conſideration or worldly Advantage before a Regard to his Will and Pleaſure?

In this open Sin doth outgo private Wickedneſs, and putteth down even the worſt Hypocriſie (beſide its own) that it not only offendeth God, but ſorely woundeth his Honour, and expoſeth his glorious Name to Contempt; by which Conſideration ſuch Miſcarriages are frequently aggravated in Holy Scripture: So in the Prophets God complaineth of his People, for having by their ſcandalous Crimes *profaned his holy Name among the Hea-*
Ezek. 36. 21 —— *then:* So St. *Paul* expoſtulateth with the *Jew, Thou that boaſteſt of the Law,*
Iſa. 52. 2. *through breaking the Law diſhonoureſt thou God?* ſo *Nathan* told *David*, that
Rom. 2. 23. God would puniſh him, *becauſe by his bad Deed he had given great occaſion*
2 Sam. 12. 14. *to the Enemies of the Lord to blaſpheme.* But.

4. We ſhould be careful of our good Behaviour in the ſight of Men, that we may thereby maintain the Dignity and Repute of our Chriſtian Profeſſion, which by our naughty or negligent Demeanour will be much diſparaged and diſgraced.

Moſt evident it is to Reaſon, that a viſible Practice, conformable to the Rules of our Religion, cannot otherwiſe than exceedingly commend and grace it; for how can the goodneſs of a Rule more ſurely obtain its due Commendation, than from its being applied to obſervable Practice and Experience.

Aſſuredly Charity, Meekneſs, Humility, Patience, Sobriety, Diſcretion, and all Chriſtian Vertues, as in themſelves they are very amiable and venerable to all Men, as they yield great Benefit and much Pleaſure to thoſe whom their Conſequences do touch; ſo they do ingratiate the Law which preſcribeth them, they bring Eſteem to the Principles, whence they are derived;
Rom. 14. 18. *He* (as the *Apoſtle* ſaith) *that in theſe things ſerveth Chriſt, is* both *acceptable to God, and approved of Men*, as the Follower of a moſt excellent Rule.

We

We may alſo conſider, that a conſpicuous Practice, according to our Religion, is a demonſtrative Proof, that we do ſeriouſly and firmly embrace it, or that we are heartily and ſteadily perſwaded of its Truth; which is no ſmall credit to any Profeſſion, arguing that it hath a good Foundation in Reaſon, apt to bottom and ſuſtain a ſolid Faith.

And as thereby we pregnantly do evidence, that we our ſelves do highly value the noble Privileges, the excellent Promiſes, the precious Rewards exhibited in the Goſpel; ſo we thereby do breed a like Eſteem in others; upon whom the authority of Men apparently Vertuous and Conſcientious infallibly will have a forcible Influence.

Such a Practice will have a great ſtroke toward evincing the Truth and reality, the perfect excellency, the notable ſtrength and efficacy of our Religion; plainly ſhewing, that it is not a meer name, an idle Pretence, a weak Fancy, a dry Speculation, a chimærical Dream; but a vigorous and maſculine Principle, able to produce moſt worthy Fruits of ſubſtantial Goodneſs, *profitable to men*; conducible to our own welfare, and to the benefit of others.

As gallant Actions, becoming a noble Rank, elevated above the vulgar level, do illuſtrate and dignifie Nobility it ſelf; ſo doth a worthy Converſation, beſeeming our high Station in the heavenly Kingdom, our near Alliances to God, thoſe ſplendid Titles and glorious Privileges, aſſigned to every faithful Chriſtian in the Evangelical Charter, render our State admirable, and make it ſeem an excellent advantage to be a Chriſtian,

Hence in the *Apoſtolical* Writings an obſervance of the Evangelical Laws is ſo much and often enforced by this Conſideration; for upon this account we are exhorted to a careful diſcharge of our Duty, that *we may adorn the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things*; We are urged *to have our Converſation worthy of the Goſpel*; to *walk worthy of the Vocation, wherewith we are called*, to behave our ſelves *as worthily becometh Saints* (that is, Perſons inſtituted in ſo Holy a Religion, and deſigned to ſo peculiar excellency in Virtue) to *walk as Children of the Light*, that is, of Truth and Knowledge revealed from Heaven) to *walk worthy of God, who hath called us into his Kingdom and Glory; worthy of the Lord, unto all well-pleaſing, being fruitful in every good work*: the which enforcements of Duty do imply a viſible Practice, producing the viſible effects of Ornament and Credit to our Religion, recommending it to the Minds and Conſciences of Men.

Tit. 2. 10. Phil. 1. 27. Eph. 4. 1. Eph. 5. 3. Rom. 16. 2. Eph. 5. 8. 1 Theſſ. 2. 12. Col. 1. 10.

Contrariwiſe, the defect of good Converſation before Men in Chriſtians, is upon divers accounts diſgraceful to our Religion. For,

It tempteth Men to judge, that we our ſelves do not heartily believe its Truth, or value its Worth; That we do not approve its Doctrine for reaſonable, or take its advantages for conſiderable; or deem the Name and State of a Chriſtian to be honourable; ſeeing we are not concerned to own them, or do not care to engage our Reputation in avowing and abetting them in that way, which doth beſt ſignifie our Mind and Meaning: For Men certainly will judge of our ſenſe, not ſo much by what we ſay, as from what we do; not by our verbal Profeſſion or Pretence, from our Practice, as the ſureſt indication of our Heart.

Εἰ δέ τις ἐλεγχθῇ φαῦλόν τι ἐνόμων, ὁ τοιοῦτος οὐ μόνον ἑαυτὸν ἐβλαψεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐλασσημίαν παρεσκεύασε τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ. Const. Ap. 2. 8.

Wherefore when they hear us to confeſs our Faith, and ſee us act like Infidels, they will be forced to eſteem us either for ſubdolous Hypocrites, or for inconſiſtent Fools; who aſſume the Name of Chriſtians, and pretend to great advantages thence, yet in effect do not mind, or regard them; highly commending the Rules of our Religion, but not at all obſerving them;

greatly admiring the Example of our Saviour, but not caring to imitate it; deſcribing Heaven for a moſt happy place, but not ſtriving to get thither, in the ſole way, which our Lord preſcribeth, of faithful and diligent obedience to his Precepts.

Seeing, I ſay, this repugnance between our Profeſſion and our Practice will induce Men to charge us with Hypocriſie and Folly; and if the Profeſſors be taken for Counterfeits or Fools, the Profeſſion it ſelf will hardly ſcape from being held Impoſture, or Folly.

Our Religion at leaſt will thence be expoſed to the Cenſures of being no better than a fond Device, and a barren Notion, unpracticable, ineffeual, and inſignificant to any good purpoſe.

The viſible misbehaviour, I ſay, of Chriſtians will aſſuredly derive obloquy and reproach on Chriſtianity, if not as bad, yet as vain, impotent, impertinent, and uſeleſs; eſpecially thoſe who are diſaffected to it, will hence take advantage to inſult upon it with contemptuous Scorn; to what, will they ſay, do your fine Rules ſerve? What effects do your glorious hopes produce? where are the fruits of that holy Faith, and Heavenly Doctrine, which you ſo extol and magnifie?

Whereas alſo bad Converſation commonly doth not only deprive Men of the Benefits which our Religion promiſeth, but doth carry with it hurtful Fruits; Men that ſee or feel them will be apt to impute them to Religion:

If a Chriſtian be unjuſt, cenſorious, factious, any-wiſe offenſive or troubleſom, although Irreligion be the cauſe of ſuch things, yet Religion muſt bear the blame, and they preſently exclaim,

Quantum religio potuit ſuadere malorum.

Whence St. *Paul* (who was a powerful Inſtructor doth impreſs Matters of Duty by the moſt proper Motives) doth often and upon all occaſions urge this Conſideration; he charges us *to give no offence in any thing, that the Miniſtry* (or Evangelical Diſpenſation) *be not blamed*, or expoſed to the cenſure of any captious *Momus*; he biddeth us to forbear harſh Judgment, and all uncharitable Dealing, that *our good be not evil ſpoken of*; He preſſeth the diſcharge of our Duty in each Calling and Relation, that by neglect thereof the Goſpel be not defamed; *Let* (ſaith he) *as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Maſters worthy of all Honour, that the Name of God, and his Doctrine be not blaſphemed*; and *Let Women be diſcreet, chaſte, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own Huſbands, that the word of God be not blaſphemed*; and, *I will that younger Women marry, bear Children, guide the Houſe* (ſo as) *to give no occaſion to the Adverſary* (that is, to Perſons diſaffected to Chriſtianity) *to ſpeak reproachfully* (of it:) which diſcourſe, by clear parity of Reaſon, may be applied to any other State, or Relation.

2 Cor. 6. 3. Ἵνα μὴ μωμηθῇ.

Rom. 14. 16.

1 Tim. 6. 1.

Tit. 2. 5.

1 Tim. 5. 14.

Now ſeriouſly what greater Miſchief can we do, what heavier Guilt may we contract, than by working diſhonour to God's adorable Name, than by caſting reproach on God's heavenly Truth, than by drawing a ſcandal on that holy Religion, which the Son of God came down from Heaven to eſtabliſh, for the Glory of God, and Salvation of Mankind? Surely next after directly blaſpheming God, and defying Religion with our own Mouths, the next crime is to make others to do ſo, or in effect to do it by their profane Tongues.

Rom. 2. 24. δι' ὑμᾶς

There remain divers Arguments of very great moment, which the time will not ſuffer me to urge; and therefore I muſt reſerve them to another occaſion.

SER

SERMON XXXIII.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

ROM. XII. 17.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

I Have formerly diſcourſed upon this Apoſtolical Precept; and having declared the meaning of it (briefly importing, that we ſhould have a ſpecial care of our external Behaviour, coming under the view and obſervation of Men, that it be perfectly innocent and inculpable,) I did propoſe divers Motives inducing to the obſervance of it; but divers others of great importance the time would not allow me to urge; I ſhall therefore now proceed to offer them to your Conſideration.

I did then ſhew that a regard to the reaſon and nature of things, to the ſatisfaction of our Conſcience, to the honour of God, and to the credit of our Religion, did require from us a good Converſation before Men: I now farther add, that,

I. The real intereſt of Piety and Vertue do exact ſuch a Converſation as the moſt effectual way of upholding, advancing, and propagating them among Men.

Example is a very powerful thing either way; both for attraction to Good, and ſeduction to Evil; ſuch is the nature of Men, that they are more apt to be guided by the practice of others, than by their own Reaſon, and more eaſily can write after a Copy, than by a Rule; that they are prone to imitate whatever they ſee done, be it good or bad, convenient or inconvenient, profitable or hurtful, emulating the one, and aping the other; that they love to be in the faſhion, and will go any whither in Company, preſuming of ſupport, defence and comfort therein; that they will ſatisfie their Minds, and juſtifie their doings by any authority, deeming that laudable or allowable, or at leaſt tolerable and excuſable, for which they can alledge Precedents; judging that if they are not ſingular, they are innocent, or however not very culpable; that hardly they will undertake any thing without Countenance, whereby their Modeſty is in ſome meaſure ſecured, and Partners engaged to bear a ſhare with them in the Cenſure, to which their deportment is liable. Hence a viſible good Converſation will have a great efficacy toward the promotion and propagation of goodneſs; the authority of that being adjoined to the native worth and beauty, to the rational plauſibility, to the ſenſible benefit of Vertue, will cogently draw Men to it; it will be a clear Pattern, whereby they ſhall be informed what they are obliged, and what they are able to perform; it will be a notable Spur ſmartly exciting them to mind and purſue their Duty; it will be a vigorous Incentive, inflaming their Courage, and provoking an emulation to do well.

The viſible ſuccour and countenance of many, eſpouſing the Cauſe of Goodneſs by their Practice, will aſſuredly bring it into requeſt and vogue, and thence into current uſe and faſhion; ſo juſt a Cauſe cannot fail to proſper, having any reaſonable Forces to maintain it; it will have great ſtrength, great boldneſs and aſſurance, when a conſiderable Party doth appear engaged on its ſide.

Yea ſometimes even the Example of a few will do it great ſervice; the rarity giving a ſpecial luſtre to their Vertue, and rendring it more notable; according to that intimation of the *Apoſtle*; when he thus doth exhort
Phil. 2. 14, 15. the *Philippians* to a chearful and forward practice of Goodneſs; *Do all things* (ſaith he) *without Murmurings and Diſputings; that ye may be blameleſs and harmleſs, the Sons of God, without rebuke in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe Generation, among whom ye ſhine as Lights in the World.*

A good Converſation doth notifie good Men to one another, and draweth them together, and combineth them in a Party, for the protection of Goodneſs, heartning and aiding one another therein.

Such Advantages Goodneſs doth always need; for it ever hath in the World many Adverſaries, ſtriving by violent force to beat it down, or by treacherous Fraud to ſupplant it; who uſe their authority and intereſt to ſuppreſs it; who by their evil Example do ſeduce from it; who labour by detraction to blaſt it, by ſcorn and reproach to diſcourage it, by divers temptations and baits to entice from it; who combining their Forces with the wicked Spirits, and with the corrupt Inclinations of Men, do raiſe a mighty Party for Wickedneſs.

Wherefore to balance ſuch Oppoſitions, Goodneſs doth need Friends to maintain it; not only Friends in Heart, or ſecret Well-wiſhers; but open Friends, who frankly will avow it, and both in Word and Deed will ſtoutly abet it.

A demure, baſhful, timorous Friendſhip will rather prejudice, than help it; for nothing will more animate its Foes to aſſail and perſecute it, than obſerving its Friends to ſlink and ſneak; When good Men hide their Faces, as if they were aſham'd of their Goodneſs, then bad Men will grow more impudent, and inſolent in their outrages againſt it.

Wherefore, if we would have Goodneſs hold up its head, we muſt openly take its part; if we would not be guilty of its ruine, we muſt ſtand up to uphold it; for whoever openly complieth with Sin, or neglecteth his Duty, may well be charged with its ruine; ſince if thou ſo deſerteſt Goodneſs, another after thy Pattern may do the like, and a third may follow him; ſo the neglect of it may ſoon be propagated, until at length it may be quite abandoned, and left deſtitute of ſupport: If it doth not thus happen, it will as to thee be accidental, and no thanks to thee for its better Fortune.

The declenſion of Piety is not perhaps more to be aſcribed to any other Cauſe, than to this, than that Men who approve Goodneſs in their Hearts, are ſo backward to ſhew it in their Practice; that good Men do ſo affect Retirement, and wrapping up their Vertue in Obſcurity; that moſt Men think it enough if in the cauſe of Religion againſt Profaneneſs and Diſſoluteneſs they appear *Neuters*, and do not impugn it: For if in a time of Infection all ſound Men do ſhut up themſelves, and all ſick Men walk abroad, how neceſſarily muſt the Plague reign in the place?

II. Charity toward our Neighbour demandeth from us a great care of our Converſation before Men.

The

The law of Charity, which is the great law of Chriſtianity, doth oblige us earneſtly to further our Neighbour's Good of all kinds, eſpecially that, which is incomparably his beſt Good, the welfare of his Soul; which how can we better do, than by attracting him to the performance of his Duty to God, and by withdrawing him from the commiſſion of ſin? And how can we do that without an apparently good Converſation, or without plainly declaring, as occaſion ſheweth, for Vertue, both in Word and Deed? how can a ſhy reſervedneſs conduce to that end? What will inviſible Thoughts or Affections of Heart confer thereto?

'Tis a precept of Charity, that we ſhould *purſue things, wherewith one may edifie another*; and how can we perform that Duty, without imparting our Mind, and as it were transfuſing it into others; ſo as by converting them from Error and Sin, by inſtilling good Principles, by exciting good Reſolutions, to lay in them a foundation of Goodneſs, or by cheriſhing and improving the ſame to rear a ſtructure of Vertue in them? How can we mutually edifie, without mutually adviſing Vertue, exhorting to it, recommending and impreſſing it by our exemplary Behaviour? Rom. 14. 19. 1 Cor. 14. 26.

The *Apoſtles* do injoin, that we ſhould *exhort one another, and edifie one another*; that we ſhould *conſider one another, to provoke* (or to whet and inſtigate one another) *to love, and to good works*; the which can no wiſe be performed, without expreſly declaring for Goodneſs and remarkable acting in its behalf; To commend and preſs it by Word is a part of our Duty, but not all of it, nor ſufficient to this purpoſe; eſpecially ſeeing we cannot urge that with good confidence, nor ſhall be held ſerious in pleading for it, which we do not our ſelves embrace in practice; for how can we expect, that our Reaſon ſhould convince others, when it doth not appear really to have perſuaded our ſelves; when our doings evidently do argue the weakneſs of our Diſcourſe? Παρακαλεῖτε ἀλλήλους. 1 Theſſ. 5. 11. Heb. 10. 24. Εἰς παροξυσμόν.

Words hardly will ever move without Practice, although Practice ſometimes will perſuade without Words; according to that of St. *Peter*; *Ye Wives be in ſubjection to your own Husbands, that if any obey not the Word, they may without the Word be won by the Converſation of the Wives, while they behold your chaſt Converſation coupled with fear* (or due reverence to them.) 1 Pet. 3. 1.

Again, We are frequently commanded to ſhun *the giving any Offence*; or *the putting a ſtumbling-block, or an occaſion to fall in the way of our Brother*; that is, to do any thing which any-wiſe may confer to his incurring any Sin; the which Precepts are violated not only by poſitive and active influence, by propoſing erroneous Doctrine, evil Advice, fraudulent enticements to Sin, or diſcouragements from Duty; but alſo by with-holding the Means, ſerving to prevent his Tranſgreſſion; ſuch as a tacit indulgence, or connivance, when good admonition may reclaim him; the omiſſion of good Example, when it is ſeaſonable, and probably may prove efficacious; for theſe Neglects have a moral cauſality, inducing or encouraging the commiſſion of Sin; our Silence, our forbearing to Act, our declining fair opportunities to guide him into the right way will be taken for ſigns of Approbation and Conſent; and conſequently as Arguments to juſtifie or excuſe bad Practice, in proportion to the Authority and Eſteem we have; which ever will be ſome in this caſe, when they favour the Infirmity of Men. 1 Cor. 10. 32. 8. 9. 2 Cor. 6. 3. Rom. 14. 13.

Charity doth farther oblige us, upon juſt Cauſe, and in due Seaſon, to check and reprove our Neighbour miſdemeaning himſelf; for, *Warn the diſorderly*, ſaith the *Apoſtle*; and, *Have no fellowſhip* (ſaith he) *with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them*; and, *Thou ſhalt not* (ſaith 1 Theſſ. 5. 14. Eph. 5. 11. Levit. 19. 17.

(ſaith the *Law*) *hate thy Brother in thy Heart, thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy Neighbour, and not ſuffer ſin upon him*; where forbearance of Reproof is implied, to ſhew not only a defect of Charity, but hatred of our Brother; and a good reaſon is intimated for it, becauſe in ſo doing, we ſuffer Sin to lie upon him; not hindring his progreſs in it, not endeavouring his converſion from it; but Reproof is an overt Act, involving ſomewhat
Prov. 22. 5. of openneſs and plain freedom, ſuch as the *Wiſeman* doth prefer before cloſe good-will; for, *Open rebuke* (ſaith he) *is better than ſecret love.*

We are all thus far *the keepers of our Brethren*, and it is a charge incumbent on us, by all good means to preſerve them from the worſt of Miſchiefs.

In fine, there is plainly nothing more inconſiſtent with true Charity, than ſuch a compliance with Sin, or neglect of Duty in the ſight of our Neighbour, which is ſcandalous, or may prove contagious to him; for how can we love him, whoſe chief good, whoſe eternal welfare we do not tender? whom we do not fear to ſeduce into the way of extream Miſery, or do not at leaſt care to lead into the way of Happineſs; whom without any check we can ſuffer to forfeit the beſt Goods, and to incur the ſaddeſt Calamities?

Wherefore if the love of our ſelves, and a ſober regard to our own welfare be not ſufficient to induce us, yet a charitable diſpoſition, and a concernedneſs for our Neighbour (for our Brethren, our Relations, our Friends) ſhould move us to a good, innocent, vertuous, fruitful and exemplary Converſation; If we do not care to ſave our ſelves, yet let it pity
Rom. 14. 15. us to damn and deſtroy others by our negligence.

III. But if Charity will not move us, yet Juſtice, exacting from us a care of our good Converſation before Men, ſhould conſtrain us thereto.

Exemplary and edifying Converſation is a debt which we owe to the World; a good office impoſed on us by the Laws of common Humanity.

When without our own hurt or inconvenience we can do conſiderable good to our Neighbour, he hath a title thereto (granted by the common Author of our Nature, the abſolute Lord of all we are or have) and he may juſtly demand it from us; as we in like caſe might claim it from him, and certainly would in Matters agreeable to our Humour expect it; Wherefore ſeeing good Converſation not only doth not harm or incommode us, but is moſt beneficial to our ſelves, and it exceedingly may benefit our Neighbour, it is moſt juſt that we ſhould afford it to him; it is no more than fair dealing to do it, to neglect it is a real Injury to him.

To ſet ill example before our Neighbour, or (which is in part, and in effect the ſame) to with-hold good Example from him (for not to give a good Example is a bad thing, and ſo a bad Example; this) I ſay is plainly a great Iniquity, and a wrong to him. For,

Is it not an Injury to offer a Cup of Poyſon to any Man, to invite him to drink it, to be his taſter of it, ſo drawing him to take it off without ſuſpicion, or fear of deadly Miſchief? Is it not an Injury to forbear warning him thereof, or not to deter him from it, when it ſtandeth before him, and he is ready to put it to his Mouth? Would not ſuch a Man in all conſcionable eſteem paſs for a murtherer of his Neighbour?

Is it not a great Wrong to carry any Man out of his way (out of a right, eaſie, fair, and ſafe Road) into Mazes, Thickets, and Sloughs, or into intricate, foul, dangerous bye-ways? Is it not wrongful, when he doth wander or err, not to reduce him thence, not to ſet him in the right way?

Is

Is it not very foul dealing to bring a Man to a ſteep Precipice, and thence to leap down before him? Is it not ſo, not to ſtop him, when he is on the Brink, and blindly moving forward to caſt himſelf down head-long?

If theſe be injurious dealings, than palpably it is far more ſuch to yield any Inticements or Encouragements; yea, not to put Obſtructions, if we are able, to our Neighbour's incurring Sin, which to his Soul is all thoſe things; the moſt baneful Venom, the moſt woful Exorbitancy, the moſt pernicious Gulf that can be.

We *by ſinning* do not only (as the *Wiſeman* ſaith) *wrong our own Souls*, Prov. 8. 36. but we do alſo wrong the Souls of others; drawing them, or driving them by the efficacious impulſe of our Example into Miſchief and Miſery; for *When* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *ye ſin ſo againſt the Brethren, and wound their weak* 1 Cor. 8. 12. *Conſcience, ye ſin againſt Chriſt*; he there ſpeaketh of bad Example; the which he not only affirmeth to be ſinful in regard of *Chriſt*, but calleth it ſinning a gainſt our Brethren; and ſuppoſeth that we thereby do wound, or *ſmite* their Conſcience; which to do is ſurely no leſs wrong to them, than if we ſhould aſſault, beat, and wound their Bodies; the wounds of Conſcience being of all moſt grivous, and producing moſt inſupportable affliction; according to that of the *Wiſeman*, *the ſpirit of* Prov. 18. 14. *a man will bear his Infirmities, but a wounded Spirit who can bear?*

Ὁ γὰρ ἁμαρτάνων εἰς ἕτερον ὅμοιός ἐστιν ἑαυτῷ ἀρχὴν οἰκοδομῆσαι εἰς τὸ τὰ αὐτὰ ποιεῖν. Conſt. Ap. 2. 17.

Τὸ πονοῦν αὐτὸν σὺν συνείδησιν ἀσθενῆ——

Indeed by thus hurting our Neighbour, we do him a wrong, not only very great in it ſelf, but ſuch as may probably be irreparable, for which hardly we can ever be able to make him any reſtitution or compenſation; for a better Example ſcarce will reach all, whom a bad Example hath touched; the beſt Example hardly will avail to undo that, which a bad Example hath done; if thereby we have engaged our Neighbour in Sin, we by no means can reſtore his loſt Innocence; or prevent his ſaying, *Woe* Lam. 5. 16. *be to me, for I have ſinned*; it will be very difficult to recover him into that ſtate (that ſound condition of Soul) from which we did move him; it will however coſt him, if not a final ruine, yet a ſore Repentance; the 1 Cor. 8. 11. pangs whereof no compenſation, which we can yield, will requite: The Wounds which we thereby do inflict may ranckle, and prove incurable; they aſſuredly will find no eaſie cure; they muſt however either in conſequence, or in correction be very painful; and they will leave an ugly Scar behind them.

The injuſtice of this Practice may alſo farther appear, upon divers ſpecial Accounts.

All Men eſteem Pity a Debt, which one Man oweth to another, as liable to Grief and Miſery; (the Obligation whereto is written in the Bowels of each Man) which Pity will incline to ſuccour the Object of it in danger or diſtreſs; wherefore every Man by the Natural Law is bound to endeavour the prevention or the reſcue of another falling into Miſchief; according to that of St. *Jude*, *Of ſome have compaſſion, making a difference,* Jude 22. 23. *and others ſave with fear, pulling them out of the fire*; whence to draw Men into Sin by ill Practice, or not to reſtrain them from it by good, is unjuſt, as a pitileſs hard-hearted cruel thing.

1. Sam. 3. 13. (*His Sons made themſelves vile, and reſtrain'd them not*)

Again, All Men hold Flattery to be a Practice very abuſive, or more than ſimply wrongful: As with Injury joyning Contempt and Cozenage: taking advantage of a Man's Infirmity to work Prejudice to him; it is indeed a miſchievous, a pernicious, and withal a perfidious, an inſiduous, an enſnaring Practice; for, *A flattering Mouth* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) Prov. 31. 30. *worketh* *Favour is deceitful.*

Prov. 26. 28. 29. 5. *worketh ruine*, and *a man that flattereth his Neighbour, ſpreads a Net for his feet?* But Flattery is not only verbal; the worſt Flattery is not that whereby Men ſooth and gloze with their Lips, encouraging others by fictitious Commendations to perſiſt in bad Courſes; there is a tacit Flattery, when by our connivance at Sin we ſeem to approve it; there is a real Flattery when by our compliance with Sin, we recommend it to our *Comrades*; Theſe do not look ſo groſly, yet do inſinuate our Mind, and commonly do inveagle to ſin more effectually; Men being more apt to truſt our Deeds than our Words, being more pleas'd in our vouching their Actions by a participation in them, and running a common hazard with them, than in our ſtraining to commend, or to excuſe them: whence it is, that groſs Flattery hath its effect chiefly upon ſimpler Folks, but this ſubtile Flattery doth often gull and abuſe Perſons of greateſt Capacity.

Again, A good Converſation before Men is a part of that due reſpect, which we owe to them; there is a regard, and a kind of reverence to be had toward every Man; which ſhould engage us to behave our ſelves decently in his Preſence, ſignifying a Conſideration and eſteem of his Perſon, of his Opinion, of his Reſentment, of his Affection toward us: To do any foul or unhandſome thing is a contempt of him, a rudeneſs toward him, an affront put on him; whereby in effect we do ſlight, diſparage, and reproach him; implying that we do little value his Judgment, that we care not for his good-will; that we preſume he hath not the ſenſe to diſcern, or hath not the Spirit to diſlike, or muſt have the Patience to comport with our unſeemly and unſavoury Carriage; and if to do other unhandſome things before Men is ſuch an Indignity offered to them, then it is eſpecially ſuch to commit Sin before them, which is the moſt ugly, the moſt ſordid, the moſt loathſome behaviour that can be; there is no deformity, no turpitude in Nature comparable to Sin: nothing ſo offenſive, ſo diſtaſtful, ſo abominable to a rational ſenſe; ſo that the Prov. 14. 21. 11. 12. *Wiſe-man's* Saying is very true, taken any way, *He that deſpiſeth his Neighbour ſinneth*; 'tis both a Sin to contemn him; and ſinning is an argument of contempt toward him; nor can we better obſerve St. *Peter's* Injunction, that we *honour all Men*, than by forbearing to ſin in their Preſence, out of reſpect to them. But farther, 1 Pet. 2. 17.

IV. Let us conſider, that a good Converſation before Men is a publick Benefit, a great advantage to the World, and common ſtate of Men.

It is not only a good Office of Charity to this or that Man; but it layeth a general Obligation on our Country, on our Age, on Poſterity it ſelf; upon which a fruitful Life, an exemplary Vertue may have notable influence.

As notorious Sin is a plague to the World, throwing Infection and Death about it; provoking the wrath of Heaven, and thence deriving Vengeance on it; So notable Vertue is a general Bleſſing, producing moſt wholſome and comfortable Effects to Mankind.

For how can one more oblige the Publick, than by conferring help to uphold the Reputation, and to propagate the entertainment of thoſe things which are the main props of the World, for the ſake of which it ſtandeth, and by the means of which it is ſuſtained; than by preſerving the Vertue and Power of Conſcience, which is the band of all Society, the guardian of Prov. 14. 34. 20. 28. Faith and Honeſty; the beſt enſurer of Juſtice, Order and Peace in the State; (that which *exalteth a Nation*, and *eſtabliſheth a Kingdom*) than by producing and promoting thoſe things, which certainly will procure the Favour and Bleſſing of God on any People?

How

How can a man better deſerve of the world, than by concurring to ſtop the contagion of ſin, and the overſpreading deluge of iniquity, together with all the lamentable miſchiefs conſequent on them; than by averting the fierce wrath, and ſevere judgments of God, which a general prevalence of wickedneſs neceſſarily will bring down?

Moſt men pretend to be concerned even for the honour of their Country; and how can we better promote that, than by checking the progreſs of *ſin*, which will not only be the bane, but *is* (as *Solomon* telleth us) *the reproach of any people*? Prov. 14. 34.

It may poſſibly be, it hath really been, that the conſpicuous vertue of a few men (yea ſometimes of one ſingle perſon) hath leavened a Country, hath ſeaſoned an age, hath imbued poſterity with an admiration of goodneſs, and with an affection to it. (*One man*, ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome*, *enflamed with zeal, may ſuffice to reform an entire people.*) So among the *Pagans*, one Perſon did ſet up the Study of Morality, and worthily was ſtyled *the parent of* (that moſt uſeful) *Philoſophy*, whereby he did exceedingly benefit mankind, and did confer much toward preparing men for the reception of our heavenly Philoſophy.

Ἀρχεῖ ἑὸς ἀνθρωπῳ ζήλῳ πεπυρωμένος καὶ ὁλόκληρον διορθώσασθαι δήμων. Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. α'. Socrates *philoſophiæ parens.* Cic.

Such our *Lord* deſigned his *Apoſtles* to be; for, *Ye* (ſaith he) *are the lights of the world, ye are the ſalt of the earth*; and ſuch in effect they did prove, *God by them* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *manifeſting the favour of his knowledge in every place*; they not onely by their heavenly doctrine, but chiefly by the luſtre and influence of their holy example, converting the world from impious errours and naughty practices, unto true religion, and vertuous converſation: They did lead men to goodneſs not only by the ears, but by the eyes, ſeeing their excellent life, and *walking as they had them for enſample.* Matt 5. 13, 14. 2 Cor. 2. 14. Phil. 3. 17. 1 Cor. 11. 1. 1 Cor. 4. 16. 2 Theſſ. 3. 7, 9.

It conſequently may be, yea hath been, that the ſingular integrity of one, or of a few perſons, diſplaying it ſelf, hath appeaſed divine wrath, and hath ſtaved off imminent ruine from a people. So one *Noah* publickly maintaining, and *preaching righteouſneſs*, did preſerve the whole race of men from extirpation: So ten perſons avowing righteouſneſs would have kept *Sodom* from that ruful deſtruction: So one good man (notably owning God, and interpoſing for the concerns of piety) might have prevented that calamitous vengeance, which fell upon *Iſrael*; as *Jeremy* told before, and *Ezekiel* affirmed after it; *Run ye to and fro* (ſaith God in *Jeremy*) *through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, and ſee now and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that ſeeketh truth, and I will pardon it*; and, *I ſought for a man* (ſaith God in *Ezekiel*) *among them, that ſhould make up the hedge, and ſtand in the gap before me for the land, that I ſhould not deſtroy it; but I found none: therefore have I poured mine indignation upon them.* There was then a *remnant* of thoſe, who cloſely did ſerve God; and perhaps *ſeven thouſand* unknown perſons, who had not in their hearts deſerted religion; but this did not avert God's wrath, or preſerve the Nation from captivity; as a few openly profeſſing, and reſolutely practiſing goodneſs, might have done. Gen. 18. 32. Jer. 5. 1. Ezek. 22. 30. Iſa. 1. 9. 1 Kings 19. 14, 18.

Now who would not be glad of being ſo publick a friend, ſo general a benefactour, in performing that, which doth otherwiſe ſo much become him, and ſo greatly behove him; yielding him the beſt ornaments, and higheſt advantages even upon his private accompt? Who would not be ambitious both to oblige his Country, and to ſave his own ſoul together, by a worthy converſation?

Aſſuredly nothing can be deviſed more conducible to the effecting a reformation and amendment of the world, (and conſequently to the proſperity and felicity of mankind here) than a conſpiracy of good men in a frank and brisk avowing of goodneſs in the face of the world.

V. A care of our converſation in the ſight of men, is needful for the preſervation of our good name, and fair repute among them.

1 Chr. 29. 12. Eccl 6. 2. (Eccl. 7. 1.) A good name in holy Scripture is repreſented as a ſpecial gift, and bleſſing of God; beſtowed in recompence of piety and vertue; and preferred before other moſt conſiderable gifts and bleſſings, concerning our external ſtate; for, *By humility* (ſaith the *Wiſe-man*) *and the fear of the Lord, are riches and honour*; both are the rewards of piety; but comparing them, *A good name* (ſaith he) *is rather to be choſen than great riches*; It cannot therefore be a contemptible thing, nor ought it to be neglected by us; for none of God's gifts, no reward which he propoſeth, ought to be ſlighted.

Prov. 22. 4. (Pſ. 112. 9.)

Prov. 22. 1.

Reaſon and experience alſo do concur in ſhewing that a good repute is a valuable thing, not only as a fair ornament of our perſons, and a commodious inſtrument of action toward our private welfare; as a guard of our ſafety and quiet, as ſerving to procure divers conveniences of life; but as very advantageous, very uſeful upon moral and ſpiritual accompts; qualifying us with greater eaſe and efficacy to ſerve God, and to do good; for indeed 'tis manifeſt, that without it we ſhall be uncapable of doing God or man any conſiderable ſervice.

Δι' εὐκονομίαν τινα. Anton. 4. §. 19.

Wherefore in duty and wiſdom we ſhould be careful of preſerving this jewel; the which we cannot otherwiſe do, than by obſerving this *Apoſtolical* rule, of *providing things honeſt in the ſight of all men*; for a good converſation is the only guard and convoy of a good name: How can men conceive good opinion of us, otherwiſe than from a view of worthy qualities and good deeds? They may charitably hope, but they cannot confidently judge well of us otherwiſe than upon good evidence: *Ye ſhall know them by their fruits*, (that is, by apparent works, falling under humane cogniſance) is the rule, whereby our Saviour teacheth us to diſtinguiſh of men, and to build a right opinion concerning them: Honour is the ſhadow, the inſeparable attendant of conſpicuous vertue.

Matt. 7. 16. 12. 33.

A good converſation will indeed command eſteem, and irreſiſtibly extort reſpect from all men.

Wiſe and good men heartily will approve it, and gladly will yield it due commendation; they cannot but honour it whenever they ſee it, as beſt ſuiting with their own judgment, and with their affection.

Rom. 14. 18.

Yea, it will procure reſpect even from the worſt men; for it is a miſtake to think, that bad men really do or can deſpiſe true goodneſs; in truth, however they may pretend or make a ſhew to ſlight and ſcorn it, however in words they may flout and revile it, yet in their hearts they cannot but admire and reverence it; although their will may be ſo perverted as to ſet them againſt it, yet their reaſon cannot be ſo deſtroyed (or natural light ſo quenched in them) as to diſapprove it; they do but vilely diſſemble, and belye their conſcience, when they make as if they did condemn, or contemn it: *As* (ſaith St. *Chryſoſtome*) *they who openly do flatter ill livers, do in their mind reprove them; ſo they who envy the workers of good, in their conſcience will admire and approve them*: At leaſt they will do thus in their ſober mind; when with any ſerious application they do reflect on things; when

Οἱ ἐν ἐκκλησίᾳ τῶν πεπόντες, καὶ τὸ συνειδὸς ὑμῶν δειμάσουσι, καὶ ἀποδέξονται· ὥσπερ οὖν οἱ φανερῶς κολακεύοντες τοὺς ἐν πονηρίᾳ ζῶντας, καὶ νοῦν διαβάλλουσι Chryſ. in Matt. 5. 16.

when the eye of their ſoul is any-wiſe cleared from the miſts of luſt and paſſion: It is not to be heeded what they ſay in a fluſter or ranting mood; when they are near out of their wits, and have their judgment ſtifled by ſenſual imaginations; but what they think, when their mind is ſomewhat compoſed, and natural light doth ſhine freely in it.

Indeed ſuch wretches really do moſt deſpiſe thoſe, who conſort and comply with them in ſinful follies: As they cannot in their hearts honour themſelves, ſo they cannot eſteem thoſe whom they find like unto them; eſpecially they deſpiſe thoſe whom they obſerve to be ſo baſe and ſilly, as againſt their own judgment and conſcience, to fear their diſpleaſure, or to regard their cenſure; looking upon them as vaſſals to their humour, and renegadoes from their own conſcience.

Moreover, a good converſation certainly will engage Almighty God to protect our reputation, and to confer honour upon us. For he as Governour of the World, the Patron of goodneſs, the Diſpenſer of proper rewards to all, is in a manner bound to encourage thoſe openly, who viſibly do own him and take his part, who promote his glory and intereſt, who pay him due ſervice and obedience; who in regard to his authority, do faithfully purſue that which is right and good; He ſurely will ſee fit to repay ſuch in the ſame kind, by openly acknowledging, countenancing, and honouring them; Accordingly he hath tied himſelf to do ſo by his expreſs word and promiſe; for, *Them*, ſaith he, *that honour me, I will honour; and they that deſpiſe me, ſhall be lightly eſteemed*; he ſaid it in reference to old *Eli*, who had neglected the duty of *reſtraining his ſons* from ſin; which is a caſe very much of kin to all neglect of exemplary piety. And, *Whoſoever*, ſaith our Lord, *ſhall confeſs me before men, him ſhall the Son of man alſo confeſs before the Angels of God; but he that denieth me before men, ſhall be denied before the Angels of God*; the which (one moſt comfortable, the other moſt terrible) ſentences are to be underſtood, He that confeſſeth our Lord not meerly by verbal profeſſion, (for divers ſuch who *ſay, Lord, Lord*, he will not ſo much as *know* at the final judgment) but in real practice; He that denieth him, not only by renouncing him with the tongue, but by diſobeying him in ſcandalous converſation, by working iniquity, by the Apoſtaſie of bad manners.

1 Sam. 2. 30.

Luke 12. 8.

Matt. 7. 22, 23.

VI. Laſtly, The publick diſcharge of a good conſcience will yield manifold advantages, and great benefits to our ſelves; not only as good (and thence needful to our ſalvation, and our comfort) but as publick; ſome of which I ſhall touch.

Such a practice will much ſecure and ſtrengthen us in goodneſs; for he that hath the heart, with reſolution and conſtancy, to doe well, notwithſtanding any worldly diſcouragement, although he thereby doth croſs the humour of the world, and incurreth the diſpleaſure, envy, hatred, cenſure, and obloquy of men, he thus having exalted his vertue above the favour and fear of the world, hath ſet it in a ſafe place, hath rendred it impregnable.

The conſideration of having obtained ſo happy, and ſo worthy a victory over the moſt dangerous temptations, (the victory of faith over the world) will be very comfortable; And the ſufferings which (from the diſfavour, enmity, and oppoſition of men) do attend ſuch a practice, being a kind of martyrdom, will yield all the joys and comforts (together with the hopes and rewards) of an heroical patience.

1 John

It will afford great ſatisfaction of mind, to reflect on the conſequences of ſuch a practice; and to conſider, that our reſolution hath engaged or confirmed others in goodneſs, hath preſerved them from ſin, hath withdrawn them from bad courſes, and ſaved them from perdition; that we have been inſtrumental to the ſalvation and happineſs of any ſoul; that beſide our own ſins (which are a burthen too heavy for any man well to bear) we have not the ſins of others to accompt for, and ſhall not be loaded with the guilt of thoſe, whom our neglect of duty, our compliance with ſin, our ſtupid coldneſs and indifference in regard to ſpiritual affairs, our diſſimulation or connivence at the ſcandalous violation of God's honour, and tranſgreſſion of his laws, might have encouraged in ſin; that we are not liable to that reproof in the Prophet, *Ye have ſtrengthned the hands of the wicked, that he ſhould not return from his wicked way.* Ezek. 13. 22.

We ſhall highly oblige thoſe, whom by our good endeavour or example we ſhall convert to righteouſneſs, or reclaim from iniquity, or ſhall anywiſe ſtop in their carriere to ruine; who when they ſhall recover from their errour, and ſoberly reflect on their caſe, (when they ſhall ἀνανήψειν, become again ſober, getting out as it were of their drunken fit) will heartily thank us, will bleſs us, will pray for us, as having laid on them a very great obligation, and done them the greateſt kindneſs that could be; ſo that they will be ready to ſay to us, as *David* did to *Abigail*, *Bleſſed be the Lord God of Iſrael, who ſent thee this day to meet me; and bleſſed be thy advice; and bleſſed be thou, which haſt kept me this day from ſhedding of blood:* This will be the conſequence of plain dealing in ſuch caſes, and that will be fulfilled, which the *Wiſe-man* ſaith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards ſhall find more favour, than he that flattereth with the tongue.* 2 Tim. 2. 26. 1 Sam. 25. 32. Prov. 28. 23. 27. 6. 19. 25.

We thereby ſhall eſcape the ſore complaints, and fell curſes of thoſe, whom our naughty or careleſs demeanour hath involved in ſinful practice; for when their conſcience is awakened into a ſenſe of their guilt, when they feel the ſtings of remorſe, when they perceive the extreme damage and woe which they have incurred, then will they diſcharge their reſentments of heart againſt thoſe, who have any-wiſe been acceſſory to their fall into ſuch a condition; then in their bitterneſs of ſoul, in the agony of their ſorrow and perplexity, they will be apt to exclaim, Curſed be the day that I knew ſuch an one, or that I did converſe with him, who did betray me into this plight, who did inveagle me into temptation, who did not pluck me back from that ſinful practice, by which I now ſo deeply ſuffer; Curſed be his baſe cowardice, his fond modeſty, his affected wiſdom, his treacherous negligence, his unconſcionable indifference, his impious want of zeal for God's honour, and charity for my ſoul, which did keep him from checking me in my bad courſes, and reclaiming me to my duty by wholeſom reproof, by ſeaſonable advice, by exemplary practice before me: It will ſurely be a great comfort to us, that we have not given occaſion for ſuch complaints; but in proportion may ſay with St. *Paul, I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have not ſhunned to declare unto you all the counſel of God.* Acts 20. 26. Ezek. 7. 17. 33. 7.

It is alſo no ſmall advantage to us, that by a good converſation we ſhall procure the particular friendſhip and affection of good men; for it is that, which diſcovereth good men to one another, which kindleth their affection toward each other, which draweth them together, and breedeth a familiarity between them, and knitteth their hearts together in a holy love; from whence they come to enjoy the faithful advice, the kind aſſiſtance, the ſeaſonable conſolations, and the hearty prayers each of other; the

which

which great benefits are loſt by concealment of our ſelves, and reſervedneſs in doing good; for how can any man know him to deſerve love, whoſe goodneſs is not diſcernible?

Such conſiderations may induce all perſons, of every rank and condition, to obſerve this Apoſtolical Precept, ſo far as their capacities do reach. I ſhall only adjoin, that it eſpecially doth concern perſons of quality, in proportion to their eminency in dignity, power, authority, reputation, or any peculiar advantage, whereby the beneficial efficacy of good converſation is encreaſed.

Such perſons are like *a city ſeated on a mountain, which cannot be hid*; Mat. 5. 15. 14 the height of their ſtation, and luſtre of their quality, do expoſe them to the obſervation of all; and their authority doth recommend their practice to the imitation of obſervers.

Their example cannot fail of having a mighty influence; its light doth guide men, its weight doth ſway them; it doth ſeem to warrant and authorize practice; inferiours would be afraid or aſhamed to diſcoſt from it.

They have not the temptations, which other men have, to comply with ſin out of fear, out of complaiſance, out of deſign; they being to lead and give law, not to follow or receive it; they being the firſt movers in converſation; the faſhion being regulated by them, or indeed being meerly a conformity to their deportment.

They ſhould by their innocence qualifie themſelves to reprove others with authority and courage. *Conſt. Apoſt.* 2. 17.

They in gratitude to God, who hath beſtowed on them ſuch advantages, are obliged to employ them for his ſervice.

They particularly were deſigned and endowed with thoſe advantages, that by them they might countenance, might encourage, might reward, might by all means promote goodneſs in the world. Rom. 13. 3---6. 1 Pet. 2. 14.

They accordingly are reſponſible for the influence their converſation hath; ſo that in the final accompt moſt actions of men will lie at their door, ſo that they ſhall reſpectively be either highly rewarded for the vertues and good works, or ſeverely puniſhed for the vices and ſins of mankind: The which moſt weighty conſideration I leave by God's grace to be ſeriouſly applied by them, who are concerned therein.

SER-

SERMON XXXIV.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

2 COR. VIII. 21.

Providing for honeſt things not only in the ſight of the Lord, but in the ſight of Men.

IF we obſerve the world, we may eaſily therein diſcern many perſons, who being inwardly well diſpoſed, (ſtanding right both in judgment and affection to goodneſs) are yet loth to appear very good, and hardly will own Chriſtian vertue, in the conſtant diſcharge of publick duties, or in ſtrict abſtinence from ſinful practices; but commonly (againſt the dictate of their reaſon, and ſenſe of their heart) neglect the one, and comply with the other: An odd ſort of hypocrites, or diſſemblers; who ſtudiouſly conceal their better part, and counterfeit themſelves worſe than they are; who adore God in their hearts, and addreſs devotions to him in their cloſets; but ſcarce will avow him in their viſible profeſſion and practice; who have a conſcience, but are ſhy of diſcloſing it, or letting it take air, and walk in open light; confining it as a criminal to cloſe reſtraint, or obſcure retirement; who gladly would be religious and ſtaunch, if there might be no notice taken of it, but take care of being remarkable (or as it were ſcandalous) for it; who think fit to compromiſe, and compound the buſineſs between God and the world, maintaining a neutrality, and correſpondence with both, ſo as privately to court the one, and publickly to cloſe with the other.

Such practice is flatly repugnant to that Rule, which otherwhere in precept, and here by his own example the holy *Apoſtle* doth recommend to us; directing us not only *before God* (that is, in our heart, and in our ſecret retirements, which God alone doth behold) but alſo *before men*, that is, in our external and viſible converſation carefully to perform things good and laudable, eſchewing whatever is bad or culpable.

Rom. 12. 17. Ἐνώπιον Κυρίου.

Our obligation to which Rule hath already been confirmed by divers other Precepts in *holy Scripture*, concurring in the injunction of it; and its obſervance urged by various poſitive conſiderations of great weight and force, (declaring how neceſſary it is for promoting God's honour and glory, how requiſite it is for maintaining the dignity of our profeſſion, and advancing the intereſts of goodneſs, how charity and juſtice toward our neighbour do exact it from us, how conducible it is to the publick benefit of mankind, and how advantageous in many reſpects to our own particular welfare) and not inſiſting farther upon thoſe conſiderations, I ſhall now only inforce it, by ſcanning the common principles, grounds, motives, pretences, or excuſes of the contrary practice, which I before touched, of openly

openly deſerting vertue, or declining the performance of duty before men; and by ſhewing how very fooliſh and vain, how very naughty and baſe, how very miſchievous, dangerous, and pernicious they are.

They chiefly are thoſe, which I ſhall immediately touch and reflect upon.

1. Men commonly in their viſible converſation do neglect their duty, or comply with ſin out of modeſty; becauſe they are aſhamed of doing that, which may expoſe them to ſome diſgrace or cenſure; becauſe vertuous practice may raiſe diſtaſte in the company, and provoke the ſcorn of thoſe with whom they converſe; becauſe ſuch a point of duty is out of requeſt, and ſlighted in the world; they are *afraid of mens faces*; their tender forehead cannot ſuſtain deriſion, or endure to be flouted for being out of the mode, and wearing an uncouth garb of conſcience. Jer. 1. 8.

But this plainly is a perverſe, and unmanly modeſty; a fond, a vile, a ſhameful ſhame: Fie on it; ſhould any man be aſhamed of that, which is his chief beauty, his beſt ornament, his ſole dignity and glory? Should a man be aſhamed of being evidently wiſe in his conduct, of following his reaſon, of conſulting his true intereſt, of purſuing his own certain welfare and felicity? Is it fit that any man ſhould be aſhamed of paying due acknowledgment, of yielding due reverence, of rendring due gratitude, of performing due ſervice to his Creatour, Sovereign Lord, and great Benefactor; to whom he oweth all, upon whoſe will he entirely dependeth, at whoſe abſolute diſpoſal he is? Surely theſe are no ſhameful things, but ſuch rather, wherein we ought to have the greateſt confidence, which we ought to perform with the greateſt aſſurance.

If we are baſhful, let us be ſo in regard to things which are truly ſhameful; let us be aſhamed of ſin, that is, of our moſt real deformity, our turpitude, our diſgrace, our wretchedneſs; the which indeed is the onely diſhonourable and deſpicable thing; the which did firſt produce ſhame, and did introduce it into the world, (for while innocence did abide, there was no ſhame) and the which will ever carry ſhame along as its inſeparable adherent: It would indeed become us to bluſh at our horrible unworthineſs, and deteſtable ingratitude toward our bountiful Lord, and moſt gracious Redeemer; it were proper for us to be confounded at our extreme folly, and foul treachery toward our ſelves, in betraying our ſouls to guilt, to regret, to wrath and puniſhment: Who ſhould be aſhamed, who not, the holy *Pſalmiſt* hath well taught us, *Let none that wait on thee be aſhamed; let them be aſhamed which tranſgreſs without cauſe*; and, *Let the proud be aſhamed* —— but, *Let my heart be ſound in thy ſtatutes, that I be not aſhamed.* Gen. 3. 2. 2. 25. Pſal. 25. 3. Pſal. 119. 78. 80.

It is true modeſty to be aſhamed of doing unworthy and unhandſom things; but to be aſhamed of doing what reaſon and duty require, is pitiful weakneſs of mind.

We do not owe ſo much regard to vicious and vain perſons, as to be daſhed out of countenance by them; we ſhould rather by our maſculine reſolution and upright confidence put them to confuſion. Tit. 2. 8.

If ſhame be an evil which we would avoid, the onely remedy thereof we may learn from thoſe words of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Then ſhall I not be aſhamed, when I have reſpect to thy teſtimonies*: But it is a fond courſe to ſhun diſgrace by doing that which alone deſerveth it. Pſal. 119. 6.

Is it not alſo a wild thing, to ſeem modeſt toward men, while we are really ſo bold with God, as preſumptuouſly to offend him, to affront him, *Quid quæſo rationis habet verecundari ad diem hominis, & vultum Dei non vereri?* Bern. *Ep.* 109.

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Iſa. 65. 3. Jer. 6. 17. 8. 12. *to provoke him* (as thoſe in the Prophet did) *to his face?* For ſo indeed every ſinner doth; and as it is the greateſt inadvertency not to conſider God always preſent with us, ſo it is the height of impudence to ſin in his preſence, or to prefer a regard to men before the reverence due to his eye.

Is it not alſo great folly, for declining a little preſent tranſient diſgrace, to do that, whereof afterward we ſhall be grievouſly and perpetually Sap. 4. 20. aſhamed; which we ſhall never remember or reflect upon without confuſion, (according to that of the *Apoſtle*, *What fruit had ye of thoſe* (Jer. 22. 22.) *things, whereof ye are now aſhamed?*) the conſequence whereof is our Rom. 6. 21. ſtanding obnoxious to *ſhame and everlaſting contempt.* Dan. 12. 2.

If we be thus aſhamed of God, and of our duty to him, may he not juſtly in recompence be aſhamed of us, and diſdain to own us in favour Luke 9. 26. and mercy? He will ſurely, he hath often declared ſo; *Whoſoever*, ſaith 12. 9. our *Lord*, *ſhall be aſhamed of me, and of my words, of him ſhall the Son of* 2 Tim. 2. 12. *man be aſhamed, when he ſhall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy Angels.*

2. Another principle, near of kin to the former, diſpoſing men to commit ſin, or wave duty in their open converſation, is, fear of loſing the good-will, or getting the ill-will of men.

It muſt often happen, that whoever will be vertuous, and ſtick to his duty, will forfeit the favour of men, will incur their diſpleaſure, will provoke their indignation; by croſſing their humour and conceit, by implicitly ſlighting their opinion, and condemning their practice; this is the portion and fate of ſtrict and ſtiff piety; the friendſhip of God and the James 4. 4. world are not well conſiſtent; and St. *Paul's* rule may be converted, *If I* 1 John 2. 15. *ſhould pleaſe men, I ſhould not be the ſervant of Chriſt:* Hence men pri- Gal. 1. 10. zing the favour of men, with the advantages of it, and dreading their anger, hatred, diſdain, with the miſchiefs conſequent on them, are ſcared from their duty.

But in truth this is a ſilly, a baſe, a ſorry fear, arguing wretched meanneſs of ſpirit, and pitiful cowardice. For,

Doſt thou, fond wretch, fear to loſe the favour of man, whoſe favour doth avail nothing to thy main intereſts, and cannot any-wiſe conſiderably benefit thee, (for in no reſpect doſt thou depend on his will and providence) but doſt not fear being deprived of God's favour, upon which all thy good hangeth, wherein thy felicity conſiſteth, without which thou art uncapable of any proſperity, of any ſecurity, of any joy or comfort?

Doſt thou fear the diſpleaſure of man, of poor impotent man, a ſorry Job 25. 6. frail *worm*, whoſe *breath is in his noſtrils*, (ready to fly away in every Iſa. 2. 22. moment) whoſe anger can do thee no real harm, whoſe power can hard- Matt. 10. 28. ly touch thee, can no-wiſe reach thy ſoul, or its concerns; whilſt thou dreadeſt not to offend the Eternal Almighty God, under whoſe feet thou lieſt, ready to be cruſhed into nothing, or ſtampt down into hell at his pleaſure?

Dareſt thou not, O heartleſs daſtard, to do that, which is in thy power eaſily to do, which thou art infinitely concerned to do, which upon ſo many accompts thou art obliged to do, out of fear to croſs thine equal, yea far thine inferiour in this caſe; for he that ſtandeth to his duty, as he hath the better cauſe, ſo he hath the greater force, and aſſuredly will defeat all his oppoſers?

Art thou, O puſillanimous ſlave, in regard to any Creature, thy fellow-ſubject, and ſervant, afraid of expreſſing thy loyalty to thy Sovereign Lord,

thy

thy love to infinite Goodneſs, thy Gratitude to thy beſt Friend and kindeſt Benefactor, thy Reverence toward the Divine Majeſty, thine awe of uncontrollable Power: Is this a reaſonable, an excuſable, a tolerable fear?

Surely, if ever to be driven out of Heart is reproachful, if ever to be cowed doth argue Infirmity and Abjectneſs of Spirit, it is in this Caſe; when we have all the Reaſon and Obligation in the World to be moſt courageous and reſolute, to fear no Colours, to make our Party good againſt all oppoſition; when we have the greateſt neceſſity to engage us, and the greateſt advantage to encourage us to hold out ſtoutly; the greateſt neceſſity, ſeeing all that we have, our Life, our Salvation, our eternal Weal doth lie at ſtake; *For it is not a vain thing for you, becauſe it is your Life:* The greateſt advantage, for that if we will, we are invincible, and aſſured of an eaſie Victory, ſeeing we take part with God, and have Omnipotency on our ſide; ſo that we can ſay with *David*, *The Lord is my helper, I will not fear what man can do unto me? The Lord is my light, and my ſalvation, whom ſhall I fear? the Lord is the ſtrength of my life, of whom ſhall I be afraid?*

Deut. 32. 47.

Pſal. 118. 6. Heb. 13. 6. Pſal. 56. 11. 11. 4. 27. 1, 3. 46. 2. Jer. 1. 8. 20. 11. Iſa. 41. 10. Gen. 26. 24. 15. 1. Numb. 14. 9. Deut. 31. 8. 2 Chron. 20. 17.

There is not indeed to thoſe who are under God's ſpecial Protection, and confide in him, any thing in nature, really formidable or terrible; it is his peculiar Attribute to be the Mighty and Terrible One: He recommendeth himſelf to us as *our fear*, that is, the ſpecial Object of it; we therefore do ſacrilegiouſly wrong him, by fearing any other thing in ſuch Caſes of Competition, and when we are concerned to fear him; whence then we are prohibited to fear the greateſt Powers in the World; *Fear not them which kill the Body* (if God permit them) *but are not able to kill the Soul; but rather fear him who is able to deſtroy both Body and Soul in Hell.*

Jer. 5. 22. 10. 7. Rev. 15. 4. Deut. 7. 21. 10. 17. 28. 58. Pſ. 76. 7, 11. 99. 3. Iſa. 8. 12. 41. 10. Matt. 10. 26, 28.

Who (ſaith St. *Peter*) *is he that will* (or that can) *harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* ——wherefore *be not afraid of their Terror, neither be troubled; but ſanctifie the Lord God in your Hearts* (by a pure Confidence in him.)

Τίς ὁ κακώσων; 1 Pet. 3. 13, 14.

In ſuch caſes, we ſhould be ready to accoſt the greateſt Potentates, in Terms like thoſe of the three brave Youths in *Daniel*: *O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to anſwer thee in this matter: If it be ſo, our God whom we ſerve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery Furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine Hand, O King; But* (however) *if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not ſerve thy Gods, nor worſhip thy golden Image which thou haſt ſet up:* And if in imitation of ſo worthy an Example, we ſhould defie the Wrath of the greateſt Kings, demanding any ſinful Compliance from us, how poor a thing is it to fear the Diſpleaſure of ſorry Companions enticing us to the like? how much more ſhould we defie all the crew of hectorly Ruffians, and huffing Bragadochios?

Dan. 3. 16.

While wicked profane Men are ſo bold and ſtout in impugning Goodneſs; we ſhould be couragious in defence of it. *The Righteous is as bold as a Lion.*

Prov. 28. 1.

The Fear of God (the which is moſt reaſonable and prudent, and conſiſtent with the braveſt Courage) ſhould exclude the Fear of Men; the which is no leſs vain than baſe; the which indeed doth involve the wildeſt Boldneſs, and moſt raſh Fool-hardineſs in the World, puſhing us into the moſt deſperate Adventures that can be; while by ſinning we incenſe the moſt dreadful Anger, we invade the moſt formidable Power, we incur the moſt horrible Dangers, we run headlong into the Jaws of Death and Hell: ſuch a mixture there is of baſe Cowardice, and mad audacity in Practices ſſuing from that Principle.

3. Men commonly do neglect the open Practice of Vertue, out of care to decline Envy; for ill Men ſeeing others endowed with worthy Qualities, which they want; performing good Deeds, from which their Infirmity or Pravity doth hold them averſe; entitled to Commendations, Rewards and Advantages to which they cannot aſpire, and whereby they ſeem to eclipſe their Credit, or impair their Intereſt, or expoſe their Unworthineſs; cannot look on ſuch Perſons without an *evil Eye*, or without conceiving in their Heart malevolent Grudges at them, which they will be apt to vent in ſpiteful Practices, endeavouring to ſupplant or blaſt their Vertue; Men are apt to envy the Favourites of God, as they are of Princes. Nor indeed doth any thing more powerfully incite Men to hurt their Neighbour, than ſuch Malignity, being edged by that anguiſh, which their ſore Eye doth feel; to ſhun which Envy, and its miſchievous Effects Men commonly are tempted to withdraw its Cauſe, their own Vertue, that its bright Luſtre may not wound the Sight of ſuch Neighbours.

Invidiam placare paras virtute relictâ? Contemnere miſer. Hor. *Serm.* 2. 3.

But thus *to appeaſe Envy by deſerting Vertue* is very fond and abſurd. For,

Shall I caſt away my beſt Goods, becauſe another would not have me to enjoy them? ſhall I be terribly ſick, to cure another's diſtempered Fancy? ſhall I render my ſelf miſerable, becauſe another doth not like to ſee me happy? becauſe he doth want Charity, muſt I forego Innocence? becauſe he doth not love me, ſhall I hate my ſelf? to pleaſe him merely, without bettering him, to eaſe him of a wholſome Smart, ſhall I diſpleaſe God, and abuſe my ſelf?

Would he not be a ſilly Man, who being envied becauſe he ſeemeth a Favourite of his Prince, would to gratifie ſuch Enviers, offend his Prince? No ſurely, this is too fond a regard unto any Man's baſe Diſpoſition, this is too great a Gratification of an Enemy's Pleaſure, this is too ſlaviſh a Depreſſion of a Man's ſelf; rather let him fret, let him torment himſelf, let him inflict a juſt Puniſhment on his own uncharitable and unworthy Humour; whereby perhaps he may be reduced to diſcern his Folly, and correct his Fault.

Would any Man upon ſuch Terms part with his Eſtate, mar his Buſineſs, ſlur his Reputation, or purpoſely play the fool? would any Man become poor, infamous or contemptible, becauſe to be rich, to be proſperous, to be honourable, to be wiſe are invidious things? Much leſs ſhould a Man upon that account neglect his Duty, thereby betraying his Soul, diſcarding the Love and Favour of God, deſtroying the ſatisfaction of his Conſcience, and forfeiting his hopes of Felicity: Damages and Miſchiefs comparable to which all the Envy and ſpight in the World can no-wiſe bring upon him.

If we would avoid Envy, we ſhould not do it by incurring a worſe Evil, and rendring our ſelves contemptible for Unworthineſs; we ſhould rather damp it by Modeſty, Humility, an inoffenſive Tenour of Life.

We ſhould ſurmount it, and quaſh it by conſtant blameleſs Converſation. The which will kill the Envious, or the Envy.

An unqueſtionable Vertue will ſtop the Mouth of Detraction, and drive Envy into Corners, not daring to ſhew it ſelf againſt it.

4. A common Principle, from whence neglect of Duty, and commiſſion of Sin in viſible Converſation doth ſpring, is a fear of Infamy, and reproach, whereto the ſtrict practice of Vertue is liable: Men not enduring to bear the odious Cenſures, the foul Imputations, the ugly Characters, the ſcurvy Epithets, and opprobrious Names, wherewith the bold and ſpiteful Enemies of Goodneſs are wont to aſperſe and brand its faithful Adherents.

To

To be deemed weak, credulous, ſuperſtitious, formal, timorous, nice, ſqueamiſh, ſcrupulous, ſtraitlaced, conceited, affected, croſs, ſurly, moroſe, froward, ſtubborn, pertinacious, proud.

To be termed a ſoppiſh *Simpleton*, doting on Speculations, and enſlaved to Rules; a fantaſtical *Humoriſt*, a preciſe *Bigot*, a rigid *Stoick*, a demure *Sneaksby*, a clowniſh *Singulariſt*, a *Non-conformiſt* to ordinary uſage, a ſtiff *Opiniatre*; a Man of a pitiful narrow Spirit, pent up within a ſmall compaſs, confined by Principles, fettered by Laws, living in Bondage to his Conſcience.

Theſe and the like hard Cenſures, foul Reproaches, and abuſive Scoffs, even all which Invention quickned by Envy, Choler, rancorous Spite, and aided by the malicious Fiend, can ſuggeſt, wherewith the profane Crew of Men uſually do conſpire to daub and perſecute thoſe who refuſe to comply with their unconſcionable Extravagancies and Impieties, Men can hardly brook, and thence to ſhun them yield up all, croſs their Reaſon, proſtitute their Conſcience, violate all their Obligations; chuſing rather to be juſtly reproachable for bad Actions, than unjuſtly reproached for good. Pſal. 57. 3, 4.

But with ſuch a Perſon, who is thus diverted from his Duty, let me expoſtulate:

Doſt thou well to regard what unbribled Tongues out of a wanton Mind and corrupt Heart do ſputter and foam? Shall thy Practice depend on their looſe Wit or licentious Talk, ſo that thou muſt do nothing which they ſhall not be in humour to commend? *Nihil eſt turpius quàm ſapientis vitam ab inſipientium ſermone pendere.* Cic. *de Fin.* 2. (*p.* 147.)

Wilt thou renounce all Wiſdom, abandon thy beſt Intereſt, forfeit thy Happineſs to decline a Squib, or a Flurt? *Quid de te alii loquantur, ipſi videant.* Scipio *apud* Cic. *in Somn.*

Would not he be a ſtark Fool who would be railed or jeered out of his Way in Travel, out of his Buſineſs in Traffick, out of his Eſtate, or real Intereſt upon any occaſion; and is he not evidently far more ſuch, who will be flouted out of his Duty, out of his Salvation, out of any ſpiritual Advantage? was not the Practice of *David* more adviſeable, who ſaid, *The proud have had me in derision, yet have I not declined from thy Law?* Pſal. 119. 51.

David, a great King, a Man of ſingular Courage and Gallantry, a glorious Hero; yet even him did bold and baſe People deride. Whom will not profane Impudence aſſail? whom will not they attempt to deter from Goodneſs?

Art thou ſo blind, as not to diſcern whence it cometh, that they diſparage Vertue? that is, from their extreme Vanity and Raſhneſs, which move them to ſpeak any thing without conſideration or diſcretion; from their great naughtineſs and weakneſs, their being bewitched with Pleaſure, and beſotted with Vice, which engageth them to take part ſo furiouſly with them; from their malignity, and ſpite againſt that which croſſeth their fond Humours and exorbitant Luſts; from their Pride which ſwelleth againſt thoſe, who by contrary Practice diſſent from their Folly, and reprove their Wickedneſs, and eclipſe their Repute; from their Envy, which repineth at thy appearing better and happier than themſelves thy excelling them in true Worth, thy enjoying that ſatisfaction which they want, thy attaining that bleſſed Hope, to which they cannot aſpire; and ſeeing that their Reproaches do iſſue from ſuch Principles, wilt thou regard them?

Are their Words any Slander, who being profeſſed Enemies of Goodneſs, do naturally impugn it by the readieſt Arms they have, a virulent and petulent Tongue? Οὐδεὶς φαῦλος τὸς σπουδαίς ἐπαινέτης ἱκανῶς. Iſid. Peluſ. *Ep.* 2. 220.

(Οὐ γὰρ λοιδεῖν ἀειστος, ἀλλ' εὖ λέγειν. Τὸ λοιδεῖν ἡδὺν πρὸς ἡμᾶς, ὥσπερ ἡδὺ ὄναρ ἀλλότριον. Greg. Naz. *Orat.*—*de fede Conſt.*) Ant. 8. §. 1.——

Can their dirty Language, beſpattering good things, after their nature, or render that diſhonourable and odious, which in it ſelf is moſt excellent, moſt amiable, moſt venerable, moſt uſeful and profitable?

Malis diſplicere laudari eſt. Sen. *Excerpt.* (p. 690.)

Is it not indeed a commendation of Vertue, which ſhould encourage us the more to like it, to honour it, to embrace it, that vain, wild, diſſolute Perſons, diſtempered in their Minds, notoriouſly void of Diſcretion, of Integrity, of Sobriety, do pretend to vilifie and diſgrace it?

Non poteſt bonus non eſſe, qui bonis placet; nec minùs validum argumentum mihi videtur, quod bonus ſit ſi malis diſpliceat. Bern *Ep.* 248.

[a] Ἄφρονες. 1 Pet. 2. 15.
[b] Ἄτοποι. 2 Theſſ. 3. 2.

As their Commendation is of no worth, ſo their Reproach is leſs conſiderable.

Ant. 3. §. 4.

Quanta dementia eſt vereri nè infamerîs ab infamibus? Sen. *Ep.* 91.

Doſt thou not diſparage thine own Judgment by heeding theirs, or ſuffering it to be of any conſideration with thee in the conduct of thy Life?

Doſt thou take them to be ſerious in this, or to ſpeak in good earneſt, when they reproach Vertue, and ſlight the plain Dictates of Reaſon, the clear Light of natural Conſcience, the expreſs commands of God, the apparent Concerns of their own Soul? they who are ſober in nothing, how can they be ſerious in this? why ſhould they ſeem judicious in ſuch a caſe?

Moverer ſi judicio hoc facerunt, nunc morbo faciunt. Sen. *Exc.*

Ego cùm à noſtro Catone laudabar, vel reprehendi me à cæteris facilè patiebar. Cic. *de Orat.*

Is it not evidently better to be ſlandered by giddy, lewd, ungodly Wretches, who mind not what they ſay, nor care what they do, whoſe Judgment therefore can ſignifie nothing; than really to deſerve reproof; and thence certainly to incur blame from all ſtaid, ſober, conſiderate, wiſe and vertuous Perſons, who judge adviſedly and uprightly about things?

Is it not better to undergo their ſevereſt Cenſure, and moſt biting Scoffs, than to be condemned of Folly and Baſeneſs by thy own Mind, and reviled by thy own Conſcience?

Is it not infinitely better to be unjuſtly defamed by Men, than to be diſreputed by God, expoſed to moſt diſgraceful condemnation at his Bar, and thrown into that ſtate of everlaſting Ignominy?

Dan. 12. 2.

Tu ergò plus opprobria times quàm tormenta? &c. Bern. *Ep.* 108.
Matt. 25. 41.

Is it not more tolerable to hear ſuch Language, than having violated our Duty, and broken God's Commands one Day to hear that diſmal Sentence, *Go ye curſed into everlaſting Fire?*

Æquiſſimo animo ad honeſtum conſilium per mediam infamiam tendam, &c. Sen. *Ep.* 81.

It is a glorious Infamy, which one ſuſtaineth for the ſake of Righteouſneſs.

Non vis eſſe juſtus ſine gloria? at mehercule ſæpe juſtus eſſe debebis cum infamia. Sen. *Ep.* 113.

Ant. 5. §. 3. 11. 16. 9. 18.

Even *Heathens*, with whom Glory was the *moſt ample Reward*, and ſweeteſt *fruit of Vertue*, yet do injoin that we ſhould prefer Conſcience before it; and that we ſhould rather gladly embrace Infamy, than forſake Vertue.

It is the Lot of all good Men (for probation, exerciſe and improvement of their Vertue to be perſecuted) at leaſt in ſome times, as when St. *Paul* ſaid, *All that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus muſt ſuffer Perſecution*; And ſurely he that ſincerely loveth God, would even deſire occaſion of ſuffering ſomewhat for his ſake, in teſtimony of his faithful Affection: But what more tolerable Perſecution, what more eaſie Martyrdom could we wiſh, than to be laſhed by a ſcurrilous Tongue; or rather to obſerve the Ears of others to be infeſted with the Buzzes of Detraction? what is this but a little Air ſtirred in vain, but a mere ſound or blaſt of Wind, importing nought to him that doth not mind it, or will not be affected with it?

2 Tim. 3. 12.
Acts 14. 22.
Heb. 12. 6—

the

the which ſurely to a ſound Heart and pure Conſcience cannot be very ſenſible; a Man muſt have a froward Temper, or a tender Ear, whom a little ſuch creaking, or grating noiſe doth much vex; all its force is broken, all its miſchief is remedied eaſily, by neglect or contempt. *Quid ſtultius homine verba metuente?* Sen. Ep. 91.

It is in a manner more commendable to ſuffer for being good, than for being a Chriſtian; a truer Martyrdom to ſuffer for the Temper than for the Name of *Chriſt*; for doing well, than for profeſſing Truth.

Who indeed had ever been good, in any notable degree, if ſome had minded the Opinion, or the Diſcourſe of ſuch Men, whom in all times the great Adverſary of Goodneſs and Maligner of our Welfare hath excited to deter Men from Vertue by thus abuſing it? hath it not ever been the Portion of good Men to ſuffer in this kind? Jer. 20. 7.——— Pſal. 44. 16, 17. 57. 3, 4. 119. 51. 69. 10. Job 12. 4. Sap. 5. 3.

Was not * our *Lord* himſelf, were not his *Apoſtles*, were not all the *Prophets* of old, were not all the *Heroes* in Goodneſs of all times thus purſued with Obloquy? what vile Imputation, what Name of Reproach can be deviſed, wherewith the ſpiteful World did not beſmear them? Ἐμπαιγμῶν καὶ μαστίγων πεῖραν ἔλαβον. Heb. 11. 36. * Heb. 12. 3. Ἀναλογίσασθε——— 2 Cor. 6. 8. Διὰ δόξης, καὶ ἀτιμίας.

Yet were they much diſturbed at it, were they any-wiſe diſcouraged or ſcared by it from their Duty? No; they rather did find Satisfaction and delight in it; it rather did heighten their mind and ſtrengthen their reſolution; it begat a gallant, and triumphant diſdain of ſuch Injuries, enlivening and animating them in their carier of Duty; they did embrace Reproach for Righteouſneſs not only with content, as their proper Lot and Portion from God's Providence, but with Joy, as their ſpecial Glory and Happineſs, from divine Goodneſs; feeling it moſt true, what our *Maſter* taught, *Bleſſed are ye, when Men ſhall revile you, and ſhall ſay all manner of Evil againſt you falſly for my ſake: Bleſſed are ye when Men—ſhall reproach you, and caſt out your name as evil for the Son of Man's ſake*; and according to St. *Peter*, εἰ ὀνειδίζεσθε, *if ye be reproached for the Name of Chriſt* (that is, for conſcionably diſcharging any Chriſtian Duty) *happy are ye, for the Spirit of Glory and of God reſteth on you; on their part he is evil ſpoken of, but on your part he is glorified.* Ὀνειδισμοῖς τε θλίψεσι θεατριζόμενοι— Heb. 10. 33. Acts 5. 41. 2 Cor. 12. 10. Εὐδοκῶ ἐν ὕβρεσιν—— Matt. 5. 11. Luke 6. 22. 1 Pet. 4. 14.

In fine, it is all Reaſon, and it is the expreſs Command of God, that in ſuch Caſes we ſhould not regard the Cenſures, or the Reproaches of any Mortal: It is a part of Duty to deſpiſe Obloquy, to expoſe and loſe Reputation for God's ſake. For *Hearken* (ſaith he) *unto me ye that know Righteouſneſs, the people in whoſe Heart is my Law; fear ye not the Reproach of Men, neither be ye afraid of their Revilings; for the Moth ſhall eat them up like a Garment, and the Worm ſhall eat them like Wooll: but my Righteouſneſs ſhall be for ever, and my Salvation from Generation to Generation.* Iſa. 51. 7, 8.

5. Men commonly decline the publick practice of Duty out of Affectation thereby to be deemed more honeſt and ſincere, or to decline the Suſpicion of being hypocritical.

As this is the moſt obvious and uſual Calumny wherewith diſſolute People do charge good Men; ſo to Men of generous Diſpoſition it is of all Cenſures moſt poinant, as moſt croſſing their Temper according to which as they hate to be, ſo they can hardly endure to be counted or called Diſſemblers; whence often they chuſe rather to ſeem indifferent to Goodneſs, than zealouſly affected to it: they rather wave ſome Points of Duty, than for the performance of them expoſe themſelves to that Imputation.

But this proceeding is very unreaſonable. For,

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What can be more abſurd, than to be really and notoriouſly bad (as whoever omitteth his Duty is) to prevent a ſurmiſe of being ſuch? or to be truly worſe than we ſhould be, that we may not be deemed worſe than we ſeem?

How can we more gratifie the Enemy of our Salvation, than by approving our ſelves in truth to be what he would falſly challenge us to be, Mockers of God, and Traitors to our own Soul?

Is it not a vain thing to regard that kind of Cenſure, which it is impoſſible for any Man to eſcape, upon other Terms than of being very naughty? for wicked Men will never fail to load thoſe with this Charge who will
1 Pet. 4. 4. not comply with their Follies, and *run with them to the ſame exceſs of Riot*, or are any-wiſe better than themſelves; it is inevitable for a ſtaunch Man not to be ſtigmatized for a Hypocrite by them.

2 Cor. 1. 12. We have certainly more reaſon to be ſatisfied with the ſure Conſcience
1 John 3. 21. and Senſe of our own Integrity, than to be moved with the preſumptuous Aſſertions of any Wretch devoid of Juſtice or Charity: His Cenſure being plainly Injurious, and contrary to all Rules of Equity, which preſcribe that no Man ſhould judge of things unknown, or uncertain, is utterly deſpicable.

1 John 3. 20. The Teſtimony of God (*who is greater than our Hearts*) perfectly know-
1 Theſſ. 2. 4. ing our Sincerity, may abundantly ſupport us; it is a great wrong to
Gal. 1. 10. him for us to value the raſh Suſpicions of Men, when we are ſecure of his
Col. 3. 23. Knowledge, who *ſeeth all our Works*, and *trieth our Hearts*; who hath ſaid,
Eph. 6. 5. that *if we commit our way to him*, and *truſt in him*, he *will bring forth our*
1 Cor. 4. 4. 5
Pſal. 37. 4— *Righteouſneſs as the Light, and our Judgment as the Noon day.*

It is certainly better to be called Hypocrite by Men for doing our Duty, than to be treated as a Hypocrite by God for neglecting it; for all thoſe
Matt. 24. 51. who upon any account do violate God's Laws; ſhall *have their Portion with the Hypocrites*, in that diſconſolate place, *where is weeping and gnaſhing of Teeth.* And good reaſon; for indeed by thus avoiding Hypocriſie, we really do incur it; by ſeeking to preſerve an opinion of Sincerity, we forfeit the reality of it; by the practice of diſavowing the Fear of God; and Care of Goodneſs, we do conſtitute our ſelves certain Hypocrites, and Impoſtors; diſſembling our Thoughts, ſmothering our Conſcience, deluding our Neighbours with falſe Conceits of us, feigning that Indifference which we have not, pretending to act without regret or remorſe, which we cannot do; ſeeming otherwiſe than we are, ſignifying otherwiſe than we mean, doing otherwiſe than we judge fit, or like to do; that is, if we be not ſtark Infidels, or utterly void of Conſcience.

This is Hypocriſie turned the wrong ſide outward, diſguiſing a Man in a fouler Shape, and uglier Garb, than that which is natural and true.

And if we compare the two Hypocriſies, (that of pretending Conſcience, which we want, and this of denying Conſcience, which we have; that of ſeeming better than we are, this of ſeeming worſe than we may be) this in nature may well ſeem more vile, in tendency more dangerous, in effect more miſchievous than the other.

There is in both the ſame Falſhood, the ſame Prevarication, the like Contempt and Abuſe of God; but the Hypocrite of whom we ſpeak doth worſe things, more directly wrongful to God, more prejudicial to Goodneſs more harmful to the World.

The ſpecious Hypocrite counterfeiting Goodneſs, and *having a Form of Godlineſs, without the Power* and Reality *of it*, doth yield to God ſome part (the exteriour part) of his due Honour and Reſpect; but the ſneaking Hypocrite, diſowning Goodneſs, doth apparently deſert, ſlight and affront God;

God; the one ſerveth God with his Face, and his Voice, though *his Heart be far from him*; the other doth not ſo much as ſacrifice a carcaſs of Obedience to him; That may bring ſome Credit and Advantage to Goodneſs, ſtrengthen its Intereſt by his Vote and Countenance; this by not avowing it doth aſſuredly weaken its Reputation and Cauſe; that Hypocriſie, as ſuch is a private and ſingle Evil, whereby a Man doth indeed prejudice himſelf, but doth not injure his Neighbour, yea may edifie him by the appearing (which in this reſpect is the ſame with the real) Goodneſs of his Example; but this Hypocriſie is a general Miſchief, a ſcandalous Evil, a contagious Peſtilence, whereby a Man not only harmeth himſelf, but wrongeth many others, ſeducing them into Diſſoluteneſs, infecting the World with baſe Indifference to Good, and eaſineſs to comply with Sin.

It is indeed a ſad thing, that God and Goodneſs ſhould be deſerted upon this accompt; that moſt Men ſhould be ſo uncharitable, ſo unjuſt, ſo imprudent as to ſuſpect all good Men of Hypocriſie; as if it were incredible that any Man ſhould heartily love or fear God; (when it is rather ſtrange that any Man ſhould do otherwiſe) that any Man in good earneſt or otherwiſe than in Pretence and for ſiniſter Reſpects ſhould embrace Vertue (when it is marvellous, that a reaſonable Man ſhould decline it) that ſo many of themſelves inclinable to Goodneſs, ſhould be ſo weak as to be deterr'd from it by ſo vain an Apprehenſion; and that the Name of Hypocriſie ſhould drive away Piety; that it ſhould become deſirable, that Hypocrites might abound in the World, leſt Religion both in truth and ſhew ſhould be diſcarded.

In fine, we may otherwiſe ſuppreſs this odious Imputation, than by deſerting Goodneſs; we may demonſtrate our ſelves ſerious and ſincere by an inflexible adherence to it, in the continual Tenour of our Practice; and eſpecially in ſome inſtances of Duty, which are hardly conſiſtent with Hypocriſie, for no Man can hold long in a ſtrained Poſture; no Man will take much Pains, or Encounter great Difficulties, or ſuſtain grievous Hardſhips and Afflictions, croſs his Appetites, forego Gains, and Honours, for that which he doth not heartily like and love; he may counterfeit in Ceremonies and Formalities, but he will hardly feign Humility, Meekneſs, Patience, Contentedneſs, Temperance, at leaſt uniformly and conſtantly. Even the patient enduring this Cenſure will confute it, and wipe off the Aſperſion of Hypocriſie. Matt. 23. 25.

SER-

SERMON XXXV.

Provide things honeſt in the ſight of all Men.

2 COR. VIII. 21.

Providing for honeſt things not only in the ſight of the Lord, but in the ſight of Men.

6. ANother great Impediment of good Converſation before Men is a deſire of ſeeming courteous and civil; Men uſually conform to ſinful Practices, becauſe they would not be held Clowns, rude and diſtaſtful in Converſation; they would not give Offence to their Company, by claſhing with their Humour; by preferring their own Judgment, and ſeeming to be in their own Conceit wiſer and better than thoſe with whom they converſe; by provoking them to think they are held Fools or worſe by ſuch non-compliance.

This is an ordinary Snare to eaſie and ingenuous Natures; but the ground of it is very unreaſonable: For although in Matters of indifference, where Duty and Sin do not fall into conſideration, to be limber and ductile as can be (which is the Temper of the beſt Metal) to have no Humour of our own, or to reſign up all our Humour to the Will of our Company, to condeſcend unto, and comport with any thing; to raiſe no Faction or Debate, but preſently to yield to the ſwaying Vote; to *become all things to all men* in a ready Complaiſance, be Wiſdom and good Manners, doth argue good Nature, good Underſtanding, good Breeding; is a rightly gentile and obliging Quality:

Yet where Duty is concerned, where Sinning or not Sinning is the Caſe, there Courteſie hath no room; there it is vain to pretend any Engagement to Complaiſance.

For ſurely it is better to be held uncivil, than to be ungodly; it is far better Manners to offend any number of Men, than to be rude with God, to claſh with his Pleaſure, to offer Indignity and Injury to him; there can be no competition in the Caſe; no ſhadow of Reaſon, why we ſhould diſpleaſe God to pleaſe Men.

As it were more civil to offend ten thouſand Boors, (Peaſants) than to affront our King; ſo to offend ten thouſand Kings than to affront our God were in Policy more adviſeable, and in Equity more juſtifiable; ſo the Royal *Pſalmiſt* did judge; for *Princes* (ſaid he) *did ſit and ſpeak againſt me, but thy Servant did meditate in thy Statutes*; ſo *Moſes*, ſo *Samuel*, ſo *Elias*, ſo *Jeremy*, ſo *Daniel*, ſo the three noble Children, ſo the holy Apoſtles did conceive; who being Perſons otherwiſe very courteous and gentle, yet had not that conſideration of mighty Princes, as not rather to approve their Conſciences to God, than to comply with their Pleaſure, how much

Pſal. 119. 23. Matt. 10. 18.

leſs

leſs ſhould we upon pretence of courteſie toward inferiour perſons, in ordinary converſation tranſgreſs our duty?

Our own intereſt in ſuch caſes is too conſiderable to be ſacrificed to the conceit or pleaſure of any men; Our ſalvation is no matter, wherein formality of reſpect ſhould intervene, or have any weight; to gain or forfeit our eternal happineſs, is no buſineſs of complement or ceremony: It were a ſilly courteſie for a man to wait on his company to Hell; a wild point of gallantry, to be damned in complaiſance.

Who would take himſelf to be obliged in good manners to hold on the round in a cup of poiſon; to leap down after thoſe, who from blind inadvertency, or wilful perverſeneſs tumble into a gulf, to gaſh or ſtab himſelf in conformity to ſome deſperate folk? Much leſs can a man be engaged out of any ſuch regard, (in compliance with the miſtake, weakneſs, or pravity of others) to incur guilt, to provoke divine wrath, to expoſe his ſoul to utter ruine, to undergo a damage, for which all the world cannot make any reparation or amends?

Is it not far better to diſguſt, than to gratifie thoſe, who have ſo little conſideration of our welfare; who indeed are very diſcourteous and heinouſly rude, in offering to tempt us unto ſin, to deſire a compliance therein with them; to expect from us, that we ſhould adventure ſo much for their vain ſatisfaction?

Indeed, to gratifie ſuch perſons, were great and noble courteſie; but really to do it, we ſhould not go this way; for this is a ſpurious courteſie, rather conſpiracy and treachery, than courteſie.

It is in truth, at the bottom, great diſcourteſie (involving much unkindneſs, real abuſe, unmerciful inhumanity and cruelty) to ſecond, to countenance, to ſupport or encourage any man in doing that which manifeſtly tendeth unto his great prejudice, to his utter bane.

It is the trueſt civility (implying real humanity, genuine charity, faithful kindneſs, and tender pity) to ſtand off in ſuch caſes, and by refuſing (in a modeſt, gentle, diſcreet manner refuſing) to concur in ſin with our friends and companions, to check them, to warn them, to endeavour their amendment and retreat from pernicious courſes; to exerciſe that *compaſſion* toward them, which S. *Jude* calleth *pulling them out of the fire.* Jud. 22, 23.

In ſuch caſes to repel them, yea to reprove them, is the greateſt favour we can ſhew them; it is not only ſafe for our ſelves, but kind to them to obſerve St. *Paul*'s precept, *Have no fellowſhip with the unfruitful works of darkneſs, but rather reprove them*; for which deportment whenever they come to themſelves, and ſoberly reflect on things, they will thank and bleſs us; and it will happen, as the *Wiſeman* ſaith, *He that rebuketh a man, afterward ſhall find more favour than he that flattereth with his tongue.* Eph. 5. 11, 7. Prov. 28. 23.

In fine, if we throughly ſcan the buſineſs, we ſhall find, that commonly it is not abundance of courteſie, but a defect of charity, or of conſcience, or of courage, which diſpoſeth us to reſervedneſs, or to concurrence upon ſuch occaſions, in regard to unallowable practices.

7. Another ſnare which catcheth and holdeth us in open practice of ſin, or neglect of duty, is deference to the opinion, authority, cuſtom, or example of others; to the common opinion, to the authority of great and leading perſons, to the faſhion of the world, and prevalent humour of the age.

A man (not conſulting or not confiding in his own reaſon) is apt to credit the vogue, to defer a kind of veneration to the general ſentiments of

men (eſpecially of men qualified) apprehending that allowable or tolerable, which men commonly by their practice ſeem to approve. He is prone to ſuſpect his own judgment of miſtake, when it doth thwart the opinion of ſo many; and hardly can have the heart to oppoſe his ſingle apprehenſions againſt ſo common notions.

——illos Defendit numerus. Juv. *Sat.* 12. 46. Ecclus 16.17. The commonneſs of ſin, and multitude of offenders, doth in a manner authorize and warrant it, doth at leaſt ſeem to excuſe and extenuate it.

A man eaſily conceiteth himſelf ſafe enough, while he is in the herd, while he walketh in the road, when he hath the broad coverlet of general uſage to ſhrowd him from blame: He doth at leaſt fanſie conſolation in undergoing a doom with ſo many.

But upon many accompts, this is a very fallacious and dangerous ground of practice.

Ant. 9. §. 18. 11. §. 4. §. 3. *Argumentum peſſimi turba.* Sen. *de vit. B.* 2. For multitudes are no good authors of opinion, or guides of practice.

Wiſe men have ever been apt to ſuſpect that to be bad, which is moſt commonly admired and affected.

Nothing is more vulgarly noted, than the injudiciouſneſs, the blindneſs, the levity, temerity, and giddineſs of the vulgar; temper, inclination, appetite, intereſt, and the like perverting biaſſes have moſt ſway on them; any ſpecious appearance, any ſlight motive, any light rumour doth ſerve to perſuade them any thing, to drive them any whither.

All ages have deplored the paucity of wiſe and good men; the genuine diſciples of our Lord, and *ſons of wiſdom*, have ever been *puſillus grex*, *a ſmall flock*: Our Lord hath told us, that *wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to deſtruction, and many there be which go in thereat.*

Matt. 7. 13. Luke 13. 24. Rom. 9. 27. Iſa. 10. 22.

Wherefore popular uſe is no good argument of truth or right; nor can yield any warrant, or any colour for infringing God's law: No *plebiſcitum* can be of force againſt it.

God never did allow the people to exempt themſelves or us from their loyalty, or obedience to his laws; they are univerſally obligatory; he hath *commanded all men to repent*; he hath threatned that otherwiſe *all ſhall periſh*; and that *tribulation and anguiſh* ſhall be *upon every ſoul of man that doeth evil.*

Acts 17. 30. Luke 13. 3. Rom. 9. 12. Rom. 2. 9.

Exod. 23. 2. Rom. 12. 2. *Be not conformed to this world.* Iſa. 8. 11. 1 John 2. 15. *Love not the world* —— Iſa 8. 10. Prov. 1. 10. Iſa. 1. 4.

He by expreſs prohibitions hath obviated all ſuch pretences and pleas; *Thou ſhalt not* (ſaith he) *follow a multitude to do evil*; and, *Say ye not a confederacy—— neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid*, (fear not to diſſent and diſcoſt *from the way of this people.*) And, *If ſinners entice thee*, (how many ſoever they be, though it be *a ſinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a ſeed of evil doers*) *conſent thou not.*

Indeed if we conſider it, it is ſo far from excuſing ſin, that it is an aggravation thereof, that we therein conſpire with others, and the more the worſe: To oppoſe God ſingly, is not quite ſo criminal, as to join with a rout in hoſtility and rebellion againſt him; for hereby God's authority is more ſhaken, and his honour more rudely violated; hereby we do not only ſin our ſelves, but contribute to the ſin of others, encourage them to it, and uphold them in it by our patronage.

Hereby we become acceſſory to the degeneracy and general apoſtaſie of the age.

Hereby we do join our forces to pull down God's judgments on our Country, and by promoting general corruption, induce general vengeance.

The

The multitude of ſinners is ſo far from ſheltring any one from wrath, that it ſurely draweth it upon all; forcing the Almighty not only for the aſſertion of his own authority, and vindication of his honour; but for the good of the people, and *purgation of the* world, to pour forth remarkable vengeance. Iſa. 1. 25. *I will purge away the droſs,*——

For example: In the time of *Noah* did *God ſpare the old world* when *all fleſh had corrupted its way upon the earth*, did that ſtave off God's wrath, or ſtop the deluge? No, it did grievouſly provoke him, it did in a manner neceſſitate him *to deſtroy man from the face of the earth; bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly.* Gen. 6. 12. 2 Per. 2. 5. Gen. 6. 6. 2 Per. 2. 5.

Did the number of ſinners in *Sodom* prevent vengeance on them? Was it not that which did *condemn them to an overthrow* ſo diſmal, pulling down fire and brimſtone on them? 2 Per. 2. 6.

What was the reaſon of that woful captivity, into which *Iſrael* was carried? Was it not becauſe they *were all grievous revolters*, and had ſo generally conſpired in wickedneſs, that the *Prophet* could ſay, *Run ye to and fro through the ſtreets of Jeruſalem, and ſee now and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man; if there be any that executeth judgment, that ſeeketh the truth, and I will pardon it?* Was it not this, which did wring from God that ſentence, *Shall I not viſit for theſe things? ſhall not my ſoul be avenged on ſuch a nation as this?* Jer. 6. 28. Jer. 5. 1. Jer. 5. 29.

When the caſe is ſuch in any community, as it was in *Iſrael*, when God ſaid, *From the ſoal of the foot even to the head there is no ſoundneſs in it*, then judgment is neceſſary, and it muſt aſſuredly follow, *Your country is deſolate*—— Then God, his patience being tired, and his goodneſs unſupportably abuſed, will cry out, *Ah, I will eaſe me of my adverſaries, and avenge me of mine enemies.* Iſa. 1. 6. Iſa. 1. 7.

God, as Governour of the world, in diſcharge of his office, for clearing his honour, for aſſuring his majeſty, out of regard to publick good, for the ſafety and welfare of his ſubjects, is concerned to chaſtiſe notorious, ſcandalous, and infectious ſin: He may reſerve private ſins for the final doom, when *the hidden things of darkneſs ſhall be brought to light, and the counſels of hearts manifeſted*, and all things ſhall receive juſt award and recompence; but it is expedient to puniſh publick ſins publickly: They who *declare their ſin as Sodom*, with outrageous impudence, are like to find a puniſhment like that in a common vengeance. 1 Cor. 4. 15. Iſa. 3. 9.

We ſhould therefore in ſuch a caſe be the more careful of our converſation, more ſhy of ſinful compliance with others, for preventing publick calamity; for that our ſingle piety and innocence (or the goodneſs of a few) may ſave our Country, together with our ſelves, from wrath and ruine; ſeeing it is the gracious method of God, in regard to a few righteous men, to ſpare the reſt; to releaſe a Nation from deſerved puniſhment; for if in *Sodom* had been found ten righteous perſons, it had eſcaped that horrible deſtruction; And *Iſrael* in *Hezekiah*'s time (although in a very great and general corruption of that age) by a few good men did avoid the like doom; according to that of the *Prophet*, *Except the Lord of hoſts had left unto us a very ſmall remnant, we ſhould have been as Sodom.* Gen. 38. 32. Iſa. 1. 9. Lam. 3. 22.

The righteouſneſs of one *Noah* did ſave the race of mankind from being extinct:

The zeal of one *Phinehas* did ſtop that plague, which had devoured *Iſrael*; *Phinehas* (ſaid God himſelf) *the ſon of Eleazar hath turned my wrath away from the children of Iſrael; while he was zealous for my ſake among them, that I conſumed not the children of Iſrael in my jealouſie.* Num. 25. 11. Pſal. 106. 30.

If there had been ſuch another publick Patron of Piety, at the time when *Iſrael* was ſo ſeverely puniſhed by deliverance into captivity, it would have obſtructed that lamentable event: God himſelf ſo teſtified; for, *I ſought* (ſaid he) *for a man among them, that would make up the hedge, and ſtand in the gap before me for the land, that I ſhould not deſtroy it; but I found none; therefore have I poured out mine indignation upon them*——

Ezek. 22. 30, 31.

and, *Run ye to and fro* —— (ſaid he again) *Seek—if ye can find a man— in Jeruſalem —— and I will pardon it.*

Jer. 5. 1.

Wherefore beſide regard to our own welfare, a conſideration of publick good, charity toward the World, a compaſſion of our Country ſhould withhold us from conſpiring in common tranſgreſſions, or omiſſions of duty.

God will not overſee us. Eccleſ. 16. 17.

If we ſin with all, we muſt ſuffer with all; nor will the having ſo much company in ſuffering yield any true comfort to us; *Socios habuiſſe doloris* (to have companions in ſorrow) is in it ſelf a pitiful ſolace, and an unworthy one, ſavouring of inhumane malignity; for our fellows will bear no ſhare with us, or take off any thing from the burthen of our pains, which will be equally to them and us extreme.

Can it be any conſiderable ſatisfaction, that we are ſick of an epidemical diſeaſe, that ſweepeth away multitudes about us and with us?

Is it better for one part, that the whole body is overſpread with a noiſom leproſie? that its fellow-members are tortured with grievous anguiſh?

Can the ſoreſt pains of our brethren cure the akings of our heart, aſſuage the pangs of our conſcience, or ſlack the conſuming flames beneath?

What advantage can we enjoy from going down to hell in a troop? What eaſe ſhall we find there from being encompaſſed with the doleful groans, the piercing ſhrieks, and diſmal howlings of fellow-ſufferers in that infernal dungeon?

Alas! will it not rather augment our pains, to hear the ſore complaints, the fierce accuſations, the deſperate curſes of thoſe, whom our compliance hath engaged, or encouraged, or confirmed and hardned in that wicked practice, which did throw them into that diſconſolate caſe?

8. Another principle (near of kin to the former) is a diſlike of ſingularity, and ſolitude; together with the conſequences and imputations uſually cleaving thereto.

One would not be a man by himſelf; to be gazed on, to be hooted at as a kind of prodigy, to be deemed an extravagant, odd, humourous, fantaſtick perſon, conceited of his own opinion, addicted to his own way, arrogating to himſelf a liberty of croſſing and condemning, or contemning the world; therefore he runneth along with the age, complying with its ſinful cuſtoms, and naughty faſhions.

He is grievous unto us even to behold; for his life is not like other mens, his ways are of another faſhion. Sap. 2. 15, &c.

But this is a vain Principle; for really to be ſingular is no fault, to be held ſo is no diſgrace; it is rather in many caſes laudable and honourable; and if in any moſt reaſonable, 'tis in this.

Doth not ſingularity, or paucity, encreaſe the price and eſtimation of every valuable thing? What maketh a jewel, but rarity? What but that maketh a diamant more precious than a peble?

Do not men for ſingular eminency in any art, skill, faculty, endowment, gain credit and renown? What recommended to poſterity the names of *Apelles*, *Praxiteles*, *Phidias*, but excelling in their art beyond the ordinary

ordinary rate? What gave to *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero* their eſteem, but a ſingular knack of eloquence? To what did *Alexander* and *Cæſar* owe their fame, but to an extraordinary valour? Whence got *Socrates* ſuch a name, but from his ſingular wiſdom? Whence *Fabricius*, *Ariſtides*, *Cato*, but from their ſingular integrity?

Why then ſhould it be a diſcouragement or reproach to be ſingular or extraordinary in the nobleſt of all faculties, that of living well, in the moſt excellent of all perfections, that of vertue?

In truth a man is hardly capable of a greater commendation than this, that he is ſingularly good; that he ſurpaſſeth the vulgar level, and mounteth near Heaven in the divineſt qualities; that no bad example or faſhion hath been able to ſeduce or corrupt him; this ſhould render him to be moſt highly eſteemed, and moſt dearly cheriſhed, as a choice ornament of the world, as a moſt uſeful inſtrument of good to mankind.

It were deſirable that vertue were more common in the world, but ſurely its being more rare doth render it more admirable, more illuſtrious, more glorious.

Heroical vertue is therefore ſuch, becauſe ſo few do attain, or can reach it;

—— —*pauci quos æquos amavit*
Jupiter,

A few, who by ſpecial aſſiſtance of God's Grace, and by extraordinary reſolution, do ſurmount the obſtacles which are ſet againſt it.

It was well ſaid of St. *Bernard*, *To be good among good men hath ſafety; but to be ſuch among bad men hath alſo praiſe*; (a man will be ſaved by that, but he ſhould be commended for this) *that hath as much facility as it hath ſecurity, this is of as much worth as difficulty.*

Inter bonos, bonus eſſe ſalutem habet, inter malos verò & laudem; illud tantæ facilitatis eſt, quantæ & ſecuritatis; hoc tantæ virtutis, quantæ & difficultatis. Bern. *Ep.* 25.

Indeed if we conſider the nature of things, or conſult the hiſtory of times, we ſhall find that vertue muſt be, and ever hath been liable to this imputation; it is commonly ſo hard and hazardous to be good in any notable degree, that few will take the pains, or undergo the hardſhips requiſite to attain or exerciſe it.

Hence the beſt men, (who are ſuch not according to the blind conjecture of men, but in God's ſure eſteem) are an elect, and peculiar ſort of people, a few choice perſons cull'd out of a great lump of thoſe, who either reject Religion, or embrace it only in verbal profeſſion, or formal ſhew. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

Hence it hath been the obſervation, and complaint of all times,

Rari quippe boni. Juv. *Sat.* 13. 28.

Hence the moſt renowned men for goodneſs, and who by God's ſpecial care have been recommended to us as patterns thereof, have been very ſingular in it; and their ſingularity did much enhance the price of their goodneſs.

It is ſaid of *Enoch*, that *he walked with God*; but it ſeemeth with ſmall, or no company beſide; otherwiſe it would not have been ſo particularly recorded of him. Gen. 5. 22.

Noah was content to be a man by himſelf, *a preacher of righteouſneſs* againſt the vogue, and a practicer thereof againſt the ſtream of his whole age; for, *thee* (ſaid God of him, that is, thee alone) *have I ſeen righteous before me in this generation*: He was no leſs ſingular in his goodneſs, than in his ſalvation. Gen. 7. 1.

Abraham

Abraham had no common qualities, which moved God to pick him
Gen. 12. 1. out, and ſeparate him from the reſt of mankind (to ſingle him *from his kindred and country*) to confer ſpecial graces and bleſſings on him.

2 Pet. 2. 7. *Lot* had *his righteous ſoul vexed with the filthy converſation of the wicked*, which did encloſe him; yet ſo that he did retain ſound and clear integrity among them.

Job had this teſtimony from God, examining *Satan* concerning him,
Job 1. 8. *Haſt thou conſidered my ſervant Job, that there is none like him on the earth; a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and eſcheweth evil?*

What was the reſolution of *Joſhua?* Did he value being ſole or ſingular in his practice? No, for propounding to his people whether they would chuſe God or not, he told them, that however it were, although all of them ſhould forſake God, he was reſolved to ſtick faſt to him, not re-
Joſh. 24. 15. garding their practice; *But* (ſaid he) *as for me and my houſe, we will ſerve the Lord*; that indeed was nobly reſolved; it was a reſolution worthy of ſuch an *Heroe*, to ſtand alone in ſo good and wiſe a choice againſt his whole Nation. It was a reſolution ſuitable to that his behaviour, which
Joſh. 14. 8. he expreſſed in theſe words, *My brethren that went up with me made the heart of the people melt; but I wholly followed the Lord my God*; in regard to which his camerade *Caleb*, being of the ſame ſpirit with him, is called
Num. 14. 24. a man *of another ſpirit*; different from, and above the mean ſpirit of his fellows.

What was *David?* Was he not a man by himſelf? Was he not like one, of whom the Poet ſaith,

Juv. *Sat.* 13.
Egregium ſanctumque virum ſi cerno, bimembri
Hoc monſtrum puero, vel fœtæ comparo mulæ.

* A Wonder. *N. Tr.* 1 Pet. Ἐν ᾧ ξενίζ. Pſal. 71. 7. 119. 51. So he telleth us, *I* (ſaith he) *am become as it were a * monſter unto many, but my ſure truſt is in thee.*

Did *Elias*, to ſhun the imputation of ſingularity, or in regard to common practice, ſwerve from his faithful adherence to God's ſervice; al-
1 Kings 19. 10 though he did paſſionately reſent and bewail his caſe? No; for, *I have*, ſaid he, *been very jealous for the Lord of hoſts; for the children of Iſrael have forſaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and ſlain thy prophets with the ſword; and I, even I only am left, and they ſeek my life to take it away.*

Lam. 3. 14. What was the caſe of *Jeremy?* *I* (ſaith he) *was a deriſion to all my people, and their ſong all the day*; yet did he maintain his integrity, and was
Jer. 1. 1°. *a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and a brazen wall againſt the whole land;*
Murus aheneus. *againſt the kings of Judah, againſt the princes thereof, and againſt the people of the land.*

What was the condition of our *Lord?* Was not he σημεῖον ἀντιλεγόμενον, *a prodigie ſpoken againſt* by all, againſt whom *both Herod and*
Luke 2. 34. Heb. 12. 3. Acts 4. 27. Iſa. 63. 3. John 12. 37-- John 16. 32. Matt. 26. 31, 56. *Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Iſrael were gathered together*; who *trod the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with him*; who in his life was regarded by few, and at his death (when he yielded his great atteſtation to truth and righteouſneſs) was deſerted by all?

What was the *Apoſtles* condition? Were they not ſingular men? Were
Acts 28. 22. 2 Cor. 4. 9. Heb. 10. 33. 1 Cor. 1. 26. not they held *a Sect, every where ſpoken againſt*, and impugned with all violence of ſpirit and rage? Were not they *made a ſpectacle to the world*, to be gazed at with ſcorn and reproach? Did not they (a few, ſimple, poor, weak

weak folk) in doctrine and practice croſs and controll the world, confuting, reproving, condemning the generality of men, of errour, of folly, of wickedneſs?

It can therefore be no juſt blame or reaſonable diſcouragement to appear ſingular in the practice of vertue.

Such a ſingularity is no good argument of fond conceitedneſs, of wilful humour, of arrogant pride. For,

Can it be fond conceitedneſs to follow the dictates of the beſt reaſon, to obſerve the advices of the wiſeſt men in all times, to follow the direction and conduct of infinite wiſdom, to embrace that which in moſt caſes natural light, common ſenſe, and continual experience do approve? Is it not wildneſs to do otherwiſe, though all ſhould do it?

Can it be wilful humour to hold fait our beſt intereſt, our trueſt comfort, our eternal ſalvation? Is it not rather ſo, to comply with *a perverſe generation*, in running headlong to their own ruine?

Can it be pride or arrogance, to acknowledge our Maker; to be loyal and dutiful to our heavenly Sovereign; to fear the Almighty God, to ſubmit to his will, to *tremble at his word*, to *be afraid of his judgments*, to ſhun his fierce anger and ſevere vengeance?

Is it a bad ambition to ſeek that honour and immortal glory, which God doth offer; to ſhun that everlaſting ſhame and contempt, which he doth menace?

Is it not rather monſtrous preſumption, and enormous vanity, to conſort and conſpire with rebels againſt God's law, with deſpiſers of his grace?

In fine, when the moſt men are fooliſh and vain, when the world is depraved and diſſolute, it is neceſſary that the beſt reaſon ſhould be called humour, and the wiſeſt men ſhould be deemed extravagant; that the beſt things ſhould be ſlighted, and the beſt perſons repreſented with odious characters: But hence to renounce wiſdom and goodneſs is abominably abſurd; as if we ſhould therefore put out our light, becauſe it is night about us; or in deep winter ſhould put off our clothes among the wild *Indians*.

9. Of affinity to the foregoing Principles is this moſt plauſible apology for ſmothering our conſcience, namely, a prudential apprehenſion, that we ſhall not come off well in openly avowing and abetting goodneſs, ſo as to do any good, or ſervice to it thereby; but ſhall thereby rather work prejudice and diſſervice to it.

The Age (will ſuch a wiſe man ſay) is incorrigibly degenerate; wickedneſs is not only bold and impudent, but even outragiouſly inſolent; ſo that to appear ſtrictly good, is a kind of ſcandal; to pretend conſcience for our rule of action, is to be ridiculous; to patronize duty, is to provoke ſcorn and obloquy; to mention religion, is to proſtitute and profane it; to concern God in our doing, is to expoſe his moſt ſacred and venerable Name to irriſion and foul abuſe. Job 12. 4.

Such is the poſture of things, that of all the ſects and factions which divide the world, that of *Epicurean* ſcorners and mockers is become the moſt formidable; with diſdainful pride inſulting and vapouring over the profeſſors of religion; perſecuting all ſoberneſs of mind and ſtaunchneſs of manners with a fierce rage, and a kind of Satanick zeal.

The ſtate of the world being like to that, when the holy *Pſalmiſt* cried out, *Lord, how long ſhall the wicked, how long ſhall the wicked triumph? How long ſhall they utter and ſpeak hard things, and all the workers of iniquity boaſt themſelves.* Pſal. 94. 3, 4. 52. 1. 10. 3.

In

Matt. 7. 6. In ſuch a caſe, is it not ſeaſonable to obſerve our *Lord*'s advice, *not to give that which is holy unto dogs, nor to caſt our pearls before ſwine*; not to expoſe good doctrine, and holy practice, to ſcurrillous and ſenſual people, who will ſnarl and bark at it, will ſcorn and trample on it, will bite and tear you for it?

Is it not then wiſdom rather fairly to retreat, withdrawing our vertue into a ſafe retirement, than by openly conteſting for it againſt overmatching forces, to hazard its being baffled and abuſed, its being trampled on, and triumphed over, by ſcornful pride and malice?

In ſuch a world to oppoſe impiety, what is it but attempting to ſtop a torrent, to allay a ſtorm, to gape againſt an oven, to blow againſt the wind, to kick againſt the pricks?

But if this caſe be rightly weighed, it rather ſtrongly may engage us to an open profeſſion and practice of the ſtricteſt vertue, than excuſe us from it.

Eph. 5. 15. Phil. 2. 15. St. *Paul* doth enjoin us *to walk accurately, not as fools, but as wiſe, redeeming the time*, for this reaſon, *becauſe the days are evil*; and *that we ſhould be blameleſs and harmleſs, the ſons of God without rebuke, in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe nation, ſhining among them as lights in the world*; *and* * *holding forth the word of life.*

* (Or, holding faſt, ἐπέχοντες)

And great reaſon for it; for the worſe the world is, the more need there is of good patterns to inſtruct and guide it, to admoniſh and excite it to goodneſs.

If the days are evil, it is high time that we ſhould apply our beſt endeavours to the mending of them.

Spectꝛ juvenis —— in ea tempora natus es, quibus formare animum expediat conſtantibus exemplis. Tac. *Ann.* 16.

If vertue be ſo near loſt, or ſo quite gone from among us, it is needful that we ſhould preſently ſeek to recover, or to retrive it.

If goodneſs be ſo hardly preſſed by oppoſition, then hath every good man the more reaſon to appear ſtrenuouſly in its defence, the more are we engaged to haſten with all our might to its relief and ſuccour from irrecoverable oppreſſion.

Every one ſhould labour to raiſe a bank againſt that inundation, which threatneth to overthrow and overwhelm all.

Shall we endure to ſee the adverſary of our welfare to carry all before him, without any oppoſition or obſtruction? Shall we ſuffer iniquity to enjoy a quiet reign, to root and ſettle it ſelf in its uſurpation, to raiſe it ſelf a title of long occupancy and preſcription againſt goodneſs?

Is it not then more generous to avow our friendſhip to vertue, and to abet it in our patronage, when it is under the hatches, and crieth for our aid? Is it not vile treachery in ſuch a caſe to deſert it?

Is it not gallant then *to reſiſt ſin*, and check wickedneſs, when it is ſo high and rampant?

Who will not be vertuous (or endeavour at leaſt to appear ſuch) when vertue is in faſhion and requeſt; when it flouriſheth in reputation, when all the world doth countenance and abet it? Who will not ſhun or diſown wickedneſs, when it is commonly odious and deſpicable? Who will *not help the Lord againſt* weak adverſaries?

Jud. 5. 23.

But to embrace vertue upon greateſt diſadvantages, to diſclaim vice in its triumphant proſperity, this is indeed brave and maſculine.

He is a worthy man indeed, who can keep the field among ſo many ſtout enemies, who can ſtand upright *in a crooked generation*; who can deſpiſe the ſcorn, defie the rage, bear up againſt the impudence and malignity of vain, baſe, wretched men, combining to ſupplant and extirpate goodneſs.

Nor

Nor have we reaſon in proceeding thus to deſpair of good Succeſs; we need not fear thereby to expoſe the credit, or endanger the intereſt of Goodneſs. For,

How can we fail of proſpering in the maintenance of God's Cauſe, and ſpecial Concern? Although Men may commonly deſert him, yet doth he not utterly forſake them, or give over the government of the World; he may let the Reins lie a little looſe, but he doth not put them out of his Hands; his Power cannot be abated, his Providence can never ſleep; though he is ſo patient in ſuffering wicked Men to provoke him, yet he will not be *ſlack* in aſſiſting good Men, who take his part, and undertake to maintain his Honour; Aſſuredly he will help them, who *help him againſt the mighty.*

In this ſervice *one will chaſe a thouſand, and two put ten thouſand to flight*; One *David* will knock down never ſo many Philiſtines reproaching God's Name; One *Phinehaz* will repreſs the petulancy of a whole Nation; One *Jeremy* ſhall be *a brazen Wall againſt a whole Land*; God will make it good to ſuch an one, *They ſhall fight againſt thee, but they ſhall not prevail againſt thee; for I am with thee, ſaith the Lord, to deliver thee.* Deut. 32. 30. Joſh. 23. 10. Num. 25. 3. Jer. 1. 19. 15. 20. 20. 11.

One ſober Man, in defence of Vertue, is able to diſcomfit all the Hectors, the huffing Blades, and boiſterous Ruffians in the World; attacking them with ſound Diſcretion, and ſteady Reſolution: For all their Bravery and Confidence, they are eaſily Mated, and being like their Sire, if you *reſiſt them, they will flee from you:* A prudent, ſeaſonable, ſmart check will quaſh their ſpurious Courage, and giddy Audacity. Their contempt of Goodneſs is but feigned; they cannot really for their Hearts deſpiſe it; there is ſtamped on their Souls and Conſciences ſuch a reſpect, ſuch an awe thereof, which they cannot quite race out; wherefore if you briskly repreſent it to them, and challenge their reverence to it, they cannot but ſuccumb, their own Mind and Conſcience joining to back your Reproof; ſo that if you cannot reclaim them, you ſhall however repreſs them; if you cannot correct their Vice, you ſhall yet confound their Impudence; *For ſo* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *it is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to ſilence the Ignorance of fooliſh Men*; and, *Having a good Conſcience, that whereas they ſpeak evil of you, as of evil doers, they may be aſhamed that falſly accuſe your Converſation in Chriſt.* Jam. 4. 7. Jer. 20. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 15. 3 16. Tit. 2. 8.

It is only a ſneaking, or a timorous pretence to Vertue, which they contemn, but they will admire thoſe who ſtifly adhere to it, and ſtoutly maintain it.

We ſhall therefore expoſe Vertue, not by frankly avowing it, but by faintly ſinking from it, when occaſion requireth an open acknowledgment and exemplary practice of it.

If the World is ſo very bad, it will not be worſe for our attempt to better it; it will be ſo much at leaſt better, that one therein hath that worthy purpoſe.

It was bad, when *Noah* preached Righteouſneſs to it.

It was bad, when *Elias* was ſo zealous for the Lord of Hoſts.

It was bad, when *Jeremy* was derided for declaring God's Will, and exhorting to Repentance.

They were very bad times, when all the Prophets did ſtrive ſo earneſtly to reclaim Men from their Wickedneſs; being reproached and perſecuted for doing ſo, but not deterred from doing it; the reſentment they had of the badneſs of Times did not make them abandon the means of its recovery from it.

1 John 5. 19. *The whole World did lie in wickedneſs* when the Apoſtles did undertake the Reformation of it.

None calleth for juſtice, nor any pleadeth for truth — Iſa. 59. 4.

In fine, if Men generally upon ſuch accompts of deſpairing Prudence neglect to own Goodneſs, what muſt the conſequence be? what, but that Piety ſhall be caſhiered, that Vertue ſhall be diſcarded, that Conſcience ſhall be quite exploded and exterminated from the World; that conſequently an horrible deluge of various Miſchiefs, a general prevalence of Lewdneſs and Luxury, of Fraud and Violence, of Faction and Tumult; a violation of all Faith and Friendſhip, a diſſolution of all Order and Peace will enſue?

And what muſt grow upon this ſtate of things? what but another flood of Judgments and woful Vengeance; when God's Patience hath been tried to the utmoſt, and his Goodneſs tired with bearing ſuch a load of Abominations, he will be forced to cry out, *Shall I not viſit for theſe things? ſhall not my Soul be avenged on ſuch a Nation as this?*

Jer. 5. 29. Iſa. 1. 24. 59. 17.

Stulta calliditas, perversè imitata prudentiam. Cic. de Offic. 3. p. 143.

10. Another Principle of diſpenſing with Conſcience in publick Duties, and Converſation before Men, is a kind of perverſe Wiſdom, or ſubtile Craft, affecting the name of Diſcretion.

Men ſee there are divers Inconveniences attending the profeſſion of reſpect to God, and conſcience in all their doings; that the World may diſlike and diſeſteem them, that divers Perſons will hate, malign, reproach and perſecute them for it; that they may chance to be croſſed in their Deſigns, and loſe Profits and Preferments thereby; therefore they deem it adviſeable to decline it in open view, making up the defect by adoring and ſerving God in private.

Thus they think to ſalve all, by maintaining a neutrality, and compounding the buſineſs, yielding an open conformity to the World, and reſerving a ſecret regard to God; ſinning publickly, and privately repenting; retaining their Credit, Quiet, Eaſe, Pleaſure with their Conſcience, and peace of Mind: affecting ſome Piety, but avoiding the ſcandal of it.

Gal. 5. 11.

They would hold fair with both ſides, ſo that neither the World ſhould perſecute them for croſſing its Humour, nor God puniſh them for tranſgreſſing his Will.

They drive a ſubtile trade, hoping to gain on all hands, both the benefits of the other, and the advantages of this World; to ſave their Soul, and ſerve their worldly Intereſt together:

This they would believe a point of ſpecial Wiſdom; preſcribed by *Solomon*, *Be not righteous overmuch, neither make thy ſelf over-wiſe, for why ſhouldeſt thou deſtroy thy ſelf? Be not overmuch wicked, neither be thou fooliſh, why ſhouldeſt thou die before the time?*

Eccleſ. 7. 16, 17.

But this rooking trick, to hedge thus, and ſave Stakes, to play faſt and looſe, to dodge and ſhuffle with God, God doth not like, nor will ſuffer himſelf to be gull'd with it.

1 Kings 18. 21. He will not be ſatisfied with ſuch a mongrel, partial, and *halting* Service.

He will not allow us to with-hold that half of his Service (the external, viſible part thereof) which is moſt honourable to him, and moſt beneficial to our Neighbour.

Pſal. 12. 2. Jam. 1. 8. 4. 8.
2 Chron. 12. 33.
1 Tim. 3. 8. Δίγλωσσοι.
Pſal. 78. 37. *Their heart was not whole with him.* (O. Tr.)
Deut. 18. 13. Job 1. 8.
Pſal. 44. 18. 119. 51.
2 Chron. 34. 2. Job 23. 11.
Matt. 6. 24. Luke 16. 13. Δυσὶ κυρίοις.

He cannot endure a double Heart, a double Face; one looking upward to Heaven, another downward to the Earth.

He exacteth from us an integrity of Heart, and perfection of Obedience; that we ſhould love him with our whole Heart, that we ſhould be *perfect with him*, that we ſhould walk uprightly, not *deflecting to the right hand or left* from our Duty.

He

He will not endure, that we ſhould hold amity, or correſpondence with his Enemies; particularly with the World, the friendſhip whereof he hath declared inconſiſtent with his favour; and that it is a ſpiritual adultery to impart any of our affections to it; according to that of St. *James*, *Ye Adulterers, and adultereſſes; know ye not that the friendſhip of the World is enmity with God; ſo that whoſoever will be a friend of the World, becometh the enemy of God.* Jam. 4. 3. 1 John 2. 15. Καθίσται. (John 15. 19. 17. 14.)

We may ſhift as well as we can in the World, provided that we hold Innocence, and do not conſpire with it againſt God, by violation of our duty to him. *Be wiſe as Serpents, innocent as Doves*, Matt. 10. 16. (*As Lambs*, Luke 10. 3.) Pſal. 37. 38. *O. Tr.* Phil. 2. 5. Rom. 16. 19. Σοφὲς εἰς τὸ ἀγαθόν, ἀκεραίους δὲ εἰς τὸ κακόν.

They reproach good Men as ſuperſtitious; who are afraid of inviſible Powers; who let go things in hand (preſent Intereſts and Pleaſures) for a reverſion and hope.

As if God's Word were not ſufficient Security: As if we may not as well rely upon things conſpicuous to Reaſon, as thoſe which are obvious to ſenſe.

If Chriſtianity be plainly falſe, they ſay well; but if it be true, very abſurdly; yea, if probable, very imprudently; yea, if poſſible, not wiſely. Ἄτοποι. 2 Theſſ. 3. 2.

They charge conſcientious Men with timorouſneſs, faint-heartedneſs.

It is timorouſneſs or blameable fear to dread things without reaſon; things no wiſe formidable, which cannot hurt us; ſuch a timorous Man is he, that out of fear of Men, (of diſpleaſing them, of ſuffering by them, of their reproach, *&c.*) tranſgreſſeth his Duty.

But to fear God is Wiſdom, Soberneſs, Duty, Vertue; 'tis handſome and honourable, becoming our Nature, our Condition; the paſſion of fear was chiefly put in us for this purpoſe, as its beſt uſe.

Is it Courage, and not rather Madneſs to provoke, to reſiſt, to challenge, to cope with the Almighty? Is it Courage to throw ones ſelf down a Precipice, to leap into the infernal Lake? Is it gallantry to dare tranſgreſs all Reaſon and Sobriety? Is it brave to be wild and ſenſeleſs, *&c.*?

It is true courage to reſiſt and repel Sin, aſſaulting a Man with whatever advantages; to dare to do well, although vain Men deride, and ſpiteful Men hate us for it.

It is a kind of Martyrdom to be ill uſed by the World for adhering to his Duty, and he hath a ſhare in that, *Bleſſed are they who ſuffer for righteouſneſs.*

In fine, it is a vain Prudence, to be thus politick with God; whereby we ſhall loſe the whole, or that part which is invaluable, out of preſumption to ſave a ſmall inconſiderable part. Matt. 10. 39. Ὁ εὑρὼν τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτῦ, ἀπολέσει αὐτήν. Gal. 5. 11. Matt. 10. 38. 16. 24.

If this be prudence, *then* (as St. *Paul* ſaith) *is the offence of the croſs ceaſed.*

Then our Lord preſcribed a fooliſh Condition.

Then were the Apoſtles very imprudent, who deſerted all, and ſuffered ſo much for their Conſcience; being content to ſecure their Spiritual Intereſt, and to obtain the eternal rewards of Piety; *chuſing the better part, which could not be taken from them.* Phil. 3. 8. Luke 10. 42.

What the true Wiſdom is in ſuch caſes St. *James* hath told us, *Who is a wiſe Man, and endowed with knowledge among you? let him ſhew out of a good converſation his Works, with meekneſs of Wiſdom.* Jam. 3. 13.

SERMON XXXVI.

Of the Goodneſs of GOD.

PSALM CXLV. 9.

The Lord is good to All, and his tender Mercies are over all his Workt.

THE goodneſs of God is a frequented Theme; to many perhaps it may ſeem vulgar and trite; ſo that Diſcourſe thereon, like a Story often told, may be nauſeous to their Ears: but in truth neither can we ſpeak too much upon this moſt excellent Subject, nor ought we ever to be weary in hearing about it; for 'tis a ſign that the Palate of our Mind is diſtempered, if we do not with delight and affection reliſh any mention of Divine Goodneſs. Yea, the obſervation of Mens common practice would induce us to think, that either this point is not ſo well known, or but little believed, or at leaſt not well conſidered and applied. For how could we be ſo void of love to God, of gratitude toward Him, of faith and hope in Him, were we throughly perſuaded, did we ſeriouſly conſider, that He is ſo exceedingly good toward us? how can we be ſo inſenſible of the Benefits we enjoy, ſo diſtruſtful of finding Succours and Supplies in our Need, ſo diſſatisfied and diſcontented with what befalls us, if we conceive and weigh, that all things do proceed from, are guided and governed by immenſe Goodneſs? how alſo, if Men have ſuch an opinion of God impreſſed on their Minds, comes it to paſs that they are ſo little careful to reſemble and imitate him in Kindneſs, Bounty, and Mercy to one another? How is it in fine, that the moſt powerful Argument to all manner of good Practice, and the mightieſt aggravation of Sin, if well known and pondered, hath ſo little force and efficacy upon us? from Experience therefore this Argument may ſeem ſcarce ſufficiently inculcated. We may add, that Diſcouſe upon this Attribute (which above all other Attributes doth render God peculiarly admirable, and amiable) hath this ſpecial advantage beyond other Diſcourſes, that it doth, if our Hearts conſpire therewith, approach moſt nearly to the formal exerciſe of the moſt high and heavenly parts of Devotion, Praiſe and Thankſgiving; that it more immediately conduces to the breeding, the nouriſhing, the augmenting in us the beſt and nobleſt of pious Affections, love and reverence to God? truſt and hope in him; willing reſolutions to pleaſe and ſerve him; whence is conſequent, that we cannot too much employ our Thoughts, our Words, or our attention upon this Point. Beſide ſo much reaſon, we have alſo good

— Θεὸς, ὃ πολλῶν ὕμνων, ἐφ' οἷς θαυμάζεται, ἥδιον ὅπως ὡς τὸ πᾶν λαὸς εὐεργέτην ἰδιώταις ὢν. Naz. *Orat.* 26.

good Example to countenance us in ſo doing: we have the precedent of the holy *Pſalmiſt* reſolving to make it his conſtant and continual employment: *I will ſing* (ſaith he) *of the Mercies of the Lord; with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulneſs to all Generations.* Pſal. 89. 1. And, *Every day will I bleſs thee, and I will praiſe thy Name for ever and ever*; (that bleſſing and praiſing God, the Context ſhews to have conſiſted eſpecially in the declaration of God's great goodneſs) and, *It is a good thing* (ſaith he again) *to give thanks unto the Lord, and to ſing praiſes unto thy Name, O thou moſt High; to ſhew forth thy loving kindneſs in the morning, and thy faithfulneſs every night.* Pſal. 145. 2. Pſal. 92. 1. Such were his Intentions, and ſuch his Judgment about this Practice; and we find him in effect true and anſwerable to them; Every Song of his, every Meditation, every exerciſe of Devotion chiefly harping upon this String; and he earneſtly wiſhes that others would conſent and conſort with him therein: he earneſtly exhorts and excites them thereto: *O that men would praiſe the Lord for his goodneſs, and for his wonderful works to the children of men. Praiſe the Lord, O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever.* Pſal. 107. 8. Pſal. 106. 1. That one Example might ſufficiently authorize this Practice; but we have innumerable others, and thoſe the higheſt that can be, to encourage and engage us thereto; even the whole Choire of Heaven, whoſe perpetual buſineſs and happy entertainment it is to contemplate with their Minds, to celebrate with their Voices the immenſe goodneſs of God; *they have* (as it is in the *Revelation*) *no reſt day or night from performing this office.* Apoc. 4. 8. Such is the ſubject of our Diſcourſe; the which our Text moſt plainly and fully expreſſes; aſſerting not only the goodneſs of God; but the univerſal and boundleſs extent thereof: *The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies* (or *his bowels of affection and pity*) *are over all his works.* And that God indeed is ſuch, we ſhall firſt endeavour to declare, then ſhall briefly apply the conſideration thereof to practice.

That God the Lord, and Maker of all things is of himſelf, in regard to all his Creatures, eſpecially to us Men, ſuperlatively good, that is diſpoſed never without juſt or neceſſary cauſe to harm us, and inclinable to do us all poſſible and befitting good, the univerſal frame of Nature, and the conſtant courſe of Providence do afford us ſufficient reaſon to conceive, and moſt frequent, moſt expreſs Teſtimonies of holy Scripture do more fully demonſtrate. There is no argument from natural effects diſcernible by us, which proveth God's Exiſtence, (and innumerable ſuch there are, every ſort of things well ſtudied may afford ſome) the which doth not together perſuade God to be very kind and benign; careful to impart to us all befitting Good, ſuitable to our natural Capacity and Condition; and unwilling that any conſiderable Harm, any extreme Want or Pain ſhould befal us (I interpoſe ſuch limitations, for that an abſolute, or univerſal and perpetual exemption from all kinds, or all degrees of Inconvenience, an accumulation of all ſorts of appearing good upon us, doth not become, or ſute our natural ſtate of being, or our rank in perfection among Creatures; neither all things being duly ſtated, and computed, will it turn to beſt account for us.) The beſt (no leſs convincing, than obvious) Arguments, aſſerting the exiſtence of a Deity are deduced from the manifold and manifeſt footſteps of admirable Wiſdom, Skill and Deſign apparent in the general Order, and in the particular frame of Creatures; the beautiful harmony of the whole, and the artificial contrivance of each part of the World; the which 'tis hardly poſſible that any unprejudiced and undiſtempered Mind ſhould conceive to proceed from blind chance,

chance, or as blind neceſſity. But with this Wiſdom are always complicated no leſs evident marks of Goodneſs. We cannot in all that vaſt bulk of the Creation, and numberleſs variety of things diſcover any piece of meer Pomp, or dry Curioſity; every thing ſeems to have ſome beneficial tendency; according to which it confers ſomewhat to the need, convenience, or comfort of thoſe principal Creatures, which are endued with Senſe and Capacity to enjoy them. Moſt of them have a palpable relation to the benefit (to the ſubſiſtence, or delight) of living Creatures; and eſpecially in an ultimate relation to the benefit of Man; and the reſt, although their immediate uſe be not to our dim ſight ſo diſcernible, may therefore be reaſonably preſumed in their natural deſignation to regard the ſame end. Wherefore as upon conſideration of that ample proviſion, which is made in Nature for the neceſſary ſuſtenance, defence, and relief, for the convenience, delight, and ſatisfaction of every Creature, any Man, who is not careleſs or ſtupid, may be induced to cry out with the *Pſalmiſt*: Pſal. 104. 24. 33. 5. 119. 64. *O Lord, how manifold are thy Works, in wiſdom haſt thou made them all?* ſo 57. 10. 108. 4. may he with no leſs reaſon and ground after him pronounce and acknow- Pſal. 33. 5. 119. 64. ledge; *The Earth is full of the goodneſs of the Lord: The Earth, O Lord,* 57. 10. 108. 4. *is full of thy Mercy. Thy Mercy is great unto the Heavens; thy Mercy is* Pſal. 104. 10. *&c.* *great above the Heavens.* 'Tis indeed becauſe Divine Goodneſs is freely Pſal. 65. 11. 103. 4. diffuſive and communicative of it ſelf; becauſe eſſential Love is active, and fruitful in beneficence; becauſe higheſt excellency is void of all Envy, Selfiſhneſs, and Tenacity, that the World was produced ſuch as it was; thoſe Perfections being intrinſical to God's Nature, diſpoſed him to beſtow Pſal. 104. 28. ſo much of Being, of Beauty, of Pleaſure upon his Creatures. *He openeth his hand, they are filled with good:* 'Tis from God's open Hand, his unconfined Bounty and Liberality, that all Creatures do receive all that good which fills them, which ſatisfies their Needs, and ſatiates their Desires. Every pleaſant Object we view, every ſweet and ſavoury Morſel we taſte, every fragrancy we ſmell, every Harmony we hear; the wholſome, the chearing, the uſeful; yea, the innocent and inoffenſive Qualities of every thing we do uſe and enjoy, are ſo many perſpicuous Arguments of Divine Goodneſs; we may not only by our reaſon collect it, but we even touch and feel it with all our Senſes.

The like concluſion may be inferr'd from the obſervation of Divine Providence. Every Signification, or Experiment, whence we may reaſonably infer that Divine Power and Wiſdom do concur in upholding, managing, and directing the general State of Things, or the particular Affairs of Men, being well examined and weighed, would afford reaſon apt to perſuade, that the Governour of the World is graciouſly affected toward his Creatures and Subjects. The general preſervation of things in their natural Conſtitution and Order; the diſpenſing conſtant viciſſitudes of Seaſon, ſo as may ſerve for the ſupply of our Needs; the maintaining ſuch a courſe of things in the World, that notwithſtanding the great irregularity of Will, and violence of Paſſion in ſo many Perſons, yet Men do ordinarily ſhift ſo as to live tolerably upon Earth in Peace and Safety, and enjoyment of competent accommodations for Life; with the Aids and Conſolations ariſing from mutual Society; the ſupports, encouragement, and rewards of Vertue many times in a ſtrange manner adminiſtred; the Reſtraints, Diſappointments, and ſeaſonable Chaſtiſements of Wickedneſs, eſpecially when it grows exorbitant and outrageous, unexpectedly intervening, with the Pſal. 28. 5. like paſſages of Providence, will, to him that ſhall *regard the works of the* Iſa. 5. 12. *Lord, and the operation of his hands*, ſufficiently declare as the other glorious Attributes (Wiſdom, Power, and Juſtice) ſo eſpecially the goodneſs of

of him, who preſides over the World; aſſuring that he is a friend to the welfare, and diſlikes the Miſery of Mankind. He that ſhall well obſerve, and conſider how among ſo many fierce and hard-hearted, ſo many crafty and ſpiteful, ſo many domineering and devouring Spirits, the poor and weak, the ſimple and harmleſs ſort of People do however ſubſiſt, and enjoy ſomewhat, cannot but ſuſpect that an undiſcernible hand, full of Pity and Bounty, doth often convey the neceſſary ſupports of Life to them, doth often divert imminent Miſchiefs from them; cannot but acknowledge it credible, what the holy *Scripture* teacheth, that God is the Friend, and Patron, and Protector of thoſe needy and helpleſs People, *redeeming their Soul from deceit and violence*, (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſpeaks) that he is (as the *Prophet* expreſſeth it) *a ſtrength to the Poor, a ſtrength to the Needy in his diſtreſs, a refuge from the Storm, a ſhadow from the Heat, when the blaſt of the terrible ones is as a Storm againſt the Wall.* He that ſhall remark, how frequently in an unaccountable way, ſuccour and relief do ſpring up to juſt and innocent Perſons; ſo that in a whole Age (as the *Pſalmiſt* obſerved) ſuch Perſons do not appear deſtitute or forſaken; how alſo Iniquity is commonly ſtop'd in his full cariere, and then eaſily receives a check, when its violence ſeem'd uncontrollable; how likewiſe many times the World is reſcued from Confuſions and Diſtractions unextricable by any viſible wit or force; with other like occurrences in humane Affairs, muſt admit it for a reaſonable *hypotheſis* (fit to render a cauſe of ſuch appearances) that a tranſcendent Goodneſs doth ſecretly interpoſe, furthering the production of ſuch effects; he muſt upon ſuch obſervation be ready to verifie that of the *Pſalmiſt: Verily there is a reward for the righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth the Earth.* St. *Paul* inſtructs us, that in paſt-times (that is, in all Generations from the beginning of things) *God did atteſt himſelf* to be the Governour of the World: how? ἀγαθοποιῶν, by his beneficence; *giving to Men ſhowers from Heaven, and fruitful Seaſons, filling their Hearts with food and gladneſs:* competent evidences it ſeems theſe were of his Providence, and withall (ſuppoſing that) certain demonſtrations of his Goodneſs: Although ſome have abuſed this kind of Teſtimony, or argumentation ſo valid in it ſelf, unto a contrary purpoſe alledging, that if God ruled the World, ſo much Wickedneſs and Impiety would not be tolerated therein, that ingrateful and evil Men could not ſo thrive and flouriſh; that more ſpeedy and more ſevere Vengeance would be executed; that Benefits would not be ſcattered among the crowd of Men, with ſo promiſcuous and undiſtinguiſhing a freeneſs: But ſuch Diſcourſes, upon a juſt and true account, do only infer the great Patience and Clemency, the unconfined Mercy and Bounty of our Lord; that he is in Diſpoſition very different from pettiſh and impatient Man, who ſhould he have the Reins put into his hands, and in his adminiſtration of things ſhould be ſo often neglected, croſſed, abuſed, would ſoon overturn all things; and being himſelf diſcompoſed with Paſſion, would precipitate the World into confuſion and ruine. Things would not have ſubſiſted hitherto, and continued in their orderly courſe, but by the moderation of an immenſe Goodneſs; by that

Pſal. 14. 6. *tot.* 10. 14. 72. 12. Iſa. 25. 4. Pſal. 37. 25. Pſal. 58. *ult.* Acts 14. 17.

——— *magni cuſtos clementia mundi.* Claud.

'Tis *by the Lord's Mercies that we* (we the whole body of ſinful Men, ſo guilty of heinous Provocations, and Rebellions againſt our Maker) *are not conſumed.* And what again God in the *Prophet* ſpeaks concerning *Iſrael*, he might have applied to the whole Nation of Men: *How ſhall I* Lam. 3. 22. Acts 17. 26.

give

Hoſ. 11. 8. *give thee up, Ephraim; how ſhall I deliver thee, Iſrael? how ſhall I make thee as Admah? how ſhall I ſet thee as Zeboim? I will not execute the fierceneſs of my Anger, I will not return to deſtroy Ephraim; for I am God, and not Man:* the reaſon (for I am God, and not Man) is obſervable; implying (upon parity of Reaſon in the Caſes, concerning that one Nation, and concerning the Body of Men) that it is an Indulgenee, and forbearance above, if not contrary to the Temper of Man, and even beyond humane Conceit, whereby the ſtate of things here doth ſubſiſt, and is preſerved from Ruine.

Thus Nature, and thus Providence do bear witneſs concerning the diſpoſition of God. As for holy *Scripture*, there is nothing either in way of poſitive aſſertion more frequently inculcated, or by more illuſtrious Exam-
Exod. 34. 6. ples ſet forth and made palpable, than this Attribute of God. When God would impart a Portraicture, or deſcription of himſelf to his deareſt Friend, and Favourite *Moſes*; the firſt and chief Lineaments thereof are ſeveral ſorts, or ſeveral Inſtances of Goodneſs; he expreſſes himſelf *Merciful and*
אל רחום *gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs: (Merciful: El rachum;)* a *God of pitying*, or ſtrong in pity; that is, moſt apt to commiſerate and to ſuccour thoſe who are in Need or Diſtreſs. *Gracious*, that is, ready both freely to forgive Wrongs, and to diſpence Favours. *Long-ſuffering*, or *longus irarum*, that is, not ſoon moved, or apt eaſily to conceive diſpleaſure; not haſty in execution of Vengeance, or venting his Anger in hurtful effects. *Abundant in goodneſs*, that is, not ſparing as to quantity or quality, either in the multitude or magnitude of his Favours, but in all reſpects exceedingly liberal; conferring willingly both very many, and very great Benefits. Such did God repreſent himſelf to *Moſes*, when he deſired a fuller Knowledge, and nearer acquaintance with him, than ordinary means afford. The ſame character in ſubſtance we have often repeated; and ſometimes with advantage of emphatical Expreſſion, well deſerving our obſervation and regard; as when the Prophet *Joel* ſaith, that God *is penitent, or ſorry for evil inflicted*; and *Micah*, that *he delighteth in Mercy*; and when *Nehemiah* calleth him *a God of Pardons*; and when *Eſay* repreſents him as *waiting* (or ſeeking occaſions) *to be gracious:* and all this in the *Old Teſtament*, where God ſeems to look upon Man with a leſs ſerene, and debonair Aſpect: Indeed as that diſpenſation (ſutably to the nature and condition of things under it) doth ſet out God's Mercy and Goodneſs with eſpecial relation to this preſent World, or temporal Eſtate; ſo the *New* one more abundantly diſplays his more excellent care and love of our Souls; his great tenderneſs of our ſpiritual and eternal welfare. It is all of
Rom 2. 4. it in its nature and deſign but as it were one entire declaration of the τὸ χρηστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ (the beneficial diſpoſition, the benignity, or bountifulneſs of God, as St. *Paul* telleth us) 'tis a rare project of divine *philanthropy*; an illuſtrious *affidavit* of God's wonderful propenſity to bleſs and ſave Mankind; manifeſted by the higheſt expreſſions and inſtances of Love and Goodneſs that were poſſible. (For his not ſparing his own Son, *the expreſs Image of his ſubſtance*, the deareſt object of his infinite Love, the partaker of his eternal Nature and Glory, but delivering him up a Sacrifice for our Offences; his moſt earneſt woing our baſeneſs and unworthineſs to reconciliation with him, and admiſſion or acceptance of his favour; his tendering upon ſo fair and eaſie terms an endleſs Life in perfect joy and bliſs; his furniſhing us with ſo plentiful Means and powerful Aids for attaining that
Rom 5. 33. happy State; how pregnant demonſtrations are theſe, of unſpeakable good-
13. 5. neſs toward us, whence) The ordinary titles in this diſpenſation attribu-
2 Cor. 13. 11. 1. 3 ted unto him are, *the God of love and peace, of hope, of patience; of all grace,*

of

of all Conſolation; the Father of Pities, rich in Mercy, full of Bowels; Love and Goodneſs it ſelf. Thus doth the *Scripture* poſitively aſſert God's Goodneſs; thus it directly repreſents and deſcribes his gracious Diſpoſition toward us. And as for Examples (which muſt ſerve as to illuſtrate and explain, ſo alſo to verifie, and aſſure Matters of this Nature) if we carefully attend to God's ordinary Proceedings with Men there recorded, we ſhall find this Diſpoſition very conſpicuous in them. Who can recount the number, or ſet out the value of thoſe Inſtances, wherein God's Goodneſs is expreſſed toward ſuch as lov'd him? of his admirable Condeſcenſion in drawing them to him; of the Affectionate Tenderneſs, with which he conſtantly embraced them; of his merciful Indulgence toward them, when provoked by their untowardly Behaviour; of his kind Acceptance, and munificent recompencing their Endeavours to pleaſe him; of his deep compaſſionating their Sufferings; of his vigilant Carefulneſs over them, and over all their Concernments? Methinks the higheſt Expreſſions that Language, aſſiſted with all its Helps of Metaphor and Reſemblance can afford, are very languid and faint in compariſon of what they ſtrain to repreſent, when the Goodneſs of God toward them who love him, comes to be expreſſed: *As the Heaven is high above the Earth, ſo great is his Mercy toward them that fear him. Like as a Father pitieth his Children, ſo the Lord pitieth them that fear him*; So *David* ſtrives to utter it, but with Similitudes far ſhort of the Truth. If any will come near to reach it, 'tis that in *Moſes* and *Zachary*, when they are compared to *the Apple of God's Eye*, that is, to the moſt dear and tender part, as it were, about him.

Eph. 2. 4. Jam. 5. 11. 1 John 4. 8.

Luke 6. 35. *For he is kind unto the unthankful, and to the evil.*

Pſal. 36. 6. Pſal. 103. 11, 13.

Deut. 32. 10 Zach. 2 8. John 15. 14. 2 Chron. 20. 7.

We find them often ſtyled, and ever treated as Friends, and as Children; and that in a Senſe tranſcending the vulgar ſignification of thoſe Words; for, what Friendſhip could endure, could paſs over, could forget, could admit an entire Reconciliation, and Re-eſtabliſhment in Affection after ſuch heinous Indignities, ſuch Infidelities, ſuch Undutifulneſs as were thoſe of *Adam*, of *Noah*, of *David*, of *Peter:* who would have received into Favour and Familiarity a *Manaſſes*, a *Magdalen*, a *Paul?* who would ſo far extend his regard upon the Poſterity (upon ſuch a Poſterity, ſo untoward, ſo unworthy) of his Friend, as God did upon that of *Abraham*, in reſpect unto him? what great Prince would employ his principal Courtiers to guard and ſerve a poor Attendant, a mean Subject of his? Yet; *The Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them*; And many Inſtances we have of thoſe glorious Inhabitants of Heaven by God's Appointment ſtooping down to wait upon, and to perform Service to the Sons of Men. But upon Examples of this Nature, being numberleſs, and compoſing indeed the main Body of the *Sacred Hiſtory* (it being chiefly deſigned to repreſent them) I ſhall not inſiſt; I ſhall only obſerve for preventing or ſatisfying Objections (yea indeed for turning them to the advantage and confirmation of that which we aſſert) that even in thoſe Caſes, wherein God's higheſt Severity hath been exerciſed, when God hath purpoſed to exhibit moſt dreadful Inſtances of his Juſtice upon the moſt provocative Occaſions; we may diſcern his Goodneſs eminently ſhewing it ſelf: That even in the greateſt Extremity of his Diſpleaſure, in his Acts of higheſt Vengeance, *Mercy* doth κατακαυχᾶται κρίσεως (as St. *James* ſpeaketh) *boaſt it ſelf, and triumph over Juſtice*: that God, as the Sun (to uſe

Pſal. 34. 7.

Γίνεται φιλανθρωπίας ἡ τιμωρία· ὅτε γὰρ ἐγὼ πείθομαι κολάζειν ἢ θεόν. Naz. *Orat.* 38.

Ἐγὼ τοσαύτην φιλοσοφίαν εἶδον φημὶ τοῦ θεοῦ κηδεμονίας, ὡς μὴ μόνον ἀφ' ὧν ἐτίμησεν, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀφ' ὧν ἐκόλασεν ὁμοίως ἡμᾶς σύνεσθαι τὸ ἀγαθότητα αὐτοῦ δεικνύναι, καὶ τὸ φιλανθρωπίαν. Chryſ. *ad Pſ.* 7.

Ὁ θεὸς ἀπαθὴς ὢν καὶ εὐεργετῶν, καὶ κολάζων, ὁμοίως ἐστὶν ἀγαθός. Ibid.

Jam. 2. 13.

Tunc maximè eſt optimus, cùm tibi non bonus; ſicut Sol tibi etiam quando non putas, optimus & utilis, &c. Tertull. *in* Marc. II. 2.

Tertullian's Similitude) when he ſeems moſt to infeſt and ſcorch us, doth even then diſpenſe uſeful and healthful Influences upon us. Even I ſay in the moſt terrible and amazing Examples of Divine Juſtice (ſuch as were the ejecting and excluding Mankind from Paradiſe; the general Deſtruction in the Deluge; the exſcinding and extirpation of the *Amorites* together with other Inhabitants of *Canaan*; the delivering *Iſrael* and *Judah* into the *Aſſyrian* Thraldom, the final deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, together with the diſperſion of the *Jewiſh* Nation over the World, and its ſad Conſequences) we may (not hardly) obſerve Particulars, more than ſavouring of great Mercy and Goodneſs.

Vide Chryſ. *Tom.* 6. *Or.* 8. *p.* 63. *optimè.*

1. That (in moſt of theſe Caſes, in all according to ſome Account) God was not moved to the Diſpleaſure productive of thoſe Effects but upon very great Conſiderations. That he did not ſeek Advantages, nor embrace all Occaſions; but was incenſed by ſuperlative Degrees of Iniquity and Impurity (ſuch in their own Nature, and much aggravated by their Circumſtances) ſuch as rendred common Life inconvenient and inſupportable to Men; made the Earth to ſtink with their Filth and Corruption; to groan under the burthen and weight of them; to pant and labour for a riddance from them.

2. That God did not upon the firſt Glimpſes of Provocation proceed to the execution and diſcharge of his Wrath, but did with wonderful Patience expect a change in the Offenders, *waiting to be gracious*, as the Prophet ſpeaketh; affording more than competent time, and means more than ſufficient of appeaſing him by Repentance; vouchſafing frequent Admonitions, Solicitations, Threatnings, moderate Corrections, and other ſuch proper Methods conducing to their Amendment, and to their Preſervation.

Eſa. 30. 18.

3. That their Inflictions themſelves, how grievous ſoever in appearance, were not really extreme in meaſure; not accompanied with ſo acute Torments, nor with ſo lingring Pains, nor with ſo utter a Ruin as might have been inflicted; but that (as *Ezra*, in reſpect to one of thoſe Caſes, confeſſeth) they *were leſs than their Iniquities deſerved.* That (as it is in the *Pſalm*) *He did not ſtir up all his Wrath*; which would have immediately conſumed them, or infinitely tormented them.

Ez. 9. 13.

Pſal. 78. 38.

4. That (conſequently upon ſome of thoſe Premiſſes) the Afflictions brought upon them were in a ſort rather neceſſary than voluntary in reſpect of him; rather a natural Fruit of their Diſpoſitions and Dealings than a free Reſult of his Will; however contrary to his primary Intentions and Deſires. Whence he no leſs truly, than earneſtly diſclaims having any Pleaſure in their Death, that he *afflicted willingly*, *or grieved the Children of Men*; and charged their Diſaſters upon themſelves, as the ſole Cauſes of them.

Ezek. 18. 23, 32. 33. 11. Lam. 3 33. Hoſ. 13. 9.

5. That farther, the Chaſtiſements inflicted were wholſome and profitable, both in their own Nature, and according to his Deſign; both in reſpect to the generality of Men (who by them were warned, and by ſuch Examples deterr'd from incurring the like Miſchiefs; were kept from the Inconveniences, ſecured from the Temptations, the Violences, the Allurements, the Contagions of the preſent evil State? according to that Reaſon alledged for Punishments of this kind: *All the people ſhall hear, and fear, and do no more preſumptuouſly*) and in regard to the Sufferers themſelves, who thereby were prevented from proceeding farther in their wicked Courſes; accumulating

Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. ζ'. Ὁμοῦ καὶ δικαστὴς καὶ ἰατρὸς καὶ διδάσκαλος ἐστὶν ὁ Θεός. *Ibid.* Deut. 17. 12. Ἐπίτασιν τιμωρίαν, ἀ οὐ προσδέχεται ἀπειθῶν δίκην, ἀλλὰ τὰ μέλλοντα διορθοῦται. Chryſ. *Tom.* 8. *p.* 59.

lating (or, *treaſuring up*, as the *Apoſtle* ſpeaketh) farther degrees of *Wrath*, as obdurate and incorrigible People will ſurely do. (*Why*, ſaith the *Prophet*, *ſhould ye be ſtricken any more?* (to what purpoſe is moderate Correction?) *ye will revolt more and more.* That he did with a kind of Violence to his own Inclinations, and Reluctancy inflict Puniſhments on them. *O Ephraim, how ſhall I give thee up, O Ephraim.* Yea farther, Rom. 2. 5. Iſa. 1. 5. 26. 10. Hoſ. 6. 4.

6. That during their Sufferances God did bear Compaſſion toward them, who underwent it. *His Bowels*, as we are told, *ſounded and were troubled*; his *Heart was turned within him*; his *Repentings were kindled together*; *in all their Afflictions himſelf was afflicted*; *he remember'd and conſider'd they were but Duſt*; that they *were but Fleſh* (that they were but of a weak and frail Temper; that they were naturally prone to Corruption and Evil) and did therefore pity their Infirmity, and their Miſery. Iſa. 63. 9, 15. Hoſ. 11. 8. Jer. 31. 20. Gen. 6. 3. 8. 21. Pſal. 103. 14. 78. 39.

7. That God *in his Wrath remembred Mercy* (as the Prophet *Habakkuk* ſpeaks) mixing gracious Intentions of future Refreſhment and Reparation with the preſent Executions of Juſtice. *I know* (ſaith he in the Prophet *Jeremy*) *the Thoughts that I think toward you*; *Thoughts of Peace, and not of Evil, to give you an expected End. Behold, I will bring Health and Cure, I will cure them, and will reveal unto them abundance of Peace and Truth.* And, *For a ſmall Moment* (ſaith he again in *Eſay*) *have I forſaken thee, but with great Mercies will I gather thee.* And, *Ye ſhall be comforted concerning the Evil that I have brought upon Jeruſalem.* ——and *ye ſhall know, that I have not done without cauſe all that I have done in it*; ſaith the Lord (he ſaith ſo in *Ezekiel*) *without cauſe*, that is, without a beneficial Deſign toward them. Hab. 3. 2. Gen. 6. 3. 8. 21. Jer. 29. 11. 33. 6. Iſa. 54. 7. Ezek. 14. 21. 22, 23

8. Laſtly, that he always ſignified a readineſs to turn from his Anger, and to forgive them; and upon very equal and eaſie Terms to be fully reconciled to them; according to that in the *Pſalmiſt*, *He doth not always chide, neither will he keep his Anger for ever*; but upon any reaſonable Overtures of Humiliation, Confeſſion and Converſion to him, was ready to abate, yea, to remove the Effects of his Diſpleaſure; *Thou waſt a God that forgaveſt them, though thou tookeſt vengeance of their Inventions.* Pſal. 103. 9. Pſal. 99. 8.

Theſe Particulars, if we attentively ſurvey thoſe dreadful Examples of Divine Severity forementioned (the greateſt which Hiſtory acquaints us with, or which have been ſhewed on this Theater of Humane Affairs) we may obſerve moſt of them in all, all of them in ſome, either plainly expreſſed, or ſufficiently inſinuated by the Circumſtances obſervable in the Hiſtorical Narrations concerning them; ſo that even the harſheſt Inſtances of God's wrathful dealing with ſome Men, may well ſerve to the illuſtration of his Mercy and Goodneſs toward all Men; may evince it true, what our Lord affirms, that God is, χρηστὸς ἐπὶ ἀχαρίστους, καὶ πονηρούς, *kind and beneficent even to the moſt ingrateful and unworthy Perſons.* To make which Obſervation good, and conſequently to aſſert the verity of our Text (That *God is good unto all, and merciful over all his Works*)) againſt the moſt plauſible Exceptions; I ſhall examine the Particulars in the following Diſcourſe. Luke 6. 35.

SERMON XXXVII.

Of the Goodneſs of GOD.

PSALM CXLV. 9.

The Lord is good to All, and his tender Mercies are over all his Workt.

I Shall now more particularly conſider the ſeveral Inſtances beforementioned.

I. The Puniſhment inflicted on Mankind for the firſt Tranſgreſſion containeth in it much of Depth and Myſtery, ſurpaſſing perhaps all Capacity of Man to reach; its full Comprehenſion being by Divine Wiſdom (I conceive) purpoſely concealed from us; ſo that I cannot pretend thoroughly to explain it; and ſhall not therefore ſpeak much about it.

This indeed is clear, that God did in his Proceedings occaſion'd thereby intend remarkably to evidence his grievous Reſentment and Indignation againſt wilful Diſobedience; yet in the management thereof we may obſerve; that,

Vid. Chryſ. Ἀνδρ. ξ'. Οὐ γὰρ εἶπε, καθάπερ εἰώθεις ἂν ὑβρισμένον εἰπεῖν, ὦ μαχὲ καὶ πάμμιαρε, &c. Ibid.

1. After that Provocation (in it ſelf ſo high, and liable to ſo great Aggravations) God did expreſs his Reſentment in ſo calm and gentle a manner that *Adam*, though abaſhed upon the Conſcience of his Fault, was not yet by the vehemency of the Reproof utterly diſmayed or dejected.

2. God uſed great Moderation in the infliction of this Puniſhment; mitigating the extremity of the Sentence juſtly decreed and plainly declared
Gen. 2. 17. to *Adam* (that in caſe of his offending againſt the Law preſcribed him, he ſhould immediately die) for notwithſtanding his Forfeiture that very day of Life, God reprieved him, and allowed him a long Life, almoſt of a Thouſand Years after.

3. God did not quite reject Man thereupon, nor did withdraw his fatherly Care and Providence from him, but openly continued them; inſomuch that immediately after the Curſe pronounced upon our firſt Parents, the
Gen. 3. 21. next Paſſage we meet with is, that unto *Adam* and his *Wife* did the Lord God make Coats, and cloathed them.

4. Although indeed Man was by his Fault a great Loſer, and became deprived of high Advantages; yet the Mercy of God did leave him in no very deplorable Eſtate, ſimply conſidered, as to his Life here; the Relicks of his

his firſt Eſtate, and the Benefits continued to him being very conſiderable; ſo that we the Inheritors of that great Diſaſter do commonly find the Enjoyment of Life, with the Conveniences attending it, to be ſweet and deſirable.

5. The Event manifeſts, that while God in appearance ſo ſeverely puniſhed Mankind, he did in his Mind reſerve Thoughts of higheſt Kindneſs toward us; even then deſigning not only to reſtore us to our former Degree, but to raiſe us to a Capacity of obtaining a far more high Pitch of Happineſs. While he excluded us from a Terreſtrial Paradiſe here, he provided a far better Celeſtial one, into which, if we pleaſe, by Obedience to his Holy Laws we may certainly enter. So that in this of all moſt heavy inſtance of Vengeance God's exceeding Goodneſs and Clemency do, upon ſeveral Conſiderations moſt clearly ſhine.

II. The Calamity, which by the general Deluge did overflow the World, was not (we may conſider) brought upon Men but in regard to the moſt enormous Offences long continued in, and after amendment was become deſperate. Not till after much forbearance, and till Men were grown to a ſuperlative pitch of wickedneſs by no fit means (by no friendly warning, no ſharp reprehenſion, no moderate chaſtiſement) corrigible. Not until the Earth was become (eſpecially for Perſons of any Innocence or Integrity) no tolerable Habitation, but a Theater of lamentable Tragedies, a Seat of horrid Iniquity, a Sink of loathſome Impurity. So that in Reaſon it was to be eſteemed rather a Favour to Mankind to reſcue it from ſo unhappy a State, than to ſuffer it to perſiſt therein. To ſnatch Men away out of ſo uncomfortable a Place, from ſo wretched a Condition, was a Mercy; it had been a Judgment to have left them annoying, rifling and harraſing; biting, tearing and devouring; yea defiling and debauching each other; and ſo heaping upon themſelves Loads of Guilt, and deeper Obligations to Vengeance. *The Earth* (ſaith the Text) *was corrupt before God; and the Earth was fill'd with Violence. God looked upon the Earth, and behold it was corrupt; for all Fleſh had corrupted its way upon the Earth*; which univerſal and extreme Corruption had not in probability ſprung up in a ſmall time (for, Gen. 6. 11.

Nemo repente fuit turpiſſimus,

is true not only of ſingle Men, but of Communities; no People, no Age doth ſuddenly degenerate into extreme Degrees of Wickedneſs) ſo that the Divine Patience had long endured and attended upon Men, before the Reſolution of thus puniſhing them was taken up; the which alſo was not at firſt peremptory and irreverſible, but in God's Deſign and Deſire it was revocable; for the World had a long Reprieve after the Sentence paſs'd; Execution was deferr'd till *Noah*'s long preaching of Righteouſneſs, and denouncing of Judgment in a manner ſo notorious and ſignal (not by verbal Declarations only, but by the viſible Structure of the Ark) could prevail nothing toward their amendment, but was either diſtruſted or diſregarded, and perhaps derided by them. For, as St. *Peter* tells us, *They were diſobedient, when once the Long-ſuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the Ark was preparing*; that is (as is collected by ſeveral Interpreteas from the * Text of the Story) during no leſs than 120 Years; a competent time for their recollecting themſelves, and endeavouring by amendment of Life to prevent the Ruin threatned to come upon them. Yet notwithſtanding that, this obſtinate and incorrigible Diſobedience did ſo much diſpleaſe 1 Pet. 3. 20. 2 Pet. 2. 5. * Gen. 6. 3.

God

Gen. 6. 6. God, as that in conſideration thereof God is ſaid to have *repented that he made Man on the Earth*, and to have been thereby grieved at the Heart: Yet did he ſo temper his Anger as not utterly to deſtroy Mankind, but provided againſt its total ruin, by preſerving one Family as a Seminary thereof; preſerving the Father thereof (queſtionleſs by a ſpecial Grace) from the ſpreading Contagion, inſpiring him with Faith, and qualifying him for the Favour, which by him he deſigned to communicate unto the World; the reparation thereof, and reſtoring the Generations of Men. So that alſo through this Paſſage of Providence, how diſmal and dreadful ſoever at firſt ſight, much Goodneſs will be tranſparent to him that looks upon attentively.

III. In the next place, as to that extermination and exciſion of the *Canaanites*, which carries ſo horrible an appearance of Severity, we may find Levit. 18. it qualifiable, if we conſider, that for the nature of the Treſpaſſes, which procured it, they were inſufferably heinous and abominable: Moſt ſottiſh, barbarous, and baſe Superſtitions (Cruelty and Impurity being eſſential Ingredients into their Performances of Religion, and it being Piety with them to be exceedingly wicked) and in their other Practice moſt beaſtly laſciviouſneſſes, moſt bloody Violences, Oppreſſions and Rapines generally abounding. So that for thoſe Men themſelves, who were by turns, as it hapned, the Authors and the Objects of theſe Dealings, it could not be deſirable to continue in a State of living ſo wretched and uncomfortable. Impunity had been no Mercy to ſuch People, but rather a Cruelty; cutting them off muſt needs be the greateſt Favour they were capable of; it being only removing them from a Hell here, and preventing their deſerving many worſe Hells hereafter. Even to themſelves it was a Favour and a greater one to their Poſterity, whom they might have brought forth to ſucceed in their Courſes, and to the Conſequences of them; whom they would have engaged into their wicked Cuſtoms, and their woful Miſchiefs. They were not ſo deſtroyed from the Land, until it grew uninhabitable in any tolerable manner, and it ſelf could not, as it were, endure them any longer, but (as the Text doth moſt ſignificantly expreſs Levit. 18. 28. it) *did ſpue them out*; being like a Stomach ſurcharg'd with foul, or poiſonous Matter, which it loaths, and is pained with, and therefore naturally labours to expel. Neither was this ſad Doom executed upon them till after 400 Years of forbearance: for even in *Abraham*'s time God took notice of their Iniquity, then born and growing; and gave account of his ſuſpending their Puniſhment; *becauſe* (ſaid he) *the Iniquity of the Amo-* Gen. 15. 16. *rites* was not yet full (that is, was not yet arrived to a pitch of deſperate Obſtinacy and Incorrigibility:) While there was the leaſt glimpſe of Hope, the leaſt Relicks of any Reaſon, any Regret, any Shame in them, the leaſt poſſibility of Recovery, God ſtopped his avenging Hand; but when all ground of Hope was removed; the whole Stock of natural Light and Strength was imbezill'd; all Fear, all Remorſe, all Modeſty were quite baniſhed away; all Means of Cure had proved ineffectual; the Gangreen of Vice had ſeized on every part, Iniquity was grown mature and mellow; then was the Stroke of Juſtice indeed not more ſeaſonable than neceſſary; then was the fatal Sword the only proper Remedy; then ſo with one Stroke to cut off them, and their Sins and their Miſchiefs, and their Miſeries together, was an Argument no leſs ſtrong and clear of God's merciful Goodneſs, than of his juſt Anger toward them.

IV. The

IV. The like Account we may render of God's Judgments upon the People of *Iſrael*. If we conſult the *Prophets*, who declare the ſtate of things, the Facts, the Diſpoſitions, the Guilts, that brought them down from Heaven, we ſhall ſee, that they came upon account of an univerſal Apoſtaſie from both the Faith and Practice of true Religion; *a deep corruption (like that in the days of Gibeah*, as the Prophet *Hoſea* ſpeaketh) in Mind and Manners; an utter perverting of all Truth and Right; an obſtinate compliance with, or emulation of the moſt abominable Practices of the Heathen Nations about them; an Univerſal Apoſtaſie, I ſay, from God and all Goodneſs; a thorough Prevalence of all Iniquity. Hear the *Prophets* expreſſing it, and deſcribing them. *Jeremy*; *Run ye to and fro through the Streets of Hieruſalem; ſee now, and know, and ſeek in the broad places thereof; if ye can find a Man; if there be any that executeth Judgment, that ſeeketh the Truth, and I will pardon it. Eſay*; *The Earth is defiled under the Inhabitants thereof; becauſe they have tranſgreſſed the Laws, changed the Ordinances, broken the everlaſting Covenant: Ah ſinful Nation, a people laden with Iniquities, a Seed of Evil Doers, Children that are Corrupters; they have forſaken the Lord, they have provoked the Holy One of Iſrael unto Anger; they are gone away backward*, &c. Thus do theſe and other Prophets in a like ſtrain deſcribe in the groſs the ſtate of things preceding thoſe Judgments. And in *Ezekiel* (in divers places, particularly in the 8*th*, but eſpecially in the 22*d*. Chapter) we have their Offences in retail, and by parts (their groſs Impieties, their grievous Cruelties, Extortions and Oppreſſions) ſet out copiouſly, and in moſt lively Colours. And as the Quality of their Provocations was ſo bad, and the Extenſion of them ſo large, ſo was their Condition deſperate; there were no means of Remedy left, no hopes of Amendment; ſo was their Forehead covered with Impudence, their Heart hardned with Obſtinacy, their Minds deeply tinctured with habitual Pravity and Perverſeneſs: *Can the Ethiopian change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots, then may ye alſo do good that are accuſtomed to do evil*, ſaith *Jeremy* concerning them. All Methods of reclaiming them had proved fruitleſs; no favourable Dealings, no gentle Admonition, or kind Inſtruction would avail any thing; for 'tis of them the Prophet *Eſay* ſaith; *Let Favour be ſhewed to the Wicked, yet will he not learn Righteouſneſs.* No Advices, no Reproofs (how frequent, how vehement, how urgent ſoever) had any Effect upon them. Almighty God declares often that he had ſpoken unto them riſing up early, but they would not hear nor regard his Speech; did not only neglect, and refuſe, but *deſpiſe*, *loath*, *mock*, and *reproach* it (*turning their Back upon him, pulling away their Shoulder, ſtiffning their Neck, and ſtopping their Ears, that they ſhould not hear*) *that he had ſpread out his Hands all the day long to a rebellious and gainſaying People; to a People that* (with extreme Inſolence and Immodeſty) *provoked him to Anger continually to his Face.* Nor could any Tenders of Mercy allure or move them: *I ſaid* (God ſaid it in *Jeremy*) *after all theſe things, turn unto me, but ſhe returned not. Amend your Ways and your Doings, and obey the Voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent him of the Evil, that he hath pronounced againſt you. Repent, and turn your ſelves from all your Tranſgreſſions, ſo Iniquity ſhall not be your Ruin*; and innumerable the like Overtures we have of Grace and Mercy to them; all which they proudly and perverſely rejected, perſiſting in their wicked Courſes: they even repelled and ſilenced, they rudely treated and perſecuted the Prophets ſent unto them with Meſſages of kind Warning, and Overtures of Grace; ſo obſtructing all acceſs of Mercy to themſelves: *They ſay to the Seers, ſee not; and to the Prophets, propheſie not unto us right things*: ſo *Eſay* reports their proceeding;

Hoſ. 9. 9. Je. 5. 1. Eſ. 24. 5. 1. 4. Ezek. 22. Jer. 13. 23. Iſa. 26. 10. Jer. 25. 4. 32. 33. 6. 10. Zech. 7. 11. Neh. 9. 29, 30. Eſ. 65. 2. 2 Chr. 36. 16. Jer. 3. 7. 7. 3. 4. 1, 14. 18. 11. 26. 13. Jer. 11. 21. 32. 30. Eſa. 30. 10. Matt. 23. 37. Ezek. 18. Eſa. 30. 10.

Acts 7. 51. ceeding; *which of the Prophets did not your Fathers perſecute:* ſo St. *Stephen* expoſtulates with them. Neither were gentler Chaſtiſements deſigned for their Correction and Cure any-wiſe available; they made no Impreſſion on
Iſa. 1. 16, 17, &c. (Neh. 9. 29.) Jer. 2. 30. 5. 3. them, they produced no change in them: *In vain* (ſaith God) *I have ſmitten your Children, they have received no Correction.* And, *Thou haſt ſmitten them, but they have not grieved; thou haſt conſumed them, but they have refuſed to receive Correction; they have made their Faces harder than a Rock,*
Iſa. 9. 13. *they have refuſed to return*; and, *The People turneth not to him that ſmiteth*
Rom. 9. 22. *them, neither do they ſeek the Lord of Hoſts.* Unto this καταρτισμὸς εἰς ἀπώλειαν, this perfect Fitneſs (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh) this maturity of deſperate and irrecoverable Impiety, had that People grown, not at once, and on a ſudden, but by continual ſteps of Provocation, through a long courſe of time, during that divine Patience ſparing them, and by various Expedients ſtriving to recover them. This Conſideration is frequently inſiſted
Jer. 32. 30. 7. 25. 16. 12. 11. 7. upon, eſpecially in the Prophet *Jeremy*, *The Children of Iſrael, and the Children of Judah have only done evil before me from their youth; ſince the day*
Ezr. 9. 7. *that your Fathers came forth out of the Land of Egypt unto this day, I have even ſent unto you all my Servants the Prophets, daily riſing up early, and ſending them; Yet they hearkned not unto me*, &c. Well then, after ſo many hundred Years of abuſed Patience, and unſucceſsful Labour to reclaim them, it was needful that Juſtice ſhould have her Courſe upon them: Yet how then did God inflict it, with what Mildneſs and Moderation, with what
Neh. 9. 31. Pity and Relenting? *Nevertheleſs* (ſay they in *Nehemiah*) *for thy great Mercies ſake thou didſt not utterly conſume them, nor forſake them, for thou art a gracious and merciful God.* And, *Thou haſt puniſhed us leſs than our Iniqui-*
Ezr 9. 13. *ties deſerve*, doth *Ezra* confeſs. *I will not execute the fierceneſs of my An-*
Hoſ. 11. 9. *ger*; doth God himſelf reſolve and declare in *Hoſea.* So mild he was as to the meaſure of his puniſhing; and what Compaſſion accompanied it,
Jer. 31. 20. thoſe pathetical Expreſſions declare: *My Heart is turned within me, my Repentings are kindled together. Is Ephraim my dear Son, is he a pleaſant Child? for ſince I ſpake againſt him, I do earneſtly remember him ſtill, therefore my*
Iſa. 63. 9. *Bowels are troubled for him. In all their Afflictions he was afflicted*, &c. We may add; that notwithſtanding all theſe Provocations of his Wrath, and Abuſings of his Patience, which thus neceſſitated God to execute his Vengeance, yet even during the execution thereof, and while his Hand was ſo ſtretched forth againſt them, he did retain Thoughts of Favour and Intentions of doing good even toward this ſo ingrateful, ſo inſenſible, ſo in-
Iſa. 54. 7. corrigible a People: *For a ſmall time* (ſaith God) *have I forſaken thee,*
Jer. 29. 11. 33. 6, 7. *but with great Mercies will I gather thee: I know the Thoughts that I think toward you, ſaith the Lord, Thoughts of Peace, and not of Evil, to give you an expected End.* Now theſe things being ſeriouſly laid together, have we not occaſion and ground ſufficient even in this Inſtance no leſs to admire and adore the wonderful Benignity, Mercy, and Patience of God, than to dread and tremble at his Juſtice?

V. As for the laſt ſo calamitous and piteous Deſtruction of *Hieruſalem*, with the grievous Conſequences thereof, as we might apply thereto the former Conſiderations, ſo we ſhall only obſerve what was peculiar in that Caſe; that God diſpenſed ſuch Means to prevent it; (to remove the meritorious Cauſes thereof, obſtinate Impenitency and Incredulity; reſiſting the Truth by him ſent from Heaven with ſo clear a Revelation and powerful Confirmation; deſpiſing the Spirit of God, and the Dictates of their own Conſcience; baſely miſuſing divers ways, and at laſt cruelly murthering the Son of God) ſuch Means, I ſay, God did employ for the removing thoſe Provocatives of Vengeance, which (as our Lord himſelf

ſaith)

faith) were ſufficient to have converted *Tyre* and *Sidon*; yea, to have preſerved *Sodom* it ſelf; ſo that our *Saviour* could with a compaſſionate grief deplore the unſucceſsfulneſs of his tender affection, and ſolicitous care for their welfare, in theſe paſſionate terms; *How often would I have gathered thy children as a hen gathers her chickens under her wing, but ye would not?* That St. *John* the *Baptiſt* his ſharp reproofs, his powerful exhortations, his downright and clear forewarnings of what would follow (*Even now*, ſaid he, *the axe is laid to the root of the tree*) attended with ſo remarkable circumſtances of his perſon, and his carriage (which induced all the World about him to regard him as no ordinary man, but a ſpecial inſtrument of God, and meſſenger from Heaven) did yet find no effect conſiderable; the *Phariſees* and *Lawyers*, thoſe corrupt guides, whoſe authority managed the blind multitude, *defeating the counſel of God toward themſelves*, as St. *Luke* ſpeaketh; (that is, defeating his gracious purpoſe of reclaiming them from diſobedience, and conſequently of with-holding the judgments imminent) they reviled the perſon of that venerable *Prophet*, *He hath a devil*, ſaid they; they ſlighted his premonitions, and rejected his advices, by obſerving which, thoſe dreadful miſchiefs, which fell upon their rebellious heads, might have been averted. We may add, that even thoſe fearful judgments were tempered with mixtures of favourable deſign, not only to the community of mankind (which by ſo remarkable a vengeance upon the perſecutors of our *Lord* and the ſcorners of his doctrine was converted unto, or confirmed in the Chriſtian Faith) but even toward that people whom it ſerved to convince of their errors and crimes; to induce them to repentance, to provoke them unto the acknowledgment and embracing of God's truth, ſo palpably vindicated by him. So that I might here apply that paſſage of St. *Paul* (if not directly and adequately according to his ſenſe, yet with no incongruous alluſion at leaſt) *Have they ſtumbled, that they ſhould fall* (or, was there no other deſign of God's judgments upon them, but their utter ruine?) μὴ γένοιτο· *No ſuch matter; but through their fall ſalvation came to the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealouſie* (or emulation.) And, in effect, as our *Lord* in the midſt of his ſufferings did affectionately pray for God's mercy upon them, as the *Apoſtles* did offer reconciliation unto them all indifferently, who would repent, and were willing to embrace it; ſo were ſuch of them as were diſpoſed to comply with thoſe invitations, received to grace, how deeply ſoever involved in the continued guilt of thoſe enormous perſecutions, injuries and blaſphemies; as particularly Saint *Paul*, that illuſtrious example of God's patience, and mercy in this caſe. So that neither by this inſtance is any attribute of God more ſignalized, than his tranſcendent goodneſs, in like manner as by the former inſtances, and in analogy to them by all others, that may be aſſigned. By all of them it will appear that God is primarily and of himſelf diſpoſed to do all fitting and poſſible good to men, not to inflict evil more than is fit and neceſſary; that God is indeed *Optimus ex naturæ proprietate (moſt good according to property of nature)* although *juſtus ex cauſæ neceſſitate (ſevere from the neceſſity of the caſe)* as *Tertullian* ſpeaketh. To afflict men (either ſome men ſingly, or whole ſocieties of men) may be ſometimes expedient upon ſeveral accompts; for vindicating the eſteem, and ſupporting the intereſt of goodneſs, which may by impunity be diſgraced, endamaged, endangered; for the diſcrimination of good and evil men, in an obſervable manner; for the encouragement and comfort of the good; the reduction and amendment of the bad; for preventing the contagion, and ſtopping the progreſs of iniquity, whereupon greater guilts, and worſe miſchiefs would enſue; it may be

Matt. 11. 21. 23. 37. 3. 10. Luke 7. 30. Matt. 11. 18. Rom. 11. 11. 1 Tim. 1. 16. De reſurr. Carnis, c. 14.

Baſil. Orat. *Quòd Deus non eſt cauſa mali, elegantèr & pulchrè de hac re.*

as neceſſary as ſharp Phyſick to cure publick or private diſtempers; as an inſtrument of rowſing us out of our ſinful lethargies; as that which may cauſe us better to underſtand our ſelves, and more to remember God; as a ground of fearing God, and an inducement to believe his providence. For thoſe and many ſuch purpoſes to bring upon men things diſtaſtful to ſenſe, may be very requiſite; nor doth the doing it any wiſe prejudice the truth of divine goodneſs, but rather confirms it, commends it, and advances its juſt eſteem. It would be a fond indulgence, not a wiſe Kindneſs; a cruel, rather than a loving pity to deal otherwiſe. In fine, we are to conſider, that all the miſchiefs we undergo, God doth not ſo much bring them on us, as we do pull them on our ſelves. They are ἀυθαίρετα πήματα, *affected*, or *ſelf-choſen miſchiefs*; they are κακὰ βλαστήματα προαιρέσεως, *bad ſprouts of our free choice* (as a *Father* calls them) they are (as another *Father* ſaith) ἑκουσίων κακῶν ἀκούσια ἔκγονα (*the unwilling off-ſprings of wilful evils*) they are the certain reſults of our own will, or the natural fruits of our actions; actions, which (however God deſire, adviſe, command; perſuade, entreat, excite) we do will, we are reſolved to perform. *We in a manner* (as *Salvian* ſaith) *do force God to do whatever he doeth in this kind; violently plucking down vengeance on our own heads; compelling the kind and merciful Lord, againſt his nature and will, to afflict us; not ſo much as giving him leave to ſpare us.* God vehemently diſclaims himſelf to be the original cauſe; to deſign (according to abſolute or primary intention) to deſire to delight in our grief, or our ruine. *As I live, ſaith the Lord*, (and ſurely when God ſwears, we may believe that he is very ſerious) *I have no pleaſure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. I call heaven to record this day againſt you, that I have ſet life and death before you, therefore chuſe life. He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men. He would have all men to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. He would not have any periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance. He made not death, nor hath he pleaſure in the deſtruction of the living.* God then, if we may believe him, is not the firſt authour of our calamities: who then? He tells us himſelf: *O Iſrael, thou haſt deſtroyed thy ſelf: thou haſt fallen by thy own iniquity. Your ſins have with-holden good things from you. Our iniquities like the wind have taken us away. How often would I have gathered you, but ye would not?* The deſigns, and the endeavours of God do tend to our welfare and ſalvation; 'tis our will and our actions which only procure our ruine: *'Tis we*, that (as the *Wiſe-man* ſaith) *ſeek death in the errour of our life; and pull upon our own ſelves deſtruction.* So that, to conclude this part of our diſcourſe, Even thoſe paſſages of providence, which at firſt glimpſe appear moſt oppoſite, or diſadvantageous to the goodneſs of God (or to our opinion and belief concerning it) do, being well ſifted, no wiſe prejudice it, but rather ſerve to corroborate and magnifie it.

Wiſd. 1. 12. *Carm.* Pythag. Cyril. Hier. Damaſc.

Πάντα καιρὸν ἡ προαιρέσεως ὁ θεὸς, ὥσπερ ἡμᾶς ἀπαλλάξαι κολάσεως, ἡ τιμωρίας. Chryſ. *Tom.* 8. *p.* 100.

Nos vim Deo facimus iniquitatibus noſtris; nos nolentem ulciſci cogimus. Deus enim pius & miſericors eſt, & qui nemnem velit perire, vel lædere, &c. Salv. *lib.* 5. & 8.

Miſeros nos nec juranti Deo credimus. Hier.

Ezek. 18. 30. 33. 11. Deut. 30. 19. Lam. 3. 32. Wiſd. 1. 13.

Hoſ. 13. 9. 14. 1. Jer. 5. 25. Iſa. 64. 6. Matt. 23. 37.

Sap. 1. 5.

St. *Chriſoſtome* in divers places doth inſiſt upon the goodneſs of God in making and threatning Hell it ſelf.

Τῆς Βασιλείας οὐκ ἔλαττον, ἡ τῆς γεέννης ἀπειλὴ δήλωσιν, ἀντὶ τῶν ἀγαθότητα, &c. Ἀνδρ. ζ.

I ſhall only farther briefly touch (or rather but mention) the uſes and effects, to the producing which, the conſideration of God's goodneſs, in ſo manifold ways declared, ſhould be applied.

1. It ſhould beget in us hearty love and reverence toward God, in regard to this attribute ſo excellent and amiable in it ſelf, ſo beneficial and advantageous to us. What can we eſteem, what can we love, if ſo admirable goodneſs doth not affect us? how prodigiouſly cold and hard is

is that heart, which cannot be warm'd and ſoftned into affection by ſo melting a conſideration?

2. It ſhould produce as grateful ſenſe in our hearts, ſo real endeavours of thankful obedience in our lives. It ſhould make us *walk worthy of God, to all well-pleaſing, bringing forth fruit in every good work*; taking heed of doing, as did *Hezekiah*, of whom it is ſaid; that *he rendred not according to the benefit done unto him, for his heart was lifted up; therefore was wrath upon him*; that we may not have that expoſtulation juſtly applied unto us: *Do ye thus requite the Lord; O fooliſh people and unwiſe?* Col. 1. 10. 2 Chro. 32. 25. Deut. 32. 6.

3. It ſhould engage us the more to fear God; complying with the *Prophet*'s admonition; *Fear the Lord and his goodneſs.* Conſidering that intimation of the *Pſalmiſt*; *There is forgiveneſs with thee, that thou mayſt be feared*; obſerving that advice of *Samuel, Only fear the Lord, and ſerve him, for conſider what great things he hath done for you.* For that indeed nothing is more terrible, than goodneſs ſlighted, and patience abuſed. Hoſ. 3. 5. Pſal. 130. 4. 1 Sam. 12. 24.

4. It ſhould humble, aſhame and grieve us, for having croſſed and offended ſuch exceeding goodneſs and mercy. It ſhould cauſe us greatly to deteſt our ſins, which lie under ſo heinous an aggravation, to be deeply diſpleaſed with our ſelves, who have ſo unworthily committed them.

5. It ſhould therefore render us wary and vigilant againſt the commiſſion of any ſin; that is, of incurring the guilt of ſo enormous ingratitude and baſeneſs; making us cautious of doing like thoſe, of whom 'tis confeſſed in *Nehemiah*; *They did eat, and were filled and delighted themſelves in thy great goodneſs; nevertheleſs they were diſobedient, and rebelled againſt thee, and caſt thy laws behind their back.* Neh. 9. 25, 26.

6. It ſhould alſo breed and nouriſh in us faith, and hope in God. For what reaſon can we have to diſtruſt of ſo great goodneſs; that he will refuſe to help us in our need; that he will fail in accompliſhment of his promiſe; that he will with-hold what is convenient for us? It ſhould preſerve us from deſpair. What temptation can we have to deſpair of mercy, if we heartily repent of our miſdoings, and ſincerely endeavour to pleaſe him? *Vid.* Chryſ. *ad* Theod. 2. *Tom.* 6. *p.* 63. *optimè & fuſè.*

7. It ſhould upon the ſame account excite us to a free and conſtant exerciſe of all devotions. For why ſhould we be ſhy or fearfull of entring into ſo friendly and favourable a preſence; why ſhould we be backward from having (upon any occaſion or need) a recourſe to him, who is ſo willing, ſo deſirous, ſo ready to do us good? what ſhould hinder us from delighting in oblations of bleſſing, and praiſe unto him? Matt. 7. 11.

8. It ought to render us ſubmiſſive, patient and contented under God's hand, of correction, or trial: as knowing, that it cannot be without very juſt cauſe, that ſuch goodneſs ſeemeth diſpleaſed with us; that we are the chief cauſes of our ſuffering, or our want; ſo that we can have no good cauſe to repine, or complain: for, *Wherefore doth the living man complain? ſince, a man* (ſuffers) *for the puniſhment of his ſins*; ſince it is *our ſins, that withhold good things from us.* Since alſo, we conſidering this attribute may be aſſured, that all God's diſpenſations do aim and tend to our good. Lam. 3. 39, 8. Jer. 5. 25.

9. It ſhould alſo in gratitude toward God, and imitation of him, engage us to be good; kind and bountifull, peaceable, and apt to forgive; meek and gentle, pitifull and affectionate toward our brethren. *To be good and mercifull, as our heavenly Father is mercifull and benign even* toward the wicked and ungratefull; to be *kind unto one another, full of bowels, forgiving one another, as God for Chriſt's ſake hath forgiven us.* Luke 6. 35, 36. 1 John 3. 16. Coloſſ. 3. 13. Eph. 4. 32.

Jude 4. 10. Lastly, We ought to have an especial care of perverting this excellent truth by mistakes and vain presumptions; that we *do not turn the grace of God into wantonness*, or occasion of licentious practice. Because God is very good and merciful, we must not conceive him to be fond, or slack, or careless; that he is apt to indulge us in sin, or to connive at our presumptuous transgression of his laws. No; ἕπεται τῷ ἀγαθῷ, ἡ ἀγαθὸν, ἡ μισοπονηρία (*the hatred of wickedness is consequent upon goodness even as such*, as *Clemens Alex.* saith) God even as he is good, cannot but detest that which is opposite and prejudicial to goodness; he cannot but maintain the honour and interest thereof; he cannot, he will not endure us to dishonour him, to wrong our neighbour, to spoil our selves. As he is a sure friend to us, as his creatures, so he is an implacable enemy to us as impe-
Psal. 11. 5. nitent rebels and apostates from our duty. *The wicked, and him that loveth violence his soul hateth.* As he is infinitely benign, so he is also perfectly
Hab. 1. 13. *holy, and of purer eyes than to behold iniquity.* *He is not a God that hath plea-*
Psal. 5. 4. *sure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with him.* *The foolish shall not stand*
Psal. 34. 16. *in his sight, he hateth all workers of iniquity.* *His face is against them that do evil.* Finally, as God is gratious to all such as are capable of his love, and qualified for his mercy; so he is an impartial and upright judge, who will deal with men according to their deserts, according to the tenour of his laws and ordinances; according to his immutable decree and word; so that as we have great reason to trust, and hope in him, so we have no true ground to presume upon him; vainly to trifle, or insolently to dally with him.

But I leave this point to be farther improved by your meditations.

Grant we beseech thee, Almighty God, that the words which we have heard this day with our outward ears, may through thy grace be so grafted inwardly in our hearts, that they may bring forth in us the fruit of good living to the honour and praise of thy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Sermon XXXVIII.

No Respect of Persons with GOD.

Rom. II. 11.

For, There is no respect of persons with God.

IT is an ordinary conceit, grounded on a superficial view of things, that Almighty God dispenseth his gifts with great inequality, and dealeth very partially with men; being lavish in his bounty to some, but sparing therein to others; slack and indulgent in calling some to accompt, but rigorous and severe in judgment toward others.

Which

Which imagination often hath influence upon the affections and the actions of men; so that hence some men do highly presume, others are much discouraged; some are apt to boast themselves special darlings and favourites of heaven; others are tempted to complain of their being quite deserted, or neglected thereby. Psal. 73. 6.

But whoever more carefully will observe things, and weigh them with good consideration, shall find this to be a great mistake; and that in truth God distributeth his favours with very equal measures, he poiseth the scales of justice with a most even hand; so that reasonably no man should be exalted, no man should be dejected in mind, upon accompt of any considerable difference in God's regard towards him, and other persons; the which is clearly discovered by God, or merely dependeth on his will and providence. Job 31. 6.

The advantages, which one man hath above another, being estimated morally, in reference to solid felicity and content, are indeed none; or are not absolutely made by God, but framed by men unto themselves. For God is indifferently affected toward persons as such nakedly and privately considered; or as devested of moral conditions, qualifications and actions; He in his dealing, whether as benefactour or judge, purely considereth the reason and exigency of things, the intrinsick worth of persons, the real merits of each cause; He maketh no arbitrary or groundless discriminations; he neither loveth and favoureth, nor loatheth and discountenanceth any person unaccomptably: He doth utterly disclaim partiality, or respect of persons, as a calumnious aspersion on him, and a scandal to his providence.

Such in holy Scriptures he representeth himself, upon various occasions; declaring his perfect impartiality, and that nothing beside the right and reason of cases doth sway with him; all other considerations being impertinent and insignificant to him. For instance,

It is declared, that he hath no partial respect to nations; for the piety of *Job* an *Edomite*, of *Melchisedeck* a *Canaanite*, of *Jethro* a *Madianite* were very pleasing to him; he favourably did hear the prayers, and accept the alms of *Cornelius* a *Roman* Souldier; whereupon St. *Peter* made this general reflexion, *Of a truth I perceive, that God is no respecter of persons; But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.* (Rom. 10. 12. 3. 29.) Acts 10. 31. 34.

He is declared not to regard the external profession of true Religion, but real practice according to it; *He rendreth* (saith St. *Paul*) *to every man according to his deeds--- tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile; for* (adds the Apostle, assigning the reason of this proceeding) *there is no respect of persons with God.* (Gal. 5. 6. 6. 15. 3. 28. Col. 3. 11. Rom. 2. 6, 9, 10. 10. 12. 3. 29.)

He is said not *to respect faces*, or any exteriour appearances, however specious in the eye of the world; according to that saying of God to *Samuel*, at the choice of *David* before his brethren; *Look not on his countenance, or on the heighth of his stature, because I have refused him; for the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance; but the Lord looketh on the heart.* 1 Sam. 16. 7.

It is expressed, that he hath no respect to the outward estate, or worldly rank and dignity of men; but that Princes and Peasants, Masters and Servants, the honourable or wealthy, and the mean or poor are of equal consideration with him; *He* (saith *Job*) *accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for they are all the work of his hands;* Job 34. 19. Sap. 6. 7.

and

Ephes. 6. 9. Colos. 3. 25. 4. 1. and St. *Paul* biddeth Masters to deal fairly with their Servants, *knowing* (saith he) *that your Master is also in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.*

We are taught, that He doth not regard even the most sacred offices, or more worthy accomplishments of men, in prejudice to the verity of things, or equity of the case; for hence St. *Paul* maintaineth his resolute behaviour toward those great pillars of Religion, St. *Peter* and St. *James*; *Of these who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me, God accepteth no man's person.* Gal. 2. 6.

It is frequently inculcated, that he hath no consideration of any gifts, of sacrifices, of services presented to him with sinister intent, to compound for sin, or excuse from duty, to pervert justice, or palliate wrong; according to that [declaration of *Moses*, *The Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward*; and that] charge of King *Jehoshaphat* to his Judges, *Let the fear of the Lord be upon you; take heed, and do it; for there is no iniquity with the Lord our God, nor respect of persons, nor taking of gifts.* And, *Do not think* (saith the *Hebrew* Wise-man) *to corrupt* (him) *with gifts; for such he will not receive; and trust not to unrighteous sacrifices; for the Lord is Judge, and with him is no respect of persons.* Deut. 10. 17. 2 Chron. 19. 7. Ecclus. 35. 12. (Isa. 1. 3. 61. 8. 66. 3. Prov. 15. 8. 21. 27. Amos 5. 21, 22. Jer. 6. 20. Mic. 6. 7, 8. Hos. 6. 6.

In fine, it is often generally declared, that God impartially dispenseth recompences, in just proportion, according to the deeds of men: *He* (saith St. *Paul*) *that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done, and there is no respect of persons; And if* (saith St. *Peter*) *ye call upon the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.* Rom. 2. 11. Col. 3. 25. 1 Pet. 1. 17.

There is nothing more frequently asserted, or more seriously urged in holy Scripture, than this point, that God will judge, and deal with men, not according to his absolute, antecedent affections, but *according to their own works*, or the tenour of their practice, duly scann'd and estimated by the rules of justice; so that the really better man will certainly prove the happier, and the worse man shall be the more wretched: *He will reward every man* (saith our Lord) κατὰ τὸν ἀρᾶξιν αὐτοῦ, *according to his practice*; *Every one* (saith St. *Paul*) *shall receive the things done in his body,* πρὸς ἃ ἔπραξε, *suitably* (in just proportion) *to his works*; and *Each man shall receive* ἴδιον μισθὸν, *his own wages according to his own labour*; and *then praise* (or a due taxation) *shall be to every man from God*: *Behold* (saith He in the Revelation) *I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to recompence each man,* ὡς τὸ ἔργον ἔστιν αὐτοῦ ἔσται, *as his work shall be.* Matt. 16. 27. Rom. 2. 6. Apoc. 2. 23. 20. 12. 2 Cor. 5. 10. 1 Cor. 3. 8. (Jer. 17. 10. 32. 19. Psal. 62. 13.) 1 Cor. 4. 5. Apoc. 22. 12. Ἀποδόσεως ἐκδικῶν.

Wherefore by sacred testimonies it is abundantly manifest, that impartiality is a divine attribute, and perfection of God; the which (for our greater satisfaction, and farther illustration of the point) may be also evinced by divers arguments, some proving that it must be so, others shewing that it is so; some inferring it *à priori*, from the prime most avowed attributes of God's nature; and from his relations to men; others arguing it *à posteriori*, from principal instances of God's proceedings and providential dispensations toward men.

Of the first sort are these.

1. God is impartial, because he is perfectly wise, and thence doth truly estimate persons and things.

Wisedom doth look evenly, with a free and pure (an indifferent and uncorrupt) eye upon all things; apprehending and esteeming each as it is in it self; making no distinction where it findeth none; not preferring one thing

thing before another without ground of difference in them. It doth not fix a valuation on its objects, but acknowledgeth it, and taketh it for such as it is in themselves.

Wherefore God cannot have any blind affection, or fondness toward any person, grounded on no reason, or upon any unaccountable prejudice. No person can seem amiable, or odious to him, who is not in himself truly such.

This argument is often used in Scripture; and to assure us of this truth it is there frequently affirmed, that God doth search the hearts, doth try the spirits, doth weigh the actions of men: *The Lord* (said *Hannah*) *is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed: All the ways of man* (saith *Solomon*) *are clean in his own eyes, but the Lord weigheth the spirits: His eyes* (saith the *Psalmist*) *behold, his eye-lids try the children of men:* and, *O Lord of Hosts* (saith *Jeremy*) *that judgest righteously, that triest the reins and the heart---Thine eyes are open upon all the ways of the sons of men, to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings:* [*I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.*] 1 Sam. 2. 3. Prov. 16. 2. Psal. 11. 4. Jer. 11. 20. 20. 12. Jer. 32. 19. Jer. 17. 10.

2. God cannot be partial, because he is perfectly righteous, just and holy. This reason adjoined to the former doth make up a complete demonstration: for partiality doth proceed either from blindness of mind, or from perverseness of will; He therefore, who hath both an exact knowledge of things, and a perfect rectitude of will, can no-wise be partial; the one enabling him to judge, the other disposing him to affect things as they are and deserve; to esteem and love that which is indeed worthy and lovely; to despise and dislike that which is despicable and odious; to have no opinion, or affection toward a person, abstracted from all qualifications; such an one being no special object of a wise and just either esteem or contempt, love or hatred.

As these causes are always inseparably connected (for what is justness, but a disposition of will, to follow, without deflexion, the dictates of wisedom?) so the effect must necessarily follow; according to numberless testimonies in Scripture importing, that *The righteous Lord loveth righteousness; but the wicked, and him that loveth violence, his soul hateth: The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous----* but *the face of the Lord is against them that do evil.* Psal. 11. 7. (7. 11. 33. 5. 45. 7. 146. 8.) Psal. 11. 5. 5. 5. Psal. 34. 15, 16.

3. God is impartial, because he is infinitely great and potent; whence all creatures are in the same degree inferiour, at the same distance remote from him; all are equally at his discretion and disposal; he hath no need of any; what therefore should incline him to regard one before another, excepting onely goodness, wherein he delighteth? So the Wise-man discourseth, *He that is Lord of all, shall fear no man's person, neither shall he stand in awe of any man's greatness; for he hath made the small and great, and careth for all alike.* So *Moses* did imply, *The Lord your God is God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons.* Sap. 6. 7. Deut. 10. 17.

4. God is impartial, because he is immensely good and benign; both intensively in the degree, and extensively as to the objects of his goodness; so that he favoureth all equally, because all thoroughly, so far as may well be according to their condition and capacity; whence if there be any difference or defect, the ground thereof is not in his nature or will, but in the different qualifications of Creatures. Exod. 24. 6, 7. Numb. 14. 18. Psal. 86. 5, 15. 103. 8. 145. 8.

There is a double goodness or love of God; one absolute, preceding all regard to personal qualities, or deeds; the other conditionate, and consequent

quent on special regards; in both these God is impartial; for the first is general and unconfined, according to that of the Psalmist, *The Lord is good to all, and his mercies are over all his works*; and those sayings in the Gospel, *He is kind unto the unthankfull, and to the evil; He maketh his sun to rise on the evil, and on the good; and sendeth rain on the just, and on the unjust*; The second is grounded on special reasons of the case, and adapted to the rules of justice, demanding it; according whereto *The Lord is rich* (in mercy) *toward all that call upon him. He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him*, and *preserveth all them that love him.*

Psal. 145. 9, 16. Luke 6. 35. Matt. 5. 45. Rom. 10. 12. Psal. 145. 18. Psal. 34. 15. Psal. 145. 19, 20. 34. 9. 33. 18.

In the first there is no difference; in the second the difference is made by our selves; being founded in our voluntary demeanour.

5. God is impartial toward all persons, because he hath the same (natural and original) relations toward all.

1. He is the maker and father of all; according to that of the Prophet, *Have we not all one Father? hath not one God created us?* and that of the Apostle, There is *One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all*; He therefore hath the same parental kindness toward all, the same tenderness for the good of each; He is not capable of that imperfection, which is observable in some parents, to be fond and indulgent to some children above others; but in his affection *The rich and poor* (as the Wise-man saith) *do meet together, the Lord is the maker of them all.*

Mal. 2. 10. Ephes. 4. 6. Prov. 22. 2.

Hence *Job* did collect that *God accepteth not the persons of Princes, nor regardeth the rich more than the poor; for* (saith he) *they are all the work of his hands.*

Job 34. 39.

Hence the same holy Man did infer, that he was obliged to deal fairly with his own servants, for that God in judgment would consider their case no less than his, upon this accompt, for *Did not he that made me in the womb, make him; and did not one fashion us in the womb?*

Job 31. 13, 14, 15. Job 31. 15.

Hence the Wise-man, who imitated *Solomon*, did argue an equality of gratious providence toward all, *He hath made the small and the great, and careth for all alike.*

Sap. 6. 7.

2. God is the common Lord of all; and therefore is concerned to protect all with the like care, to govern all with the same equity.

Hence St. *Paul* gathereth that God is indifferently willing to shew mercy, and dispence blessings to all people; to confer the means of salvation, and to accept pious endeavours, without distinction of *Jew* or *Gentile*; *Is* (saith he) *he the God of the Jews onely? is he not also of the Gentiles?* and, *There is therefore no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*

Rom. 3. 29. Rom. 10. 12.

Hence the same Apostle doth urge Masters to be just and kind to their servants; for that God as the common Master hath an equal respect to both; *knowing that your Master also is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.*

Ephes. 6. 9. 1 Tim. 4. 10. 2. 3.

3. God is *the Saviour of all*; desiring and designing that *all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth*; being *willing that no man should perish, but that all should come to repentance.*

1 Tim. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

Wherefore out of philanthropy and love to mankind he sent his Son to be *the Saviour of the world*; to *give himself a ransome for all men*, to *taste death for every man.*

Tit. 3. 11. 2. 11. 1 John 4. 14. Luke 9. 56. John 3. 17. 12. 47. 2 Cor. 5. 19. 1 Tim. 2. 6. Heb. 2. 9.

And what greater instance could there be of perfect impartiality?

So by reasons from the principal attributes and relations of God his impartiality may be deduced: The same also may be declared from his proceedings and dealings with men. For

1. God

1. God hath proposed to all men indifferently the same terms and conditions of obtaining his love and favour, of enjoying his bounty and mercy, of obtaining rewards and felicity from him. Clem. *Paed.* l. 4.

The same laws and rules of life are prescribed to all persons, as men, and as Christians.

The natural dictates of reason, the precepts of holy Scripture, the great moral duties of Religion, by observance whereof God's favour is retained, and salvation assured, are of general concern and common obligation to all without exception.

God hath not framed one Law, or one Gospel for Princes and great Men, another for Pesants and mean Artisans; He hath not chalked out one way toward heaven for the rich, another for the poor to walk in; But all, *high and low, rich and poor one with another*, are tied to observe the precepts of piety, of charity, of justice, of temperance, sobriety and chastity, of modesty, humility and patience; none (great or small) can otherwise than by proceeding in the common road of vertuous practice, arrive to happiness. *He that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Psal. 49. 2. Matt. 7. 21.

If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments: Enter in through the strait gate; Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life; To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing seek glory and honour and immortality, eternal life will be conferred; These are the grand infallible maxims, the fixt irreversible decrees, expressing the general duty and doom of mankind, according to the eternal reason of things, and the declared will of God Almighty, our Sovereign Governour and Judge. Matt. 19. 17. Matt. 7. 13. Luke 13. 24. Psal. 34. 12. Apoc. 22. 14. Rom. 2. 7.

Whoever it is, that will please God, that will have his love, that will be happy by his grace, must humbly submit to God's will, must faithfully obey God's laws, must carefully walk in God's way; from this course there can be no exemption, no dispensation, no special privilege for any person whatever. John 15. 14.

As all men naturally, by indissoluble bands of obligation, are the subjects and servants of God; so God indispensably and inexcusably doth require the same loyalty and fidelity, the same diligence, the same reverence from all.

Great men sometimes may live, as if they conceited themselves free from the obligations, which bind other men; as if they had not souls (as we poor mortals have) to be saved, or were to be saved in some other way; as if obedience to the divine laws doth not touch them, but onely doth belong to the commonalty; as if they had special indulgence to live in pride, luxury and sloth, might warrantably practise injustice, oppression, revenge; might *cum privilegio* be lewd and lascivious, with-hold their debts, take God's name in vain, neglect devotion and the service of God; but in thus doing they much abuse themselves; for they no less than others are obnoxious to guilt, and to punishment for such misdemeanours against the divine laws. In truth, if there be any difference in the case, it is onely this that they in all equity, ingenuity and gratitude are obliged to a more strict, more faithfull, more diligent observance of God's laws; they being more indebted to God for his special bounty to them; they having larger talents and advantages committed to their trust, their deportment being of higher consequence, and most influential on the world, they being liable to render an accompt according to that just rule, *Unto whom much is given, of him much shall be required*; whence their eminency of condition doth not excuse them from common duties, but doth Luke 12. 48.

advance their obligation, will aggravate their neglect, will enflame their reckoning, will plunge them deeper into wofull punishment; according
Sap. 6. 5, 6. to that of the Wise-man *A sharp judgment shall be to them that are in high places; for mercy will soon pardon the meanest, but mighty men shall be mightily tormented.*

2. All persons have the same means, the same aids, the same supports afforded to them, for ability to perform their duty, and attain their happiness.

The word of God, as the light of heaven, doth indifferently shine to all men, for instructing their minds, for directing their practice, for *guiding their feet in the way of peace.*

The divine grace is ever at hand ready to assist all those, who sincerely and seriously do apply themselves to serve God.

Seasonable comforts are never wanting to support those who need them,
Psal. 147. 3. (146. 7—) Psal. 34. 16— and who in their distress seek them from God, who *healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds*; so that when *The poor man crieth, the Lord heareth him, and saveth him out of his troubles.*

The universal good Spirit of God (the fountain of light and wisedom,
1 Cor. 12. 7. of spiritual power and strength, of consolation and joy) is communicated according to the needs of men, and exigencies of occasion; preventing them by direction to the right way, by reclaiming them from ill courses, by exciting in them good thoughts, and good desires; quickning their good resolutions, and assisting in the pursuit of them; enabling them to resist temptations, and to combat with their spiritual adversaries; to such best purposes the holy Spirit is given to all in needfull seasons and measures;
Luke 11. 13. especially to those who do earnestly seek it, do faithfully use it, do treat it well.

3. God hath provided, and doth propose to all men the same encouragements for obedience, the same punishments for transgression; the which being the same in kind do onely differ in degree, proportionably to the good deeds, or bad demerits of persons.

God hath appointed one heaven for all pious and vertuous persons; of what nation, of what rank, of what condition soever they are; He hath
Col. 3. 11. 1 Cor. 2. 9. *prepared those things, which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor heart of man conceived for all that love him.* For *all* that have *fought the good fight*, and
2 Tim. 4. 7. *kept the faith*, and *love his appearance, the Lord, the righteous judge, hath laid up a crown of righteousness.*

Immortality of life, an unfading crown of glory, a Kingdom that cannot be shaken, unspeakable joys, endless bliss God hath covenanted, and
Luke 22. 26. promised to all his faithfull servants; to all who in his way please to accept
Apoc. 22. 17. and embrace them, ὁ θέλων, *He that willeth, let him take of the water of life, freely*; And what greater rewards could there be assigned? what room is there for partiality, where all are capable of the same equally great, be-
Matt. 8. 11. cause in a manner immense felicity? *Many* (saith our Saviour) *shall come*
Luke 13. 29. *from the East and from the West, and from the North, and from the South, and shall sit down with Abraham and with Isaac and with Jacob in the Kingdom of heaven.*

Lazarus the poor beggar, shall rest with the illustrious *Moses*, and the noble *Daniel*, with *David*, and *Hezekiah*, and *Josiah*, and all pious Princes in the bosome of *Abraham*. The poor Fishermen, the painfull Tentmakers, the sorry Publicans shall reign together with *Constantine*, and *Theodosius*, and all those good Princes, who have faithfully served God, and promo-
1 Tim. 6. 19. ted his glory. The rich, well using their wealth, may obtain that state,
Luke 12. 33. 16. 9. *treasuring up to themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may*

may lay hold on eternal life; The poor, contentedly bearing their condition, have a good title thereto, expressed in those words, *Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God.* Luke 6. 20.

On the other hand the same dismal punishments are threatned to all presumptuous, contumacious, and impenitent transgressours of God's law, however dignified or distinguished; be they Princes, or Subjects, noble or base, wealthy or indigent; the same unquenchable fire, the same gnawing worm, the same weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth; the same utter darkness; the same burning lake of brimstone; the same extreme disconsolate anguish is reserved for them all: *Depart from me, Go ye cursed into everlasting fire*, will be the doom pronounced on *all the workers of iniquity*; *Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish will be upon every soul that doeth evil.* Matt. 7. 23. Luke 13. 27. Rom. 2. 8, 9.

No regard will be had to the quality of men in this world; for *the rich man*, who *was cloathed in purple and fine linnen, and fared sumptuously every day*, was not excused from *hell*, and *torment*; there is a *Tophet ordained of old, even for Kings*; *mighty men shall be mightily tormented*, if they have mightily sinned. Luk. 16. 19. 23. Jam. 5. 1. Luke 6. 24. Isa. 30. 33. Sap. 6. 6.

Even present encouragements of vertue in this life, The joys and comforts of God's holy Spirit, the sweet elapses of spiritual consolation in devotion, *the peace of God*, and delicious sense of his love, the cheerfull satisfaction of a good conscience, the *joy in believing* God's truth, and hoping for accomplishment of his promises, the delight in obeying God's commandments, the blessing of God upon good undertakings and happy success therein, the *co-operation of all things for good to them who love God*, the supply of all wants, and satisfaction of all desires, the experimental assurance of God's constant protection and gratious providence over those who fear him, and trust in him, (according to numberless declarations and promises in holy Scripture) are indifferently dispensed to all, who shall use the means to attain them, in way of conscientious practice. Psal. 37. 5. 1. 3. Rom. 8. 28. Psal. 145. 19. 37. 4. 34. 10.

As correspondently the temporal discouragements from sin (crosses, disappointments, vexations, miseries) are without exception allotted to all transgressours of God's law, according to many denunciations therein. Psal. 11. 6. 73. 19. 32. 10. Isa. 48. 22. 57. 20. 54. 17.

4. The impartiality of God doth appear from his universal providence, carefully watching over all and every person, dispensing good things to each, according to his need, without distinction.

Bonus omnipotens ita curat universos tanquam singulos, ita singulos tanquam solos. Aug. *Conf.*

Is any man in extreme want, his liberal hand presently doth reach forth a supply; for *He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness*; *He openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desire of every living thing.* Psal. 107. 9. Psal. 145. 16.

Is any man in distress? the Lord is ready to afford relief; according to that repeated burthen of the 107*th* Psalm, *Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses?* Psal. 107. 9, 13, 19, 28.

Is any man engaged in sin and guilt? He is patient and long-suffering; not powring forth his anger, not with-holding his mercies; letting his Sun arise, and his shoures descend upon the most unworthy and ingratefull; this he doth so generally, that commonly by apparent events it is not easily discernible, to whom God beareth special favour; according to that observation of the Preacher, *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them*; *all things* coming *alike to all.* How then can any man complain of partiality in him, who exerciseth so unconfined bounty, clemency and patience? Psal. 34. 6. 146. 7— 147. 6— Psal. 103. 8— 106. 8, 44. 78. 38. Eccles. 9. 1, 2.

If there be any considerable difference, it is onely this, that God hath a peculiar care of the poor, the afflicted, the oppressed, the helpless and Psal. 146. 147. 10. 14. 9. 9. 34. 18.

Isa. 25. 4. disconsolate, who do most need (and thence are most induced to seek) his succour and comfort; being also commonly better qualified to receive them; as is frequently declared in Scripture.

It is true, that God hath his particular friends, his favourites, his privados, whom he doth specially regard and countenance; upon whom he conferreth extraordinary boons and graces; namely those who do love, who do fear, who do trust in, who do honour him, who do obey him; concerning whom it is said, *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God*; and *The Lord preserveth all those that love him*; *There is no want to them that fear him*; *He will fulfill the desire of them that fear him, he also will hear their cry, and will save them*: *The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants, and none of them that trust in him, shall be desolate*: *Them that honour me, I will honour*: *The Lord loveth the righteous*; *The Eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry*; *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you*:

Rom. 8. 28. Psal. 145. 20. 31. 23. Psal. 34. 9. Psal. 145. 19. Psal. 34. 22. 1 Sam. 2. 30. Psal. 146. 8. Psal. 34. 15. John 15. 14.

But evidently there is no partiality in this; for he doth not favour them irrespectively as persons, but as in justice specially qualified for favour; friendship, dutifulness, reverence toward him being the highest vertues, and arguing a mind endewed with dispositions (with equity, with ingenuity, with gratitude, with sober wisdom, with love of truth and goodness) which demand a correspondence of love and respect from God himself. And as we do not hold a man partial, who beareth a special affection and regard to those, who express good-will, who deal kindly and fairly with them, who serve them faithfully, and pay them due respect; so neither is God partial, if he doth specially bless good men upon the like accounts.

Especially considering, that God doth not so favour mere pretenders, who profess to love and honour him, but do not love true goodness; fond, superstitious, hypocritical people, who *call Lord, Lord*, but practise iniquity; who think to please him by affected services; who court and flatter him with their lips; who would bribe him with their gifts and sacrifices.

Matt. 7. 22. Luke 6. 46. Tit. 1. 16. Matt. 15. 9. Col. 2. 22. Matt. 15. 8.

5. All Christians, without distinction, have the same illustrious relations, and honourable privileges, the most great and glorious that can be imagined.

(Col. 3. 11.) 1 Cor. 12. 13. Gal. 3. 28. 3. 26. 4. 5. Rom. 8. 16. Of what greater honour is a man capable, than to be adopted into the bloud-royal of heaven, *to be called*, to be the Sons of God? *Ye are all the Sons of God, by faith in Christ Jesus. God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, that he might redeem us*—and, *that we might receive the adoption of Sons.*

1 John 3. 1. John 1. 12. Gal. 4. Ἴδετε ποταπὴν ἀγάπην· *Behold* (saith St. *John*) *what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the Sons of God.* This is a *privilege*, which God hath given, which *Christ* hath purchased for us all. And *whosoever received him*, he gave *them* ἐξουσίαν τέκνα, (this power, this privilege, this advantage) *that they should become the Sons of God.*

To what higher dignity can any one pretend, than to be heir of a Kingdom? by the most infallible assurance that can be; by covenant, by promise of God; such are all good Christians, God's children; for *if sons, then heirs* (saith the *Apostle*) *heirs of God, co-heirs with Christ*: Heirs of God's Kingdom; for, *Hearken* (saith St. *James*) my beloved brethren, *Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the Kingdom, which he hath promised to them that love him.*

Rom. 8. 17. Gal. 4. 7. Tit. 3. 7. Heb. 1. 14. Jam. 2. 5.

Inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.

Fear not, little flock, it is your Father's good pleasure to give you a Kingdom.

Matt. 25. 34. Luke 12. 32.

I

I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me. 22. 29.

To what higher pitch can the most ambitious soul aspire, than to be a King?

Such St. *John* saith, that our Lord hath constituted every good Christian; *partakers*, not of a carnal, an earthly, a temporal Kingdom (which is unstable, is subject to various chances and crosses, cannot endure long, or last any considerable time) but of a spiritual, a celestial, an eternal Kingdom, *which cannot be shaken*; which hath continual rest, peace, joy. Rev. 1. 6. 5. 10. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 4. 18. ἐπουράνιος, 2 Pet. 1. 11. αἰώνιος. Heb. 12. 28. ἀσάλευτος.

We are by God *called unto* his Kingdom and glory.

——translated into the Kingdom of his own dear Son.

To be the brethren of *Christ*; who is the Sovereign *Lord of Glory*, *King of Kings*, *and Lord of Lords*, 1 Thess. 2. 12. Col. 1. 13.

Is it not a considerable honour to be the friends of our Lord? so is every poor soul, which hath the conscience to serve him faithfully; for, *Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you.* John 15. 14.

All are Citizens, free denizens, of the heavenly Commonwealth; συμπολῖται τῶν ἁγίων—— Phil. 3. 20. Heb. 13. 20. 12. 22.

6. All men are liable to the same judgment, at the same tribunal, before that one impartial, inflexible Judge, who cannot be corrupted with gifts, or dazled with shews, or moved by any sinister regards. Eph. 2. 19. Deut. 10. 7. (Col. 3. 25.)

All persons must stand before that Bar upon equal ground; without any advantage; according to that representation of St. *John*; *I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened ---- and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.* Apoc. 20. 12.

The greatest Monarchs, the mightiest Potentates, the most redoubtable Warriours, and successfull Conquerours (the *man, who made the earth to tremble, that did shake Kingdoms;*) *that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof*; who affected *to ascend into heaven, and to exalt his throne above the stars of God, to ascend above the heights of the clouds, and to be like the most high.* Is. 14. 16, 17. v. 13, 14. (v. 11.)

There shall they stand bare and devested of all their phantastry; their splendid pomp, their numerous retinue, their guards, their parasites.

No consideration there will be had of their windy titles, of their gay attire, and glittering pomp.

No respect will be had to the dread of their name, to the fame of their prowess; to that spurious glory, for which they unsetled mankind, and overturned the world; their Actions will be strictly scann'd, according to the rules of God's law, and common equity.

They will be put to answer for all the violences and outrages, for all the spoils and rapines, for all the bloud and slaughters, for all the ruines, devastations and desolations their cruel ambition hath caused; for all the sins they have committed, and all the mischiefs they have done.

They who now have so many flatterers and adorers, will not then find one advocate to plead for them.

Thus it may appear that God is impartial.

But there are divers obvious exceptions against this doctrine. As,

Obj. 1. Is it not apparent that the gifts of God are distributed with great inequality?

Doth not one swim in wealth and plenty, while another coucheth under the burthen of extreme want and penury?

Are not some perched aloft in high dignity, while others crawl upon the ground, and grovel in despicable meanness?

Are

Luke 16. 19, 20. Are not some *clothed with purple and fine linen, and fare deliciously every day*; while others scarce find rags to cover them, and *lie at the door* begging for relief?

Do not some thrive and prosper in their affairs, while others are disappointed and crossed in their undertakings?

Psal. 17. 10---73. 7. Job 21. 7---12. 6. Was it not truly observed of some persons (and those least deserving good fortune) *They are inclosed in their own fat---Their eyes stand out with fatness, they have more than heart could wish?*

Jer. 12. 1. Hab. 1. 16. 1 Cor. 4. 7. And whence doth this difference come, but from God's hand; *who* (as the *Apostle* asketh) *maketh thee to differ* from another, but God, the disposer of all things?

To this exception I answer:

Rom. 8. 18. Ἀναξίως πρὸς δόξαν---2 Cor. 4. 17. 1. That temporal things are so inconsiderable, that they scarce deserve to come into the balance, or to be computed; for they have but the same proportion to spiritual things, as time hath to eternity; or a finite to an infinite; which is none at all.

Luke 6. 24. 16. 25. Psal. 17. 14. What partiality therefore is there, if God in mercy and patience bestow on bad men a farthing in the temporal *consolations* of this life (if the universal Father give a small *portion in this life* to untoward children) while he reserveth infinite millions for his obedient children?

2. The goods of fortune commonly are dispensed not by a special hand of God, but according to the general course of providence: And what partiality is he guilty of, who scattereth money into a crowd of poor people; although in scrambling some get more than other; and often the worst (being most bold and fierce) do get most?

Eccles. 9. 1, 2. 3. Indeed the receiving those gifts, is no sign of God's special regard; as the *Preacher* well observed; *No man knoweth either love or hatred by all that is before them; All things come alike to all, there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked.*

4. God (as St. *Austin* saith) purposely doth sparingly deal these things to good men, and freely bestoweth them on bad men, to shew how little we ought to value them; how much inferiour they are to spiritual goods. For surely he would give the best things to his friends, and the worst to his enemies.

5. Even temporal gifts are dispensed with a very even hand; for, if barring injudicious fancie and vulgar opinion, we rightly prize things, we compare the conveniences and inconveniences of each state, it will be hard to judge which hath the advantage.

Wealth hath more advantages for pleasure; but it hath also more cares, more fears, more crosses, more dangers, more troubles, more temptations.

It hath more plenty, but withall it hath less safety, less ease, less liberty, less quiet, less real enjoyment.

Set the distraction of the rich man's mind against the toil of the poorest man's body; the nauseous surfeits of one against the griping hunger of the other.

That which really doth constitute a state happy, content, may be common to both, or wanting to either, as the person is disposed.

6. The goods of fortune are not purely gifts, but talents deposited in trust for God's service, for which a proportionable return is expected; so that he that hath less of them, hath a less burthen to bear, and an easier account to render.

7. Many gifts are not dispensed with personal regard, but for publick good; and therefore all have an interest in them.

The

The wealth, the power, the reputation, the prosperity of a Prince, of a Nobleman, of a Gentleman are not his, but his neighbours; for governing, for protecting, for encouraging, for assisting whom they are conferred; the world not being able to subsist in order and peace without subordinate ranks, and without answerable means to maintain them.

Obj. 2. It is apparent, that God dispenseth his grace, the light of knowledge, and means of salvation very unequally; some Nations living in the clear sunshine of the Gospel, while others *sit in darkness and the shadow of death*; whole Nations being detained in barbarous and brutish ignorance. Luke 1. 69. Matt. 4. 16. Eph. 4. 18. 2. 1— Tit. 3. 3. 1 Pet. 4. 3.

To answer this exception fully, would require much discourse; it being a dark and difficult point; but briefly we may say:

1. That God dispenseth measures of grace, according to a just yet inscrutable wisedom, knowing what use will we made thereof, and what *fruit* men will *bear*: It may therefore be a favour not to dispense light to them, who are not prepared to embrace and improve it well.

2. No man can tell what God doeth in preparation, and what obstructions are made by men to his grace.

3. As lower means of grace are conferred, so proportionably less returns are expected.

4. How hard soever it may be to descry the reason of God's proceedings in this case, yet assuredly it is just, and our ignorance of it, should not prejudice the belief of those general truths, which are so plainly declared, concerning the universal benignity, and impartial equity of God.

Obj. 3. Is it not in holy Scripture sometimes asserted, that God doth act arbitrariously, and absolutely; dispensing his bounty and mercy, without regard to any quality in men, or deed committed by them, either in whole, or in proportion. ---God saith, *I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy*--- Rom. 9. 15. and, *Is it not lawfull for me to do what I will with mine own?* Matt. 20. 15.

Is not a plain instance of this dealing alledged by St. *Paul* concerning *Jacob* and *Esau*, that *before the children were born, or had done either good or evil*, God said, *the elder shall serve the younger*; and in regard thereto (in the *Prophet*) *Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* Rom. 9. 13.

We answer briefly, that

Such expressions do import, not that God acteth absolutely in the thing it self, but *quoad nos*; not that he acteth without reason, but upon reasons (transcending our capacity, or our means to know it) incomprehensible or undiscernible to us; not that he can give no account, but is not obliged to render any to us: that the methods of his providence commonly are inscrutable; that his proceedings are not subject to our examination and censure; that his acting doth sufficiently authorize and justifie it self; that is high presumption and arrogance for us to scan, sift, or contest, or cavil at the equity or wisdom of God's acting. Rom. 11. 33. Rom. 9. 20.

That God doth not act according to necessity, but is free in dispensing his mercy, and applying it to any person, so that they have nothing to challenge upon account of their own deserts or works; but must refer all to his mere bounty.

However there can be nothing in these mysteries of predestination and providence, which really doth subvert an assertion so often clearly expressed, and so well grounded in reason, or the consideration of God's nature, attributes, ordinary way of acting, *&c.*

Whatever expressions are repugnant thereto in sound, whatever instances (depending on occult causes) in appearance do cross it; it yet must stand, that God is impartially mercifull, benign, just, *&c.*

Obj.

(Isa. 49. 1, 5.) Jer. 1. 5. Luke 1. 15. Gal. 1. 5. *Obj.* 4. Had not *Jeremy*, St. *John Baptist*, St. *Paul* absolute favours and graces conferred on them, who were *sanctified*, and separated from the womb to be Prophets and Apostles?

Jer. 1. 10. Luke 1. 16. Acts 9. 15. 26. 16— *Resp.* These favours were in design not so much particular, and personal, as general and publick; those persons being raised up by God upon occasions as needfull instruments (*elect vessels*) of his providence, to instruct men, and to reduce them to God; so that God in raising up such extraornary persons, did express his common goodness to mankind.

Χαῖρε κεχαριτωμένη. Luke 1. 28. The like may be said of that special favour which was vouchsafed to the holy Virgin, who was κεχαριτωμένη and *blessed among women*, for the general good of mankind.

The consideration of this Point is very usefull, and may dispose us to many sorts of good practice.

1. No man should presume upon God's dealing with him more favourably than with others; as if he were a darling, or favourite; that God will indulge him in the commission of any thing prohibited, or in omission of any duty.

No man should indulge himself in any thing, upon a conceit that God will indulge him; or overse---- and that in this sense, *He seeth not iniquity in Jacob.*

No man should be puffed up with conceit, that God hath a singular regard to him. For all such conceits are groundless and vain; in them men do miserably delude themselves.

1 Joh. 3. 19. 21. No man can otherwise found any assurance of God's special love to him, than upon a good conscience; testifying, that he doth sincerely love God, and endeavour faithfully to obey his commandments.

3. No man should despair of God's favour; seeing God hath no particular aversation from any; but every person hath the same grounds of hope.

If we can buckle our hearts to observe our duty, we may be sure to be accepted.

Gen. 4. 7. *If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?*

4. No man should be discouraged for his condition, or fortune. Since in allotting it to him God had no disfavour, nor did intend him ill.

God hath no less regard to him, than to persons of the most high, wealthy, prosperous state.

5. No man should repine, murmur or complain of God's dealing, as if he were unkindly used, more than others. For there is no such thing. God dealeth alike kindly with all.

6. No man, upon accompt of his rank, wealth, or worldly advantages should boast or pride himself; seeing thence he partaketh no more, than his meanest, and poorest neighbour, of the principal advantage, God's favour.

Jam. 1. 9. Ὁ ταπεινὸς. 7. No man, upon such accompts, should despise his neighbour, *the brother of low degree*: for upon these accompts it appeareth, that the *Wiseman* Prov. 11. 12. 14 21. saith truly, that *He is void of wisedom, who despiseth his neighbour*; seeing no man can be despicable, whom God regardeth; seeing *God* (as *Elihu* saith) Job 36. 5. (Jam. 2. 6.) *is mighty, and despiseth not any*; seeing the meanest person standeth on equal terms with the greatest in the eye of God.

Quorum fatis cælum omne vacavit. Luc. *l. b.* 7. 8. Great men should not take themselves for another sort of creatures, or another race of men than their poor neighbours; that the world is theirs, and all things are for them; that they may do what they please; that they are exempted from laws, which oblige others; for in moral and spiritual accompts they are upon a level with others.

They

They are but fellow-subjects, and fellow-servants with others; all accomptable to the same Master.

9. Superiours hence should be moved to deal fairly, gently, and courteously with inferiours; seeing these are their fellow-servants; equally considerable as themselves with the great Master of the Family.

This is the use to which St. *Paul* applieth the consideration;

Masters give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye have a Master in Heaven---- Ye Masters do the same things unto them, (that is, be conscientiously good to them, as they faithfull to you) *forbearing threatning; knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with him.* Col. 4. 1. 3. *ult.* Eph. 6. 9.

10. This consideration should preserve us from superstition, or thinking to please or satisfie God, win his favour, or appease his displeasure, by uncouth ways, which he hath not prescribed to all men; to corrupt him by our sacrifices and oblations; our flatteries, glozings, collogueings with him; so that he will indulge us in any bad thing, or excuse us from our true duty, in regard to those affected services.

We do herein but abuse our selves; for he will not approve or accept us upon any other accompt, than of discharging our duty, being truly righteous and good. Coloss. 2.--- Mic. 6. 7, 8.

11. It is matter of comfort and satisfaction to a man, who is conscious of his sincerity, that (whatever his condition and circumstances be) that God will have a fair regard thereto, and will not reject him.

It was so to *Job*; *Doth not God see my ways, and count all my steps-- Let me be weighed in an even balance, that God may know my integrity.* Job 31. 4---6.

12. The consideration of this Point should keep us from partial respects of men. Jam. 2. 1, 9. Prov. 28. 21.

Not to admire the state of great men, nor to yield them undue deferences (in prejudice to meaner persons, making greater difference than there is ground for) not to flatter, or humour them in an immoderate measure, or unbeseeming manner.

This is that which St. *James* doth urge in his 2d *Chapter*; as a very unequal thing. Οὐ μέλλ σι πεὶ ἐλίνος.

We should imitate God; we should consider that our opinions and affections should resemble his. Matt. 22. 16. Θαυμάζην πρόσωπα.

As in exteriour judgment no respect is to be had to the rich above the poor; so neither in the interiour judgment or esteem of our mind; to which St. *James* seemeth to apply the law; *If ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressours.* Jude. Levit. 19. 15. Deut. 1. 17. 16. 19. Prov. 24. 23. 16. 5. 28. 21. Jam. 2. 9.

13. This should keep us from envying at those who have more worldly advantages.

14. It should keep us from being offended, or scandalized, or perverted into false notions of God, upon occasion of any mysterious points, or hard expressions importing absolute and arbitrary proceedings of God, in predestination or providence. For however they are to be understood, they cannot derogate from the impartial goodness and justice of God.

15. This consideration should engage us readily to pay due respect and reverence to Princes, to Magistrates, to all our Superiours.

For hence we see, that the reason why we are commanded to honour and fear them is, not their worldly grandeur of wealth or power, (things of small consideration with God) but it standeth on a more solid ground, their sacred relations to God, as his representatives and officers; who in his name and behalf do administer Justice, and protect right and innocence, encourage vertue, maintain order and peace in the world.

Though God doth not favour their persons as rich and mighty; yet he regardeth his own character imprinted on them, he regardeth his honour and interest concerned in their respect, he regardeth the publick good of mankind, which they are constituted to promote. He considers them as the *Ministers of his Kingdom*, and instruments of conveying his benefits to mankind.

Whence he *giveth salvation to Kings*, he by his law, and by his providence doth guard and secure them from violence, from contempt, from disrespect.

In honouring them, we honour the authority of God; and the character of Divinity stamped on them; we serve our selves, for whose sake they are constituted, for whose good they watch.

Rom. 14. 4. Εἰς ἀγαθόν.

It may also engage us the more gladly and fully to yield them their due respect, to consider, that their condition is not invidious; or their case better than other mens; seeing they are accomptable to God for the advantages of it; seeing that God hath no regard to them upon accompt of that greatness which dazleth our eyes: seeing that for all the burthens they sustain, for all the cares they take, for all the pains they endure, for our good and publick service, they can receive so inconsiderable a recompence from us.

Finally,

It should engage us to be very carefull of our ways, and diligent in our obedience; seeing there is no other way possible of pleasing God, of gaining his favour and friendship, of appeasing his displeasure, of standing upright, and coming off well in his judgment; this is St. *Peter*'s inference, with which I conclude.

1 Pet. 1. 17. *If ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear.*

Sermon XXXIX.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 Tim. IV. 10.

Θεῷ γὰρ πολλῶν ὄντων, ἐφ' ὧν θαυμάζεται, κἂν ἔστως ὡς τὸ πάντων σωτῆρι ἰδιώτατον. Naz. Orat. 26.

——*The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.*

THERE are two Points of Doctrine here plainly asserted by Saint *Paul*, which I shall endeavour to explain, and to apply: *One*, that God is the Saviour of all men; *another*, that he is peculiarly the Saviour of the faithfull. For the *first*,

God

God in many respects may truly be conceived and called *the Saviour of all men*; for the word *save* doth in a large acception denote the conferring any kind of good: as implying a removal of need, or indigence. Whence God *is the Saviour of all men* as the universal preserver and upholder of all things in their being and natural state, as it is in the *Psalm*: *Thou, Lord, savest man and beast*, or, as the general benefactour, who *is good to all, and whose mercies are over all his works*; who *maketh his Sun to rise upon the good and bad, rains upon the just and unjust, is kind* and benign even *to the ingratefull and evil*: or, as the common assistent, protectour, and deliverer of all men who in need or distress have recourse unto him for succour and relief, according to what is said in the *Psalms*; *The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a refuge in times of trouble*: *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him. They cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses.*

Psal. 36. 6. Old Transl. and the LXX. σώσεις, or σώζεις. Psal. 145. 9. Matt. 5. 46. Luke 6. 5.

Psal. 9. 9. 145. 18. 146. 7, &c. 107. 13, &c. 68. 19, 20.

In these kinds of senses especially respecting natural and temporal good, it is manifest that *God is the Saviour of all men*. But that he is in this place termed such in a higher sense, with regard to mercies and blessings of a more excellent kind, and greater consequence (to mercies and blessings of a spiritual nature, and relating to the eternal state of men) may from several considerations appear.

1. For that according to *Apostolical* use the word *Saviour, save, salvation*, are wont to bear an *Evangelical* sense, relating to the benefits by our Lord *Jesus Christ* procured, purchased, and dispensed, concerning the future state of men.

2. For that questionless St. *Paul* doth here intend God to be *Saviour* of the faithfull in this higher sense, and consequently he means him in the same sense (although not in the same degree and measure, or not altogether to the same effects and purposes) a *Saviour of all men*.

3. Because 'tis plain that in other places of *Scripture*, like and parallel to this, such a sense is designed. As, where in this very *Epistle*, we are enjoyned *to pray for all men*, for this reason; *For* (saith St. *Paul*) *this is good and acceptable before God our Saviour, who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge* (or acknowledgment) *of the truth*; where σωτῆρ ἡμῶν, *the Saviour of us*, seems to denote the Saviour of *us* as *men* (that interpretation best suting with the argument St. *Paul* useth) however it is expressed that God is, according to desire or intention, the Saviour of all men, in reference to their spiritual and eternal advantage; as willing that all men should embrace the Gospel; which is farther most evidently confirmed by the words immediately following; *For there is one God, and one Mediatour between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.*

1 Tim. 2. 4.

4. Because according to the tenour of Scripture, and the analogy of Christian doctrine, St. *Paul*'s assertion thus interpreted is true, as our subsequent discourse may declare.

5. I might add, that *the living God* in our *Text* may very well be understood and expounded to be our Lord *Jesus* himself; not onely as partaking of the divine nature, but as exhibited in the Gospel, the word incarnate, who as such may seem commonly by St. *Paul* to be styled, *God our Saviour*; *God manifested in the flesh*; *God, that purchased the Church with his own bloud*; *Christ, who is God over all, blessed for evermore*. However it from the premisses is sufficiently apparent, that God's being *the Saviour of all men* doth relate unto our *Saviour Jesus* his undertakings and performances for the salvation of all men; since God in a sense Evangelical is no otherwise said to save, than in concurrence with what *Jesus* did undertake and perform; than as designing, ordering, accepting, prosecuting,

1 Tim. 1. 1. 2. 4. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 2. 10, 13. 2. 4. 1. 3. 1 Tim. 3. 16. Acts 20. 28. Rom. 9. 5

and accomplishing our Lord's performances; *Jesus* being the conduit through which all Evangelical Mercies and Blessings are from God convey'd and dispens'd to Mankind. So that God being *the Saviour of Mankind*, is either directly and immediately, or by equivalence and in consequence the same with *Jesus* being *the Saviour of all men.*

Ephes. 1. 3, 6.

That our Lord *Jesus* is *the Saviour of all men*; or that the most signal of his saving performances do in their nature and their design respect all men, as meant for, as conducing and tending to all mens Salvation, yea and as in their own nature (supposing mens due and possible concurrence with them) effectually productive of their Salvation; that I say this ancient *Catholick* point of Doctrine (the which we profess to believe, when with the Church we say in the *Nicene Creed*----*Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven*, and the which particularly our Church in it's Catechism, in the ministration of Baptism, and in the Communion, doth most evidently and expressly declare it self to embrace) is very true, many full and clear testimonies of Scripture do shew, many reasons grounded on Scripture do prove; the which we shall first touch, and then farther both illustrate and enforce the truth, by declaring upon what accompts, or in what respects our Lord is the Saviour of all men; as also by an application to practice, declarative of its usefulness and subserviency to the purposes of piety. For immediate testimonies:

1. *Jesus* is called the *Saviour* of the World; who was sent and came into the World to save the World; whose chief performances were designed and directed to the Salvation of the World; *We have heard and known* (said the men of *Samaria*) *that this is truly the Saviour of the World, the Christ. We have seen and testified* (saith St. *John*) *that the father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the World* (that *World*, of which it is said: *He was in the World, and the World was made by him, and the World knew him not.*) And; *God sent his Son into the World, not to judge* (or *not to condemn*) *the World, but that the World by him should be saved* (that *World*, whereof a great part he in effect would both judge and condemn for unbelief and disobedience, he did come primarily upon intent to save.) And, *The bread which I shall give, is* (saith he) *my flesh, which I will give for the life of the World:* And, *Behold* (said the *Baptist*) *the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the World.* And, *God was in Christ reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their offences* (saith St. *Paul*) *to the World*, which otherwise he expresseth by τὰ πάντα, *by him to reconcile all things unto himself:*) And, *He is a propitiation not onely for our sins, but for the sins of the whole World, (the whole World*, in contradiction from *all Christians*, to whom S. *John* speaketh in that place of his Catholick *Epistle*; that κόσμος ὅλος, of which he saith in that same *Epistle*, κόσμος ὅλος ἐν τῷ πονηρῷ κεῖται, *the whole World lieth in wickedness.*) In all which places that the *World* according to its ordinary acception, (and as every Man would take it at first hearing) doth signifie the whole community of Mankind, comprehending men of all sorts and qualities, good and bad, Believers and Infidels, (not in a new, unusual sense, any special restrained World of some persons particularly regarded, or qualified) will, I suppose, easily appear to him, who shall without prejudice or partiality, attend to the common use thereof in *Scripture*, especially in St. *John*, who most frequently applieth it as to this, so to other cases, or matters.

John 4. 42. 1 John 4. 14. John 1. 10. John 3. 17. 12. 47. John 5. 22. Acts 10. 42. 17. 31. Rom. 14. 10. 2 Cor. 5. 10. John 6. 52. John 1. 29. 2 Cor. 5. 19. Coloss. 1. 20. 1 John 2. 2. 1 John 5. 19.

2. The object of our Saviour's undertakings and intentions is described by qualities and circumstances agreeing unto all men. All the Sons of *Adam* are by disobedience in a lost condition (lost in errour and sin, lost in guilt and condemnation, lost in trouble and misery) and, *The Son of*

Matt. 18. 11.

man

man (saith *He* himself) *came to save, τὸ ἀπολωλὸς, that which was lost* (or whatever was lost.) *All men have sinned,* (saith St. *Paul*) *and are fallen short of the glory of God*; and, *'Tis a faithful saying* (saith the same Apostle) *and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the World to save sinners. God commended his love to us, that we being yet sinners Christ died for us.* All men naturally are weak, and wicked; are in a state of alienation and enmity toward God: And, *Even when we were without strength; in due time Christ died for the ungodly: When we were enemies were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: Christ once suffered for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous.* All Men have souls and lives expos'd to misery and ruine: And, *The Son of man* (so he assures us) *came not to destroy, but to save the souls* (or *lives*) *of men.* Those propositions in form respecting an indefinite object are according to vulgar use equipollent to those, wherein the object is expressed universally. However,

Rom. 3. 23. 1 Tim. 1. 15. Rom. 5. 8. Ephes. 2. 1, &c. Rom. 5. 6, 10. 1 Pet. 3. 18. Luke 9. 56.

3. They are interpreted by others, expressed in terms as general, and comprehensive as can be; such as these Texts contain: *The living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of the faithful* (of all men universally, not onely of the faithful, though chiefly of them.) *God our Saviour would have all men to be saved*; *He is the mediatour of God and Men, who gave himself a ransom for all men*; *God hath shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all. The love of Christ constraineth us, judging this, that if one died for all, then are all dead*; *and he died for all, that they who live may not live to themselves, but to him that died for them, and rose again. The saving grace of God hath appeared to all men* (or the grace of God, which is saving to all men, hath appeared, ἐπιφανὴ ἡ χάρις Θεοῦ ἡ σωτήριος πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις.) *He tasted death ὑπὲρ παντὸς, for every man. He is the true light, that enlightneth every man coming into the World.* Which propositions do sufficiently determine the extent of our Saviour's saving performances.

1 Tim. 4. 10. 1 Tim. 2. 4, 5. Rom. 11. 32. 2 Cor. 5. 15. Tit. 2. 11. Heb. 2. 9, 10. John 1. 9.

4. Farther yet, to exclude any limitation or diminution of these so general terms (at least to exclude any limitation in regard to all the members of the visible Church, which are or have been incorporated thereinto) it is expressed, that our *Saviour*'s undertakings did respect even those, who (by their own default) might lose the benefit of them, and who in effect should not be saved. For, of those false teachers, who introduc'd *pernicious heresies*, 'tis said, that *they denied the Lord, who bought them.* And St. *Paul* implies, that by a scandalous example a *weak brother, for whom Christ died,* being induced to sin, might be *destroyed.* *And by thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died.* And, *Do not* (saith *He* again) *by thy eating destroy him, for whom Christ died.* And, the Apostle to the *Hebrews* signifies concerning *Apostates*, that they do *trample upon the Son of God*, and *pollute the Bloud of Christ, by which they are sanctified.*

Væ illis, qui auctorem propriæ salutis negaverunt. Ambr. Psa. 39. 2 Pet. 2. 1. 1 Cor. 8. 11. Rom. 14. 15. Heb. 10. 29.

5. The supposition thereof is the ground of Duty, and an aggravation of sin.

Thus doth the *Holy Scripture* in terms very direct and expres declare this truth, indeed so clearly and fully, that scarce any other point of Christian Doctrine can alledge more ample or plain Testimony of Scripture for it; whence it is wonderful that any pretending reverence to Scripture, should dare (upon consequences of their own devising) to question it; and many reasons confirming the same, may be deduced thence.

1. The impulsive cause, which moved God to design the sending our Lord for to undertake what he did, is expressed to be *philanthropy*; or love to Mankind: *But* (saith St. *Paul*) *when the kindness and love of God our Saviour unto man appeared* —— *according to his mercy he saved us. So God loved*

——Greg. Naz. *saith of* Julian, Διὰ τοῦτο μισήσας Χριστὸν, ὅτι δι' ἀυτὸν σέσωσο. Athan. *Orat.* 32.

Tit. 3. 4. Ἡ φιλανθρωπία τοῦ σωτῆρος ἡμῶν Θεοῦ.

John 3. 16. Rom. 5. 8. Ephes. 2. 4. *loved the World, that he gave his onely begotten Son. God hereby commends his love unto us, that we as yet being sinners, Christ died for us.* It was not a particular fondness of affection (such whereof no particular ground can be assigned or imagined) but an universal (infinitely rich and abundant) goodness, mercy and pity toward this eminent part of his Creation sunk into distress and lamentable wretchedness, which induced God to send his Son for the Redemption of Mankind.

2. God declares himself impartial (most particularly) in this case; that as all men in regard to him stand alike related, and are in the same condition, so he proceeds with indifferent affection, and upon the same terms with all. He is equally the Lord and maker of all men; and all Men are equally involved in guilt, and exposed to ruine; upon which grounds St. *Paul* inferreth, that as to God's regard of Man's salvation, there is no difference between *Jews* and *Greeks*; and by parity of reason there can be none between any other sorts of persons, antecedently to God's merciful Rom. 2. 11. intentions. *There is* (faith *He*) *no respect of persons with God* (as to preparing the capacities and means, to propounding the terms and conditions of salvation, for about these he discourses) for, *Is he* (saith the Apostle, Rom. 3. 29. assigning the reason of that assertion) *the God of the Jews onely, and not of* Rom. 10. 12. *the Gentiles? No: there is no difference* (saith *He*) *of Jew and Greek, for there is the same Lord of all, being rich* (rich in mercy and bounty) *unto all that call upon him*; that is by consequence simply unto all; for St. *Paul* implies, that God therefore provided that all Men should have the means of calling upon him imparted to them; for that, *how should they call upon him without faith*; and *how should they believe without Preachers, and how should there be Preachers, if they were not sent?* whence he infers (against the sense of those *Jews*, with whom he disputes) that it was necessary that Rom. 3. 22. the Apostles should have a Commission to preach unto all. And, *The righteousness of God by the faith of Christ is manifested unto all, and over all that believe, for there is no difference*; *for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:* The relation of God is the same to all Men; (He *is the God and Lord of all*) the state and need of all Men are the same; there is therefore no difference, excepting that consequent one, which compliance or non-compliance with the conditions offered unto all doth induce.

Sap. 6. 7. 'Tis true in this respect, what the *Wise-man* saith, ὁ πάντων δυνάστης ἰσοίως πρόνοιαν ἔχει πάντων *He*, that is Lord of all, *careth* (or provideth) *for all alike*; and what *Clemens Alexandrinus* says, as to this particular, *All things lie equally for all from God*; *so that no man can complain of him*; as partial to some, and deficient to others.

Πάσι πάντα ἴσα κεῖται παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ, ᾧ οὐκ αὐτὸς ἀμεμφής. Clem. Alexand. *Strom. VII. p.* 301.

3. We may observe, That the undertakings and performances of *our Lord* are for nature and extent compared with those of *Adam*, (who was Rom. 5. 14. τύπος τοῦ μέλλοντος, *a type of him that was to come*;) As *Adam*, being a representative of Mankind, did by his transgression involve all Men in guilt, and subject them to condemnation; provoked God's wrath, and drew the effects thereof upon us; brought all Men under the slavery of sin, and necessity of death; so was *our Lord* the *Proxy* of Mankind, and by his performances in our behalf did undoe for our advantage, what the former did to our prejudice; by his entire obedience expiating the common guilt, suspending the fatal sentence, pacifying God's wrath, reducing righteousness, and restoring life to all that would embrace them; so doth Rom. 5. 18. St. *Paul* at large (in the 5th Chapter of his Epistle to the *Romans*) propound and prosecute the comparison; closing his discourse thus: *Therefore as by the offence of one man upon all men to condemnation*, so by the righteousness

teousneſs of one upon all Men to juſtification of life. As guilt, wrath and death forementioned were the fruits of what *Adam* did, falling upon all; ſo pardon, grace and life were (in deſign) the effects of what *our Saviour* performed relating unto all. Yea, The ſame compariſon S. *Paul* ſeems to intimate in his 2d Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, where he ſaith, that if one died for all, then are all Men dead; that is, *Chriſt*'s dying for all Men, implies all Men in a ſtate of condemnation and ſubjection to death; and that inference ſuppoſes the performances of the *firſt* and *ſecond Adam* to be in their nature and primary effects co-extended and commenſurate. The ſame St. *Paul* ſeemeth in expreſs terms to ſay, *All men have ſinned, and are fallen ſhort* (or *are deſtitute) of the glory of God*; *being juſtified freely by his grace* (or *favour) by the redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus.* (All men are juſtified, that is according to God's favourable intention and deſign.) Yea, the very reaſon, why God permitted ſin and death to prevail ſo univerſally is intimated to be his deſign of extending a capacity of righteouſneſs and life unto all; ſo St. *Paul* tells us: God hath ſhut up all men under ſin, that he might have mercy upon all. And particularly, that by virtue of *Chriſt*'s performances, death is aboliſhed, and immortality is conferred upon all men, St. *Paul* moſt expreſly teacheth us; *For* (ſaith he) *as in Adam all die, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all men be made alive.*

2 Cor. 5. 15.

Rom. 3. 23.

Rom. 11. 32.

1 Cor. 15. 22. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Rom. 6. 23.

I obſerve that *Proſper* (an eager diſputant about points allied to this) ſeveral times confeſſeth that *Chriſt* may be moſt rightly affirmed to have been crucified for the redemption of the whole world, eſpecially upon two accounts, for his true ſuſception of humane nature, and for the common perdition of all men in the firſt man; we have touchd the latter, let us add, That

Cùm itaque rectiſſimè dicatur Salvator pro totius mundi redemptione crucifixus, propter veram naturæ humanæ ſuſceptionem, & propter communem in primo homine omnium perditionem, &c. Proſ. *ad* Gall. *c.* 9.

4. Our *Saviour* aſſuming our nature, and partaking of our Fleſh, *being made in the likeneſs of men, and found in faſhion as a man*; yea endued with the paſſions and infirmities of man's nature, expoſed to the tribulations and inconveniences of man's life) did thereby allye himſelf, and put on a fraternal relation unto all men. *Foraſmuch* ſaith the Apoſtle to the *Hebrews*, *as children*, (the children he means of the ſame father, or brethren; as the tenour of his diſcourſe makes evident) are *partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo himſelf likewiſe took part of the ſame*; that is, graciouſly deſigning to become a brother to the children of men, he aſſumed all that was proper to man's nature. *God*, ſaith St. *Paul*, made *παν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων, the whole nation or race of men, dwelling upon the face of of the earth, of one blood*; and of that one blood our Saviour was pleaſed to take part, entitling us thereby to a conſanguinity with him; and it was a *Title* of his, which he ſeemed to affect and delight in, *the Son of man.* He being ſuch did ſanctifie our nature, by the cloſeſt conjunction thereof to the divine nature, and rendring it more than a temple of the divinity; he dignified it, and (as that Apoſtle intimateth) advanced it above the angelical nature by an alliance to God himſelf; he thereby not only became qualified to mediate between God and man, and capable to tranſact that great buſineſs of man's ſalvation, but was engaged, and in a manner obliged to do it; for as he was *a man*, he ſurely was endued with the beſt of humane affections, univerſal charity and compaſſion, which would excite him to promote the welfare of all; as he was *a man*, he was ſubject to the common law of humanity, which obliges to endeavour the common benefit of men. As he was *a brother* in relation, ſo he could not, he would not be otherwiſe in affection; he

Phil. 2. 7. Heb. 4. 15. 2. 17. 5. 2. Gal. 4. 4.

Heb 2. 14, 11, 12, 16.

Acts 17. 26.

Ἡ περίληψις τῆς σαρκὸς ἓν ἐβύλετο ἢ λόγον φύσει Κύριον ὄντα, ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἐλεύθερωσις ἵνα ἢ γενεὰ ἡ πρὸ ἢ λόγῳ πάσης ἀθεωτότητος, &c. *Athan. c. Arr. Orat.* 3. *p.* 385.

Heb. 2. 11.

Heb. 2. 7, 16.

1 Tim. 2. 5.

he is not to be conceived deficient in performance of the offices ſutable to that condition. That good-will which he requires us to bear toward all men indifferently, good and bad, friends and enemies, he queſtionleſs did bear himſelf in the higheſt degree, and to the utmoſt extent; the general beneficence, which in his converſation and practice he did expreſs, doth ſignifie how large his deſires and intentions were in regard to the welfare of men; ſo that we may thence well aver with St. *Ambroſe*: *Incarnationis Dei myſterium eſt univerſæ ſalus creaturæ*; *The myſtery of God's Incarnation doth reſpect the ſalvation of all mankind*, according to his deſire and deſign.

Matt. 5. 44. Gal. 6. 10. Acts 10. 38.

Ambr. *de parad.* 8.

Ἄνθρωπον αὐτὸν ποιήσας ὁ πατὴρ οὐχ ἁπλῶς ἐποίησεν ἄνθρωπον, ἀλλ' ἵνα τὸ κυριεῦσαι πάντων αὐτὸν, καὶ ἄρχειν πάντας διὰ τῆς χειρὸς ἀπ' ἐπείκεν. Ath. *Orat.* 3. *in* Art. 385.

5. We are taught that *our Lord*, hath by his *ſaving* performances acquired a rightful propriety in, and a title of dominion over all men living; to him is committed the governance and protection of all mankind, as the reward of what he did and ſuffered for its ſake. *He is* called *the Lord of all men*; *and the head of every man.* It is ſaid *that all things by his Father are given into his hand*, and *put under his feet*; that *power is given him over all fleſh*; that *All authority is given him in heaven and earth*; *all judgment is committed to him.* Which priviledges, rights, dignities are declared to have been procured by the virtue of his ſaving performances, and purchaſed by the price of his bloud. *For*, *To this end*, ſaith St. *Paul*, *Chriſt both died and roſe again, and revived, that he might be the Lord both of the dead and living*; (or might exerciſe Lordſhip over both the dead and living, ἵνα καὶ νεκρῶν καὶ ζώντων κυριεύσῃ) and, *We are not our own* (ſaith *He* again) *we are bought with a price*: And, *we ſee Jeſus, for the ſuffering of death, crowned with glory and honour, that by the grace of God he might taſte death for every man*, (or, for the ſuffering of death, that by God's grace he might taſte death for every man, crowned with glory and honour; for there ſeems to be ſuch a trajection in the words;) And *he was obedient unto death, even to the death of the croſs*; *therefore hath God exalted him, and given him a name above every name.* Subjection then and redemption, as they have one ground, ſo they are implied to have the ſame extent; as every one muſt call *Chriſt Lord*, ſo he may call him *Saviour*; therefore his *Lord*, becauſe his *Saviour*. And ſince *Chriſt* hath got an authority over all men, a propriety in every man; ſince he hath undertaken to govern and protect the world, he queſtionleſs as a Prince of incomparable benignity and clemency, doth ſeriouſly intend and deſire the beſt welfare of all his People; it ſurely cannot be a ſmall benefit to the community of men, that they are his ſubjects; the objects of his Princely care, and of his mercy. ——κήδεται δὲ συμπάντων ὅσῳ καὶ κοινῇ καὶ ἰδίᾳ πάντων ἡμῶν σωτὴρ μᾶλλον ἐστὶν, ἐχὶ δὲ μόνῳ, δὲ ἅπασι. *He taketh care of all which doth become him that is Lord of all*; *for that he is indifferently the Saviour of all*, ſaith *Clem. Alexand.*

Rom. 14. 9. 1 Cor. 6. 20. Heb. 2. 9. Phil. 2. 8, 9. Apoc. 5. 9, 12.

Apoc. 17. 14. Acts 10. 36. 1 Cor. 11. 3. Matt. 28. 18. Matt. 11. 27. John 3. 35. 13. 3. Heb. 2. 8. 1. 2. John 17. 2. 5. 22. Phil. 2. 9. Pſal. 110. 7.

Clem. *Strom.* 7. p. 505.

6. We are commanded to *pray*, *intercede* and *give thanks* (indifferently) *for all men*, even for Heathens and Perſecutours; as for the objects of God's benevolent affection; whom *he would have to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of his truth*; expreſſing our charity in conformity to the unconfined goodneſs of God. Very good reaſon (argues St. *Chryſoſtome*) there is why we ſhould pray for all men; for if God doth will the ſalvation of all men, we in imitation of him, ſhould will the ſame; and if we deſire it, we ſhould pray for

1 Tim. 2. 1, 4.

Μιμῶ τὸν θεόν —— οἱ πάντας θέλῃ σωθῆναι, οἰκότως ὑπὲρ πάντων δεῖ δεῖσθαι· οἱ πάντας αὐτὸς ἐθελήσῃ σωθῆναι, θέλε καὶ σὺ· εἰ γὰρ θέλεις, ἔσχε. Chriſoſt.

for it. Upon which score the *Catholick Church* hath constantly and carefully observed this precept; so the learned Writer *de vocatione Gentium* assures us: *Which law of supplication*, saith he, *the devotion of all priests, and all the faithful people doth so observe, that there is no part of the World, in which such prayers are not solemnized by the Christian people. The Church of God doth therefore supplicate not only for the Saints, and the regenerate in Christ, but also for all infidels, and enemies of the Cross of Christ; for all Idolators, all Persecutors, all Jews, Hereticks and Schismaticks.* And *Prosper* himself: *Setting aside*, saith he, *that distinction, which the divine knowledge contains within the secret of his Justice, it is most sincerely to be believed and professed, that God wills that all men shall be saved; since the Apostle, whose sentence that is, doth most solicitously injoyn, that which is in all the Churches most piously observed that God should be implored for all men.* So doth *he* attest the common practice, and declare the ground thereof.

Quam legem supplicationis ità omnium sacerdotum, & omnium fidelium devotio, concorditur tenet, ut nulla pars mundi sit, in qua hujusmodi orationes non celebrentur à populis Christianis. Supplicat ergò ubique Ecclesia Dei non solùm pro Sanctis & in Christo jam regeneratis, sed etiam pro omnibus infidelibus, & inimicis crucis Christi, &c.

Remotâ ergò discretione, quam divina scientia intra secretum justitiæ suæ continet, sincerissimè credendum atque profitendum est Deum velle, ut omnes homines salvi fiant; siquidem Apostolus, cujus ista sententia est, solicitissimè præcipit quod in omnibus Ecclesiis piissimè custoditur, ut Deo pro omnibus hominibus supplicetur. Prosp. *ad obj. Vincent.* 2.

7. For which practice, and for the confirmation of its ground (God's serious willingness and desire that men should be saved) we have the pattern of our *Lord* himself praying to his *Father* for the pardon of the worst of men, his murtherers; which as it demonstrated his Charity toward them, so it argues that he was their *Saviour*, for that otherwise he knew they could not be in any capacity of having pardon. His praying for them implies the possibility of their receiving forgiveness; and such a possibility doth presuppose a disposition in God to grant it, and consequently a satisfaction provided, such as God requires and accepts, and which shall avail to their benefit, if toward the application thereof they perform their parts.

8. Indeed it is not easie to conceive how we can heartily pray for pardon, or for any other blessing either for our selves or for others, without supposing *Christ* to be *our* Saviour and *theirs*; without supposing God placable and well affected towards us and them in *Christ*, upon the accompt of his performances and sufferings in our and their behalf. We are to offer up all our devotions in the name of *Christ*, and for his sake must implore all mercies and blessings from God, which how can we do seriously and with faith, if we may reasonably question whether *Christ*'s merits do respect us, and consequently whether they can be available in our behalf? I will, saith St. *Paul*, that men should pray in every place, lifting up pure hands without wrath or doubting; which precept how can any Man observe; how can any Man pray with calmness and confidence of mind, who is not assured that *Christ* is his Saviour, or that God for *Christ*'s sake is disposed to grant his requests? but this point we may be obliged to prosecute somewhat farther in the application. 1 Tim. 2. 8.

9. Either our Saviour's performances do respect all men, or some men (the far greatest part of men) do stand upon no other terms, than those of the first creation, or rather of the subsequent lapse and condemnation; being subject to an extremely rigorous Law, and an infallibly certain guilt; and consequently to inevitable punishment; being utterly secluded from all capacity of mercy, and having no place of repentance left unto them (the place of repentance being a most signal part of *Christ*'s purchase) so that if any such man should, according to the proportion of his light and ability, perform what is agreeable to God's law, doing Acts 5. 31. Luke 24. 47.

what is possible to him (this may be supposed, for what is possible to a man he may do, what is possible is possible) in order to his salvation, he notwithstanding should be incapable of any mercy, favour or acceptance. But, beside that it is expressly said, that *God* did *shut up all men under sin, that he might have mercy upon all*; and that we are plainly enough informed, that our Lord did reverse the first fatal sentence, and hath as the mediatour between God and Man evacuated all former covenants by establishing a new one (for if any former *covenant had been good, there had been no place sought for a new one*, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* discourseth) besides these considerations, I say, and beside that such suppositions do not well sute to the nature of God, and do not well consist with the tenour of his providence; God positively aud vehemently disclaimeth this rigour of proceeding; he both under *Law* and *Gospel* declares himself ready to admit any man's repentance; yea earnestly invites all men thereto; yea grievously explains and expostulates with men for not repenting, yea not only says it, but swears it by his own life, that he desires any wicked man should do it; He strongly asserts, he earnestly inculcates, he loudly proclaims to all his readiness to pardon, and his delight in shewing mercy; the riches of his goodness and forbearance, and long-suffering. He declares, that he will exact an accompt of men, according to proportion, answerable to their willingness to do what they could; and to the improvements of those talents (those measures of light and strength) which they had, or might have had; that whoever is ὁ ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς, faithful in using the smallest power, shall be accepted and rewarded. He represents himself impartial in his judgment and acceptance of mens persons and performances; any man, in any nation, his sincere, though imperfect, piety and righteousness being acceptable to him; The final ruine of men is not imputed to any antecedent defect lying in man's state, or God's will, to no obstacle on God's part, nor incapacity on the part of man, but wholly to man's blameable neglect, or wilful abuse of the means conducible to his salvation: No want of mercy in God, or virtue in the passion of our Lord are to be mentioned or thought of; infidelity (formal or interpretative) and obstinate impenitency disappointing God's merciful intentions, and frustrating our Lord's saving performances, and endeavours, are the sole banes of mankind; *Here* (saith our *Lord*) *is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.* And, *I speak these things, that ye might be saved; but ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.* And, *How often have I willed to gather thy children, as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but ye would not?* Of the *Pharisees* and *Lawyers* our *Saviour* said, that *they defeated the counsel of God toward themselves* (ἠθέτησαν τὴν βουλὴν τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς ἑαυτούς) the counsel of God, who designed to bring them to repentance by the instruction and exhortation of St. *John* the *Baptist*. Our *Saviour* invited many to the participation of the *Gospel* (*that great Feast of fat things to all people*, as the Prophet *Esay* calleth it) but they would not come, saith the Text; he iterated his message, but they carelesly neglecting it (ἀμελήσαντες) *went away, one to his farm, another to his merchandize, and the rest took his servants, and intreated them spitefully, and slew them.* The *Sower* (our *Lord*) did sow in the *field* (*the world*) the good seed of heavenly truth, but some would not admit into their heads or hearts; from others temptation bare it away; in others worldly cares and desires choaked it; Our *Lord* spake the most convincing words, such as no man ever spake, such

Rom. 11. 32.
Heb. 8. 7.
Acts 17. 30.
Ezek. 18.
Ezek. 33. 11.
Isa. 55. 3. 7.
Mic. 7. 8.
Rom. 2. 4.
2 Cor. 8. 12.
Mat. 25. 25.
Luke 19. 17.
16. 10.
Acts 10. 34.
1 Pet. 1. 17.
John 3. 19.
John 5. 34, 40.
Mat. 23. 17.
Luke 7. 30.
Esa. 25. 6.
Matt. 22. 3, 5.
Matt. 13. 19, 38.
John 7. 46. 15, 22. 15. 24. 9. 32.

such as drew *Publicans* and *Harlots* into the Kingdom of heaven; he performed most astonishing works such as never the like were done, which were sufficient to convert *Tyre* and *Sydon*, yea to have preserved *Sodom*, but without effect, such were the invincible obstinacy, the gross stupidity, the corrupt prejudices, and perverse affections of his auditors and spectators, upon which cause our *Lord* chargeth the inefficacy and unsuccessfulness of his endeavours for their salvation. So doth St. *Stephen* call the *Jews*, unto whom the *Gospel* was offered, *hard-necked, uncircumcised in heart and ears*; such as *did always resist the holy Spirit*. St. *Paul* gives the same character of them, and assigns the same cause of their rejecting the *Gospel*. And of the *Jews* of *Antioch* 'tis said, that they did *thrust away the word of salvation, judging themselves unworthy of everlasting life* (that is, disdaining to embrace the overture of everlasting life made unto them.) And, *despisest thou the riches of God's goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering, being ignorant, that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?* so St. *Paul* expostulates with the incredulous *Jew*. And, *How*, saith the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*, *shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?* so do our *Lord* and his *Apostles* state the reason of mens miscarrying in this great affair; signifying all requisite care and provision to be made on God's part for their salvation; and imputing the obstruction solely to their voluntary default of compliance with God in his conduct and management thereof.

Matt. 21. 31. John 7. 31. John 5. 44. 12. 43. Luke 16. 14. Matt. 13. 13. 23. 14. Acts 7. 51. Acts 28. 26. Acts 13. 46. Rom. 2. 3. Heb. 2. 3.

Neither are the dealings and declarations of God toward those who lived under the *Law* and *Prophets*, impertinent to this purpose; they are applicable upon consideration of party in reason, or likeness in case.

What remonstrances concerning the gentleness, kindness, and equity of his dealings, what exprobrations of their stubbornness and stupidity God did anciently make to *Israel* under that particular dispensation, (which yet in tendency and in representation may be deemed general) the same he might now use toward all mankind, under this *universal œconomy*, wherein God hath given to his *Son*, *the heathen for his inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for his possession*; whereby *all the Kingdoms of the world are become the Kingdoms of the Lord, and his Christ*; which hath erected an unconfined Kingdom of grace; to which all men in design and of right are subject; in respect to which every nation is in obligation and duty become the people of God. *What* (said *God* to them) *could I have done more to my Vineyard than I have done, wherefore when I looked for grapes did it bring forth wild grapes! O Israel, thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thy help. I have spread out my hands all the day-long to a rebellious and gainsaying People. I spake unto you rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; I called, but ye answered not; I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. When I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did chuse that, wherein I delighted not.* And, *Behold their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken; behold the word of the Lord is unto them a reproach, they have no delight in it. They refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear; yea they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the Law, which the Lord of hosts hath sent in his Spirit.* Which passages, in many others of the like importance that occurr, do imply the large extent of God's merciful intentions; and the competency of the means, which God affords for the salvation of men; that he wants no affection or inclination to save

Psal. 2. 8. Apoc. 11. 15. Isa. 5. 4. Hos. 13. 9. Isa. 65. 2. Rom. 10. 21. Jer. 7. 31. Prov. 1. 24, 29. Isa. 65. 12. 66. 4. 1. 18. Ezek. 12. 2. Jer. 6. 10. Zech. 7. 11, 12.

them, that he neglects no means proper for effecting it; that he draws them into the way leading thither by serious and earnest invitation, directs them by needful light and instruction, excites them by powerful arguments and persuasions; and as St. *Ambrose* speaketh, *Quod in Deo fuit, ostendit omnibus, quod omnes voluit liberare: God shewed to all, that what was in him, he did will to deliver* (or save) *all men.* Whence he may truly and properly be called the Benefactor and *Saviour*, even of those, who by their wilful malice or neglect do not obtain salvation. For in respect to the same favours, which are exhibited and tendered to them, He is the Saviour of those, who by hearkning to God's call, and complying with God's design; by well using the means vouchsafed, and performing the conditions required, do finally attain salvation.

De parad. 8.

—ἀπολογούμενος μετὰ ἀσφαλείας ὅτι πάντα τὰ εἰς αὐτὸν ἥκοντα ὅτι σωτήρια ἦν κεκινημένων πεποίηκεν—(Bas. in Ps. 7.)

If it be said, that these transactions do refer only to God's own people or to those only, unto whom God pleased to dispense especial revelations of truth and overtures of mercy; that we therefore cannot thence infer any thing concerning the general extent of God's design, or the vertue of *Christ*'s performances in respect to all mankind; we may to this suggestion rejoyn, that by observing the manner of God's proceedings toward them, unto whom he openly declareth his mind and will, we may reasonably collect how he standeth affected toward others, and by what rules, or upon what accompts he dealeth with them; taking in the analogy of reason, and parity or disparity of the case. As to God's affection, it is the same every-where, agreeable to that nature, which inclineth him to be *good to all*, and *merciful over all his creatures* (as the *Psalmist* tells us) unto which disposition his providence yields attestation; for οὐκ ἀμάρτυρον ἑαυτὸν ἀφῆκεν ἀγαθοποιῶν, *he did not leave himself without testimony, doing good to all*, as St. *Paul* tells us; although he doth not dispense his favours in the same method, or discover his meaning by the same light, or call all men to him with the same voice and language.

Psal. 135. 9.

Acts 14. 17.

Gratia Dei nullis seculis se negavit, virtute una, quantitate diversa, consilio incommutabili, opere multiformi. II. 5.

Adhibita est semper universis hominibus quædam superna mensura doctrinæ, quæ etsi occultioris parcioris que gratiæ fuit, sufficit tamen quibusdam ad remedium, omnibus ad testimonium. II. 15.

Neither was mankind ever left destitute of that *divine grace*, which (as the good *Writer de vocatione Gentium* saith) *never denied it self to any ages, with the same virtue, in different measure, with an unchangeable counsel, and multiform operation.* So in one place; and in another, *There was always* (saith *he*) *dispensed to all men a certain measure of instruction from above, which although it came from a more occult and sparing grace, did yet suffice to some for remedy, to all for testimony.*

Rom. 2. 14. 15.

——*nulli nationi hominum benignitatis suæ, dona subtraxit, ut prophetica voces & præcepta legalia convivacerentur in elementorum obsequiis, & testimoniis accepisse. De Voc. G. I. 5.* Rom 1. 19.

Comparing the different states of men, we may substitute with St. *Paul*, for the *law of revelation* engraved upon *tables*, the *law of nature* written in mens *hearts*; for *prophetical instructions* the *dictates of reason*; for *audible* admonitions and reproofs, *secret* whispers of grace, and checks of conscience; for *extraordinary* instances of divine power, the *ordinary* works of the creation (*by which God's eternal divinity and power are discernable*) for the *special* and occasional influences of providence, the *common* and continual expressions of divine beneficence; then allowing for the disparity (as to measure of evidence and efficacy) in these things; and as to the rest, the case is the same. If one part hath means more clear and forcible, yet those which are granted to the other are not void of use or virtue; by them all men in all places *may seek God*, if

Acts 14. 17.

Acts 17. 27.

if haply they may feel him and find him; ye may (as St. *Paul* implieth) be able to know God, and induced to serve him; to thank him and to glorifie him in some measure; in a measure answerable to such light and strength; no more doth God require, for no more will he reckon with them. If their helps be deemed more low and scanty, their duty in proportion is less high, and their accompt will be more easie. Enough certainly they have to excuse God from misprision of not having provided competently for them, to render them, if they do not well use and improve it, inexcusable; and what they have is an effect of God's mercy procured and purchased by their Saviour. But of this *Point* we may have occasion afterward to say more; I shall now only add; that this suggestion, well considered, may afford another argument to confirm our doctrine; which is this:

Rom. 1. 18, 20. Rom. 2. 15, 26. Rom. 1. 21. Rom. 1. 20.

10. If *our Lord* be the *Saviour* of all those to whom God's truth is declared; and his mercy offered; or, if he be the *Saviour* of all the members of the visible Church; particularly if he be the *Saviour* of those, who among these, rejecting the overtures and means of grace, or by disobedience abusing them, shall in the event fail of being saved, then is he the *Saviour* of all men. But *Our Lord* is the *Saviour* of those persons; and therefore he is *the Saviour of all men*. The *assumption* we assayed to shew in the last argument; and many express testimonies of *Scripture* before-mentioned establish it; the common style of Scripture doth imply it, when in the *Apostolical* Writings to all the visibly faithful indifferently the relation to *Christ* as their Saviour is assigned, an interest in all his saving performances is supposed, the title of σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι (with others equivolent, of *justified*, *sanctified*, *regenerated*, *quickned*, &c.) are attributed. And in our Text God is said to be *the Saviour* chiefly πιστῶν, *of the faithful*; which word in its common acception denotes all visible members of the Christian communion. And for its confirmation we adjoin: The *Apostles* at first, and the *Church* ever since after them (except some heterodox people of late) have professed readily to confer holy *Baptism*, and therein to dispense remission of sins, together with other Evangelical graces and privileges, to every man professing his faith in *Christ*, and resolution to observe *Christ*'s law, upon this supposition, that *Christ* is the *Saviour* of all such persons, and by his salutary passion hath purchased that remission for them; although the dispensers of these graces could not discern what decrees God in his secret providence had passed upon them, or what the event should be as to their final state; yea although according to the Judgment of Prudence they could not but conceive, that all such should not be saved, but that many of them should be of those, who (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh) *would draw back unto perdition*; who (as St. *Peter* implies some might and would do) would forget the purgation, which they had received of their sins. That in thus doing the Church proceeds upon a persuasion that *Christ* is truly the Saviour of all its visible members, duly admitted and incorporated thereinto, the thing it self plainly signifies; the tenour of its practice makes palpable; the forms of speech used in its holy administrations (of prayers, of sacraments, of exhortations) do suppose, or express. For how can each member singly be asserted in holy Baptism to be washed from his sins, and sanctified to God, and made regenerate or adopted into the number of God's children, and made partaker of *Christ*'s death? how can thanksgiving in the common name, in most general terms, be offered up for *Christ*'s saving performances? or the holy bread and cup be imparted to each communicant

Heb. 10. 39. 2 Pet. 1. 9.

as

as symbols and pledges of *Christ*'s charity and mercy towards him? how can every Christian be instigated to obedience in gratitude to *Christ*, and those who transgress *Christ*'s laws, upbraided for their ingratitude toward him; their rejecting, or renouncing, despising, or abusing him and his salvation? how can such things be said and done with any truth or consistency; yea without forgery and mockery, if every baptized Christian hath not an interest in our Lord's performances; if *Christ* be the Saviour only of an uncertain and unknown part in the Church? This consideration of the Churches practice hath made even the most vehement assertours of St. *Austin*'s doctrine (strained to the highest pitch) in the more antient and modest times, fully to acknowledge this position; that *Christ* is the redeemer of every member of the visible Church, as appears by this remarkable decree of the Council of *Valentia* in *France* (consisting of the Bishops of three Provinces, favourers of *Godscalous* his opinions.) *We also do believe it most firmly to be held, that all the multitude of the faithful, being regenerated by water and the Holy Spirit, and hereby truly incorporated into the Church, and according to the Apostolical doctrine baptized into the death of Christ, is by his blood washed from their sins.* Because there could be no true regeneration, unless there were made also a true redemption; since in the Sacraments of the Church there is nothing empty (or vain) nothing ludificatory; but all thoroughly true, and supported by its own very truth and sincerity. Yet that out of the very company of believers and the redeemed, some are eternally saved, because by God's grace they faithfully abide in their redemption, bearing the Lord's speech in their hearts, *He that perseveres to the end shall be saved*; and that others, because they would not abide in the salvation of the Faith, which they at first received, and did rather chuse to frustrate the grace of redemption by evil doctrine or life, than to keep it, do no-wise arrive to the plenitude of salvation, and to the perception of eternal beatitude. 'Tis then a Catholick and true doctrine, that at least *Christ* is a Saviour of all appearing Christians; and supposing the truth thereof, I say that by consequence he is also the Saviour of all men. For it appeareth thence, that the design of our Saviour's Performances did not flow from, or was not grounded upon any special love, or any absolute decree concerning those Persons, who in event shall be saved; since according to that supposition it extendeth to many others; wherefore it proceeded from God's natural goodness and common kind affection toward mankind; from the compassion of a gracious Creatour toward his miserable creature, whence all men are concerned and interested therein. Why God's merciful intentions were not explicitly declared and propounded to *Socrates* and *Epictetus*, as they were to *Judas Iscariot* and *Simon Magus*, is another question, which we may afterward in some manner assoil; at present, it suffices to say, that the overture of mercy made to such wretches doth argue God's kind disposition and good intention toward all men; so it did in St. *Ambrose* his opinion; who says, that our Lord ought not to pass by the man who should betray him, that all men might take notice, that in the choice even of his traytour, he did hold forth a pledge or mark of all mens being to be saved.

Anno 855.

Item firmissimè tenendum credimus, &c. supra.

Et idèo nec proditurum debuit praeterire ut adverterent omnes, quod in electione esset etiam proditoris suî, servandorum omnium insigne praetendit. Ambr. *de parad.* 8.

But the truth of this doctrine will farther appear by the declaration and surveyal of those respects according to which *Christ* is represented the Saviour of men, as also by considering how useful and conducible to piety this doctrine is, as ministring grounds and obligations, encouragements

courageements and motives to the practice of most considerable duties required from all men. But these things must be reserved to another occasion.

Sermon XL.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 Tim. IV. 10.

——The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

THAT our Lord *Jesus* is the Saviour of all men, we have before from plain testimonies of holy *Scripture*, and from some arguments grounded there, assayed to shew. The same will be made farther apparent by considering the respects according to which he is such; and those we may first consider generally and in the gross, then survey them more particularly and distinctly.

In general we may say, that our Lord is the Saviour of all men, for that he hath rendred all men *salvabiles*, capable of salvation; and *salvandos*, designed to salvation. For that he hath removed all obstacles peremptorily debarring men from access to salvation, and hath procured competent furtherances to their attainment of it. For that he hath rescued mankind out of that dead and desperate condition, wherein it lay involved; being *the bread of God*, who *hath descended from heaven, that he might give life to the world*, as he saith of himself. For that he hath performed whatever on his part is necessary or fit in order to salvation, antecedently to the acceptance and compliance with those reasonable conditions, which by God's wisdom are required toward the instating men into a full and immediate right to salvation, or to a complete and actual fruition thereof. He made the way to happiness plain and passable: levelling the insuperable cliffs, and filling up the *chasmes*, and rectifying the obliquities, and smoothing the asperities thereof, as the *Prophet* foretold; so that all men, who would, might conveniently walk therein. He set the doors of *Paradise* wide open, so that who pleased might enter in; all the bonds and restraints under which men lay, he so far loosed, that any man might be free, who would concur to his own liberty and enlargement. All the protection, and encouragement which was needful toward obtaining salvation, he afforded and exhibited to every one, that would embrace and make use of them.

John 6. 33.

Luke 3. 5.

Ἡ γῆ ἀντὶ καπάρχε ἐυλόγηται, ὁ παράδεισος ἠνοίγη, &c. Athan. *in pass.*
Luke 4. 18. Αἰχμαλώτοις ἄνεσιν ——

In

In respect to which performances he might be justly esteemed and truly called a *Saviour*, altho all men do not in effect become saved. For the estimation and denomination of performances are to be grounded upon their own nature and design, not upon events depending upon the contingent and arbitrary behaviour of men. As he that freely offers a rich boon is no less to be accompted a benefactor and liberal, altho his gift be refused, than if it were accepted; as he that opens the prison is to be styled a deliverer, although the captive will not go forth; as he that ministers an effectual remedy, although the Patient will not use it, deserves the honour and thanks due to a Physician; so is *our Lord* in regard to what he hath performed for men, and offered to them (being sufficient to prevent their misery, and promote their happiness) to be worthily deemed, and thankfully acknowledged their *Saviour*, although not all men, yea although not one man should receive the designed benefit. Accordingly we may observe, that in the Scripture style, those persons are said to be saved, who are only in a way toward salvation, although they do not arrive thither; and the means conducing to salvation are said to save, although their effect may be defeated; σωζόμενοι and σεσωσμένοι are terms applied to all Christians, and *Christ* is ὁ σώσας, *he that hath saved them*; and *Faith* is said to have *saved them*, although some of them οὐκ ἔπίστευσαν, have *believed in vain*, or to no effect, forsaking and renouncing their faith; and *Baptism* save them, who partakes it, although being washed, they return to their wallowing in the mire. And as our *Lord* is so termed a *Saviour* in respect to them, who are by faith and admission into the Church put into a more near capacity of salvation, as St. *Paul* speaketh: ἐγγύτερον ἡμῶν ἡ σωτηρία, ἢ ὅτε ἐπιστεύσαμεν (*Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed*;) so is he in respect of all those, who are in any capacity thereof, although a more remote one.

Acts 16. 17. Καταγγέλλουσιν ὁδὸν σωτηρίας.
1 Cor. 1. 18.
Acts 2. 47.
Apoc. 21. 29.
Eph. 2. 5.
2 Tim. 1. 9.
1. Cor. 15. 2.
Tit. 3. 8.
1 Pet. 3. 21.
2 Pet. 2. 22.
Rom. 13. 11.

But let us now view more nearly and distinctly the respects in which he is *a Saviour of all men*, or the particular benefits and advantages conducing to salvation, which by his performances accrue to mankind; for πάμπολυ τὸν σωτηρίαν ἀπάσῃ χαρίζεται τῇ ἀνθρωπότητι, *In very many ways he bestoweth salvation upon all mankind*, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* speaks.

Clem. Alex. *Pædag.* 11.

1. Our *Lord* is *the Saviour of all men*, as having effected that Almighty God (who upon great provocations was justly displeased and angry with man, who had averted his face, and withdrawn his favour from mankind, whom our apostasie and rebellion had rendred a stranger and an enemy to us) hath deposed his wrath toward mankind, hath conceived a kind affection to it, doth cast a favourable aspect upon it; being throughly reconciled and made a friend thereto by our Saviour's mediation. *This is my beloved Son, ἐν ᾧ εὐδόκησα, in whom I have been well pleased*, was the attestation given from God to our Lord; the meaning whereof in regard to men the holy choir of Angels did interpret, when after the gladsome report of his birth (that *great joy, which should be to all people*) they sang, *Glory be to God on high, on earth peace, good-will toward men.* Which St. *Paul* farther declareth, when he saith, that by him εὐδόκησε, God pleased to reconcile unto himself all things, upon earth, and in heaven; and when he saith, *That God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their sins.* And, *When we were enemies* (saith he again) *we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: When we were enemies*, that implies God antecedently to any man's conversion to have been appeased, and become favourably disposed toward all men, or toward those, whom St. *Paul* speaketh unto, as men; so the reason of the case doth import, and so the analogy which St. *Paul* immediately

Matt. 3. 17. 12. 18.
Luke 2. 10, 14.
Col. 1. 20.
Eph. 1. 10.
2 Cor. 5. 29.
Rom. 5.

ately after propounds between the results of *Adam*'s transgression and our *Saviour*'s obedience (as to provocation and reconciliation, to condemnation and absolution, to the intents of bringing death and life upon all men) doth enforce. Whence it is, that God declareth himself now to bear an universal good-will to mankind, that he doth earnestly desire the welfare of all men, and is displeased with the ruine of any man; that he *would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth*, because *there is one mediatour between God and man; that he would not have any perish, but that all should come to repentance*; this he affirms, yea (for the confirmation of our faith and our consolation therein) he in the *Evangelical Prophet* swears it, *As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* So far toward our salvation is done, God meets us half way; he is reconciled unto us, it remains only that we be reconciled to him; that we hearken to the Embassie from him: *Be reconciled to God.*

1 Tim. 2. 4. 2 Pet. 3. 9. Heb. 6. 16, 18. Ezek. 33. 11. 2 Cor. 5. 19.

2. *Jesus* is *the Saviour of all men*, by satisfying the divine justice, and repairing God's honour in their behalf. The disloyal and ingratefull behaviour of man had so wrong'd, so endamaged, so dishonour'd God (had so abused the goodness, disparaged the wisdom, slighted the power, impeached and slurr'd the authority of his Creator, had so prejudiced all the rights and interests of God) that by the divine wisdom it was thought fit, that he should not be restored into a capacity of mercy and favour, without a signal compensation made, and an exemplary punishment undergone, whereby the right of God should conspicuously be asserted, his love of goodness and dislike of wickedness should be remarkably demonstrated, and every creature in heaven and earth should be solemnly admonished of its duty; of the reverence and obedience it owes to the great Creator, of the heynous guilt and horrible mischief it incurs by offending him. Such a compensation man was no-wise able to make, or fit to undergo such a punishment: Our *Saviour* therefore, out of infinite pity and charity, did undertake both; by a voluntary condescension putting himself into the low and weak state of man; subjecting himself unto that Law which man was obliged unto, and suffering the pains which man had deserved. This he was pleased to do in man's behalf, and in our stead; and God was pleased to accept it as so done. His incarnation (or exinanition of himself, as St. *Paul* calleth it) was an act of that high duty and goodness, that it in virtue surpassed all the obedience, which all creatures were able to render; that it yielded God more satisfaction and more honour than the joynt endeavours of all the world could confer. His with so intense charity and chearfulness fulfilling all righteousness did far more please God, than all our most exact obedience could have done; his enduring bitter pains aad disgraces (considering the infinite dignity of his person, his near relation and dearness to God, his perfect innocence and rectitude, yea his immense charity, contentedness and patience) more than countervailed the punishment due to the sins of all men. Such a payment was more than served to discharge all our debts, (it serv'd to purchase an *overplus* of graces and blessings) so rich a price was more than sufficient to ransome all the world from captivity; so goodly, so pure, so sweet, so precious a Sacrifice might worthily expiate and attone all the guilts of men.

Λοιπὸν ἡ οἱ ἄνθρωποι ἐκέκτηντο καὶ τὸ ἴδιον παθεῖν ἔμελλον, ἁμαρτωλοὶ καὶ νεκροί· ἀλλὰ καὶ τὸν τῆς λόγε δύναμιν ἀνασάντες ἀθάνατοι καὶ ἄφθαρτοι ἐκ θανάτε. Athan. *in* Arian. *Orat.* 4. 485.

Τότε δὴ καὶ θάνατος, καὶ κατάρα ἐλύετο, καὶ λοιμονες κατεχύννοντο καὶ ἐδεγματίζοντο θεομβευόμενοι, καὶ τὸ χειρόγραφον τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ σαρκὶ περσηλώτο, &c. Chyril. *in* John 1. 14. Phil. 2. 7.

Ἡ ἔνσαρκος παρεσία τῦ σωτῆρος θανάτε λύτρον καὶ κλίσιως πάσης σωτηρία γέγονεν. Athan. *ad Adelph. Ep.*

Vide Cyrill. *in Eph. Conc.* p. 133. Δικαιώσαι τὸν ἄνθρωπον φύσιν, &c.

Eph. 5. 2. Heb 10. 10. 9. 12. 1 Pet. 1. 19.

Aug. *in* Psal. 95. Μὴ θαυμάζῃς εἰ κόσμῳ ὅλῳ ἐλυτρώθη· ἑ γὰρ ἦν ἀνθρώπῳ ἴλεως, ἀλλ' ἦν θεῦ μονογενὴς, ὁ ὑπὲρ τοῦ θνήσκων, &c.
Cyrill. *Cat.* 13.

Now if we enquire what our Saviour did redeem, the consideration of what he paid may (as St. *Austin* tells) help to inform us; *Quæritis quid emerit? videte quid dederit, & invenite quid emerit. Do ye see* (saith he) *what he bought? see what he gave, and find what he bought.* However, that as the value and sufficiency of our Lord's performances, so the design and effect thereof did reach so far in regard to man; that his charity was no less extensive than his performance was complete, for our good, the holy *Scripture* teaches us. For, *He is the lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world,* (saith the *Baptist.*) And, *The bread* (saith he) *which I gave is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.* And, *He is a propitiation* (saith St. *John*) *for our sins; and not onely for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world.* And, *He is the Mediatour of God and man, who gave himself ἀντίλυτρον ὑπὲρ πάντων, a ransome,* in the stead, and *for all men* (saith St. *Paul.*) And, *He tasted death for every one* (saith the *Author* to the *Hebrews.*) And, He was *that one man,* who, as it was *expedient,* did *dye for the whole nation* of men. And, *God was in him reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their sins.* And, *He came into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might by him be saved* (or freed from condemnation.) And, *As by the offence of one man judgment came upon all men to condemnation, so by the righteousness of one mercy came upon all to justification of life.* The end we see of our Saviour's performances was, that he might *wipe* off the guilt of sin from all mankind, that he might reverse the condemnation passed thereupon, and that he might remove the punishment due thereto; or, that absolving the first man's sin, he might take it away from the whole race (as St. *Athenatius* speaks.)

John 1. 29. 6. 51. 1 John 2. 2. 1 Tim. 2. 5. Heb. 2. 9. John 11. 50. 18. 14. 3. 17. 2 Cor. 5. 29. Rom. 5. 17. Ἵνα ἐκείνου λύων τὴν ἁμαρτίαν, ἀπὸ πάντας αὐτὸν ἄρῃ τῆς ῥίζης. Athan. *in pass.*

All men have sinned, and come short, (or are destitute) *of the glory of God, being justified freely by his grace, by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. He was born under the law, that he might redeem those which were under the law. He that knew no sin, was made sin* (was punished and dealt with as a sinner) *that we might be made the righteousness of God in him;* (that we might be capable of being esteemed and dealt with as righteous by God upon this accompt.) So that the result is, Divine justice being fully satisfied, and the honour of God fully repaired (in regard to all sins past and future) the mouth of vengeance being stopped, the claims of death and hell being evacuated, that general sentence of condemnation (pass'd upon all the sons of *Adam*) is suspended, death ceases to reign by any just power, or inevitable necessity; (it is, as St. *Paul* saith, abolished or abrogated as to any lawful right, or necessary force it hath) the rigour and severity of that law, which upon pain of death exacteth most punctual obedience (and which consequently doth expose all men to unavoidable condemnation is tempered and abated, a foundation is laid for the shewing mercy, and granting pardon. In respect whereto,

Rom. 4. 23. Gal. 3. 13. 5. 3. 2 Cor. 5. 21. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Gal. 3. 10, 12. Rom. 10. 5.

3. Our *Lord* is *the Saviour of all men,* as having in the behalf of mankind transacted and ratified a new covenant, very necessary for, and very conducible to the salvation of mankind; whereby salvation is made attainable, and is really tendred unto all, upon feasible and equal conditions. According to the purport whereof upon any man (however stained or loaded with the guilt of most heinous transgressions) his embracing the overtures thereof, consenting to, and complying with the terms propounded therein, that is, sincerely believing, and seriously repenting; returning to God with hearty desires and earnest resolutions to serve him; God is ready to dispense mercy and pardon, and immediately receiveth the person

son into grace and favour with him; yea, the man continuing to perform a faithfull (though imperfect) obedience, an obedience sutable to man's natural infirmity and frailty, and proportionable to the assistances afforded him; God farther promiseth to bestow inestimable blessings and rewards of joy and happiness. That covenant which the *Prophets* implied of old, when (beside, and beyond what the *Jewish law* did import) they Preached thus, ----*Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings, cease to* Isa. 1. 16. *do evil ----- though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as* Isa. 55. 7. *snow, though they be red as crimson, they shall be as wool.* And, *Let the wicked man forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon*; And, *If the wicked man will turn from all his sins, that* Ezek. 18. 21. *he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawfull and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die* (so *God* in *Esay* and *Ezekiel* declareth his intention to proceed with men, avowing that way of his to be most equal and fair.) This is *that Covenant* which our Lord commanded his Apostles to declare and propound to all mankind; *Go ye* (said Mark. 16. 25. he to them) *into the whole world, preach the doctrine to every creature*; that Gospel, according to which, as it is expressed in St. *Luke*, *repentance* Luke 24. 47. *and remission ought to be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem*; in respect to which St. *Peter* says, that *God hath exalted* our Acts 5. 31. Lord *to be a Prince and a Saviour, to grant repentance to Israel, and remission of sins*; (*to grant repentance*, that is (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* and *Clemens Romanus* speak) μετανοίας τόπον, room for repentance, or capacity to receive pardon upon repentance) concerning which *Covenant* that *Clemens* (the fellow-labourer of St. *Paul*, and whom *Clemens* Phil. 4. 3. Θαμμαῖος. *Alexandrinus* calleth an *Apostle*) in that excellent, admirable and almost Euseb. Canonical *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, which (as *Eusebius* and *Hierome* Ἐν πλείσις ἐκκλησίαις. tell us) was anciently publickly read in most Churches, hath these re- Euseb. markably full and clear expressions; *Let us* (saith he) *look stedfastly upon the blood of Christ, and let us see how pretious to God his blood is, which being shed for our salvation, did bring the grace of repentance to the whole world. Let us attentively regard all ages, and observe that in every generation the Lord granted place of repentance to them, who would turn unto him.* This is that *new* and *better Covenant, established upon better promises* (cancelling all former, exceptionable, imperfect and ineffectual compacts, referring to man's interest and duty) about which the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* discourseth, and Heb. 8. 6. 9. 15. 12. 24. 7. 22. whereof he calleth *our Lord* the *Mediator* and *Sponsor*; in regard to which 2 Cor. 3. 6. St. *Paul* calleth him the *Mediator between God and man*; plainly declaring all men to have a concernment and interest therein; for this supposition he useth as an argument proving God's universal desire of man's conversion and salvation: *Who would have all men to be saved, and to come to the* 1 Tim. 2. 5. *knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.* By virtue of which *Covenant* it is, that any such degrees of love or fear toward God (such as men are capable of) are available, any righteous performances, such as our weakness can produce, are acceptable, any honest endeavours do receive countenance and encouragement; and that (as St. *Peter* observed) *in every na-* Acts 10. 34. *tion he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted by him*; although his fear of God be not so intense, or pure; his righteousness not so

Ἀτενίσωμεν εἰς τὸ αἷμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ ἴδωμεν ὡς ἔστι τίμιον τῷ Θεῷ αἷμα αὐτοῦ, ὅτι διὰ τὴν ἡμετέραν σωτηρίαν ἐκχυθὲν, παντὶ τῷ κόσμῳ μετανοίας χάριν ὅλην ἐπέτυχεν. Ἀτενίσωμεν εἰς γενεὰς πάσας, καὶ καταμάθωμεν ὅτι ἐν γενεᾷ καὶ γενεᾷ μετανοίας τόπον ἔδωκεν ὁ δεσπότης τοῖς βουλομένοις σωθῆναι ἐπ' αὐτόν. Clem. *ad* Corinth.

Quo dicto ostenditur nullum hominem secundum naturam esse pollutum, sed aequaliter omnes ad Christi Evangelium provocari. Hier. *ad* Aug. *Epist. XI.*

exact and unblameable, as according to extremity of law and duty, they should be. From which *Covenant* so far as is any man, according to God's intention and desire, from being excluded, that all men are seriously invited, vehemently exhorted, earnestly intreated to enter into it, and to partake the benefits exhibited thereby. Every man that feeleth himself to want those benefits, and is desirous of mercy and ease from the guilt and burthen of his sins, may come and welcome. *Hoe every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters*; So the *Evangelical Prophet* proclaims; and, *If any man thirsteth, let him come to me and drink*, crieth *our Lord*; and, *Come to me all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* (Δεῦτε πάντες, *Come all to me*: All men therefore (saith *Origen*) who from the nature of sin do labour and are burthened, are called to that rest; which is with the word of God.) And, *in Christ's name* (saith St. *Paul*) *we are Embassadours, as that God by us intreateth, we pray for Christ be reconciled to God*; the purport of which Embassy, together with its extent, he otherwhere thus expresseth, ταυῦν παραγγέλλει τοῖς ἀνθρώποις πᾶσι παντχῦ μετανοεῖν, *He now proclaimeth to all men every where that they should repent*; he consequently holds forth to all the benefits annexed to repentance. But of this we spake formerly.

Isa. 55. 1. John. 7. 37. Mat. 11. 28.

Πάντες ἓν οἱ ἄνθρωποι διὰ τὴν τῶ ἀμείνονος φύσιν κοπιῶντες καὶ περιφερόμενοι καλῶνται ὅτι τὸν παρὰ τῶ λόγῳ τῦ θεῦ ἀνάπαυσιν. Orig *in* Celf. 3

2 Cor. 5. 20. Acts 17. 30.

4. Our *Lord Jesus is the Saviour of all men* as having purchased and procured for them competent aids, whereby they are enabled to perform the conditions required of them in order to their salvation; to acquire a sufficient knowledge of their duty, to subdue their bad inclinations and lusts, to withstand temptations; or briefly, whereby they are enabled sincerely to repent of their sins, and acceptably to perform their due obedience. The truth of this point, taking in the consideration of man's natural state, may by good consequence be inferr'd from the truth of the Points foregoing. If men are naturally so dead in trespasses and sins, so enslaved and sold under sin; so very prone to evil, and averse to good; so dark and blind that they cannot well discern what they should do, so corrupt and weak that they cannot perform what they know and confess to be good (as St. *Paul* affirmeth men to be) and consequently are of themselves indisposed to perform the duties acceptable to God, and requisite by his appointment toward their salvation, than either our Lord hath provided for them a communication of grace sufficient to countervail or surmount that natural impotency, or all his designs for their good are imperfect or inconsistent (aiming at an end, without proving requisite means, or removing necessary obstructions) and his performances, whereby the forementioned benefits were procured, do prove ineffectual and fruitless. For God being appeased, and become well-affected to man's salvation, divine justice being satisfied, the rigour of law being mitigated, repentance being made available, and an obedience, agreeable to man's frailty, becoming acceptable, with all other the immediate results of our Saviour's transactions for man, would signifie nothing in regard to him, who still lieth under a necessity of sinning, or an inability of performing that, which is indispensably exacted from him toward a complete enjoyment of those benefits and favours. In vain is the debt paid, and the bond cancelled, and the prison set open, and liberty proclaimed, and the prisoner called forth, if he be not himself able to knock off the fetters, which detain him, and there is no help afforded, by which he may do it. But our Lord hath surely laid his designs more advisedly, and

Eph. 2. 1. Colos. 2. 13. Rom. 7. 14, 15. Eph. 5. 8. 2 Cor. 4 6. 2 Pet. 1. 19. &c.

Ὁ ὅτι τὰ αἰσχρὰ ὁλισθος αὐτοφυὴς ἀνθρωπίνης ἕξεως. Max. Tir. *dis.* 22.

Si Deus non operatur in nobis nullius possumus esse participes virtutis; sine hoc quippe bono nihil est bonum, sine hac luce nihil est lucidum, sine hac sapientia nihil sanum, sine hac justitia nihil rectum. De Voc. Gent. I. 8.

and hath prosecuted his work more perfectly. Wherefore we may suppose that a competency of grace and spiritual assistence is by virtue of our Saviour's performances really imparted to every man, qualifying him to do what God requires, and is ready to accept from him in order to his welfare; that our Saviour hath sent abroad his holy Spirit (that fountain of all true goodness, of all spiritual light, strength and comfort) like the Sun, to shine, to warm, to dispence benign influences over the world; although it shineth not so brightly and vigorously; and its presence is not so visible and sensible in one place, as another; which holy Spirit, as it is in its essence omnipresent, so it is likewise in its energy, inessantly working (in reasonable measure, right manner, and fit season, as wisdom ordereth) upon the minds and affections of men, infusing good thoughts and motions, impressing arguments and motives to good practice, cherishing and promoting good purposes; checking bad designs, restraining and reclaiming from bad courses. Our reason, however aided by exteriour instruction and excitement, being unable to deal with those mighty temptations, oppositions and discouragements we are to encounter with, he hath given us a wise and powerful spirit, to guide and advise us, to excite and encourage us, to relieve and succour us in all our religious practice and spiritual warfare. So that all deliverance from the prevalency of temptation and sin we owe to his grace and assistance. That to these purposes the holy Spirit is plentifully conferred upon all the visible members of the Christian Church we have plainly declared in Scripture; It was a promise concerning the Evangelical times that God would pour forth his spirit upon all flesh; The collation thereof is a main part of the Evangelical Covenant (into a participation of which every Christian is admitted) it being the finger of God whereby God's law is impressed upon their inward parts, and engraven in their hearts (as the Prophets describe the effects of this Covenant.) And the end of our Saviour's passion is by St. *Paul* declared to be, *that the blessing of Abraham might come unto the Gentiles, through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith*; that is, that becoming Christians we might partake thereof. And the Apostolical Ministery (that is, preaching the Gospel, and dispensing the privileges thereof) is therefore styled, διακονία πνεύματος, *the ministery of the Spirit*. And the *tasting of the heavenly gift, and partaking the Holy Ghost* is (according to the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) part of the character of a visible Christian (such a Christian, who might παραπεσόντας, *fall away*, as he supposeth, and *re-crucifie the Lord, and expose him to shame*;) and St. *Peter* makes reception of the *Holy Ghost* to be a concomitant or consequent of *Baptism*; *Repent*, saith he, *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*; *for the promise* (or that promise of the Spirit, which is called, *the spirit of promise*, peculiar to the Gospel) *is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* (That is, the *Holy Spirit* is promised to all, how far distant soever in time or place, who shall be invited unto, and shall embrace Christianity;) and accordingly St. *Paul* saith of *Christians*, that *God according to his mercy hath saved us by the laver of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost*, And, *Know ye not* (saith he to the *Corinthians*) *that ye are the temple of God; and that the spirit of God dwelleth in you?* (that is, Do ye not understand this to be a common property and privilege of *Christians*, such as ye profess your selves to be?) And the union of all Christians into *one body*, doth, according to St. *Paul*, result from this *one Spirit*, as a common soul imparted to them all, inanimating and actuating the whole body, and every

Τοῖς εὖ βεβιωκόσιν ἐπαναπεπαυμένοις ἰσχὺν πρὸς τὸν λοιπὸν σωτηρίαν ἐμπνεῖ. Clem. Alex. *Strom. VII.* p. 523.

Joel 2. 28. Acts 2. 28.

Jer. 31. 33. Ezek. 11. 19. Heb. 8. 11.

2 Cor. 3. 3. Gal. 3. 14.

1 Cor. 3. 8. 1 Thess 2. 3.

Heb. 6. 4, 5.

Acts. 2. 38.

Eph. 1. 13.

Tit. 3. 4.

1 Cor. 3. 16.

2 Cor. 12. 13.

every member thereof. For *by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free, and have been all made to drink of one spirit.* And it hath been the doctrine constantly with general consent delivered in and by the Catholick Church, that to all persons, by the holy mystery of *Baptism* duly initiated into *Christianity*, and admitted into the communion of *Christ*'s body, the grace of the *Holy Spirit* is communicated, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and virtue, which they undertake; and continually watching over them for accomplishment of those purposes; which Spirit they are admonished not to resist, to abuse, to grieve, to quench; but to use it well, and improve its grace to the working out their salvation. Thus much concerning the result of our Saviour's performances, in this kind, in respect to the community of Christians, we learn from the holy *Scripture* and *Ecclesiastical Tradition* interpreting it; whence we may discern, that the communications of grace do not always flow from any special love or absolute decree concerning men, but do commonly proceed from the general kindness and mercy of God; by our Lord procured for mankind; and consequently we may thence collect, that somewhat of this nature is to the same purpose, from the same source, and upon the same accompt, also granted and dispensed to others. Unto *Christians* indeed this great benefit (for the reward, the encouragement, the support of their faith; and for promoting their obedience, who are in a nearer capacity and more immediate tendency to salvation) is in a more plentiful measure, and a more conspicuous manner dispensed; but that besides that dispensation, there have been other (not so plainly signified, or expressly promised, yet really imparted) communications of grace, in virtue of our *Saviour*'s merits, there are (beside the main reason alledged, inferring it from our Lord's being the Saviour of all men) divers good inducements to believe. For even those *Christians*, to whom upon their faith the Holy Spirit is promised and bestowed, are by previous operations of God's grace (opening their minds, inclining their heart, and tempering their affections) induced to embrace *Christianity*, saith it self being a gift of God, and a fruit of the Holy Spirit. And before our Saviour's coming all good men have thereby been instructed and enabled to do well. And before any special revelation made, or any particular covenant enacted (before the enclosure of a particular People or Church, the confinement of God's extraordinary presence and providence to one place) divine grace appears diffused over several Nations, being watchful in guiding and moving men to good, and withdrawing them from evil; neither is their reason why such an appropriation of special graces and blessings (upon special reasons) unto some should be conceived to limit or contract God's general favour, or to withdraw his ordinary graces from others. God surely (*who is*, πλούσιος ἐν ἐλέει, *rich in mercy*; yea, hath ὑπερβάλλοντα πλοῦτον χάριτος, (an *excessive riches of grace,*) is not so poor or parsimonious, that being liberal to some should render him sparing toward others; his grace is not like the Sea, which if it overflow upon one shore, must therefore retire from another; if it grow deep in one place, must become shallower in another. *Is the Spirit of the Lord straitned?* it is a question in * *Micha*; and, *Is my hand shortned at all, that it cannot redeem?* is another question in *Esay*: *No*; *The Lord's hand is not shortned that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear*; at any time, in

Eph. 4. 30. 1 Cor. 12. 7. Phil. 2. 13.

Eph. 2. 8. Gal. 5. 22. Luke 24. 45. Matt. 16. 17. John 16. 12. 1 Cor. 12. 3.

Ex quo perspicuum fit naturâ omnibus ineſſe Dei notitiam, nec quenquam ſine Chriſto naſci, & non habere ſemina in ſe ſapientiæ, juſtitiæ, reliquarumque virtutum. Unde multi abſque fide, & Evangelio Chriſti vel ſapienter faciunt aliqua vel ſanctè, &c. Hieron *in* Galat. 1.

Eph. 2. 4. 2 7.

Secundum Scripturam credimus & piiſſimè confitemur, quod nunquam univerſitati hominum divinæ providentiæ cura defuerit. Quem licèt exceptum ſibi populum ſpecialibus ad pietatem direxerit inſtitutis, nulli tamen nationi hominum bonitatis ſuæ dona ſubtraxit, &c. De Vocat. Gen. I. 5.

* Mic. 2. 7. Iſa. 50. 2. 59. 1.

in any place; he is no less able, no less ready than he ever was to afford help to his poor creatures, where-ever it is needful or opportune. As there was of old an *Abimilech* among the *Philistines*, whom God by special warning deterr'd from commission of sin; a divine *Melchisedeck* among the *Cananites*; a discreet and honest *Jetro* in *Madian*; a very religious and vertuous *Job* in *Arabia*; who by complying with God's grace did evidence the communication thereof in ~~in~~ several Nations; so it is not unreasonable to suppose the like cause now, although we cannot by like attestation certifie concerning the particular effects thereof. We may at least discern and shew very conspicuous footsteps of divine grace, working in part, and producing no despicable fruits of moral virtue, of justice and honesty, temperance and sobriety, benignity and bounty, courage and constancy in worthy enterprises, meekness, patience, modesty; prudence and discretion; yea, of piety and devotion in some manner) even among *Pagans*, which if we do not allow to have been in all respects so complete, as to instate the persons endewed with them, or practisers of them in God's favour, or to bring them to salvation; yet those qualities and actions (in degree, or in matter at least, so good, and so conformable to God's law) we can hardly deny to have been the gifts of God, and the effects of divine grace; they at least themselves acknowledged so much, (for, *Nulla sine Deo mens bona est*, *No mind is good without God*, said *Seneca*; and, Ἀρὰ μοῖρα φαίνεται παραγιγνομένη ἢ ἀρετὴ, οἷς παραγίνεται, *Virtue appears to proceed from a divine dispensation to them who partake of it*, said *Socrates*) and, αἱ ἄδεισαι φύσεις, ἀμφισβητήσιμοι ὂν μέλεϊ τ' ἄκρας ἀρετῆς πρὸς τὴν ἐσχάτην μοχθηρίαν καθωρμισμέναι, δέονται ξυμμάχου θεοῦ καὶ ξυλλήπτορος τ' ὀρθοῦ τὰ δεύτερα τὰ κρείττω ῥοπῆς καὶ ἡγεμονίας. *The best-natured souls being constituted in the middle between the highest virtue and extreme wickedness, do need God to be their succourer and assistant in the inclining and leading them to the better side*; saith *Max. Tyr.* XXII. St. *Austin* himself, who seems the least favourable in his judgment concerning their actions and state, who calls their virtues but images and shadows of virtue (*non veras, sed verisimiles*) splendid sins; acknowledges those virtuous dispositions and deeds to be the gifts of God, to be laudable, to procure some reward, to avail so far, that they, because of them, shall receive a more tolerable and mild treatment from divine justice; which things considered, such persons do at least by virtue of grace imparted to them obtain some part of salvation, or an imperfect kind of salvation, which they owe to our Lord, and in regard whereto he may be called in a sort their *Saviour*.

Gen. 20. 3. 26. 8. Exod. 18.

Καθ' ἑαυτὰ ἐδικαίᾳ πόλις ἢ φιλοσοφία τὰς Ἕλληνας. Clem. Alex.

Mortalem vitam honestare possunt, æternam conferre non possunt. Prosper *in Collat. cap.* 26.

(*Prodesse ad salutem* Aug. Prosper, Fulgent, *&c.*)

Nemo vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu divino unquam fuit. Cic. *de Nat. deorum II. sub fin.*

Sen. *Epist.* 73.

—Quæ secundum justitiæ regulam non solùm vituperare non possumus, sed etiam meritò rectéque laudamus. Plat. Menon. *fine.*

Aug. *desp. & lit* 27.

— Dei donâ. *Epist.* 130. Aug.

But although the torrent of natural pravity hath prevailed so far, as that we cannot assign, or nominate any (among those, who have lived out of the pale) who certainly or probably have obtained salvation, yet doth it not follow thence that a sufficient grace was wanting to them. The most universal practice contrary to the intents of grace doth not evince a defect of graces. For we see that the same cause hath in a manner universally overborn and defeated other means and methods designed and dispensed by God for the instruction and emendation of Mankind.

Tolerabilius puniuntur. Minùs Fabricius quàm Catilina punietur, &c. — non veras virtutes habendo, sed à veris virtutibus non plurimùm deviando. Aug.

God's

Gen. 6. 3. 1 Pet. 3. 20. God's Spirit did long strive with the Inhabitants of the *old World*; yet no more than one Family was bettered, or saved thereby. God by his good Spirit instructed the *Israelites* in the Wilderness (as *Nehemiah* saith) Neh. 9. 20. yet no more than two persons did get into *Canaan*: That people afterward had afforded to them great advantages of knowledge and excitements to piety; (so that God intimates, that he could not have done more Isa. 5. 4. for them, in that regard, than he had done.) Yet, *There is none that understandeth, or seeketh after God*, Psal. 14. was a complaint in the best times. The Rom. 1. 21. *Pagans* had the means of knowing God, as St. *Paul* affirmeth, yet generally they grew vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkned; from which like cases and examples we may infer, that divine grace might be really imparted, although no effect correspondent to its main design were produced. Neither, because we cannot alledge any evident instances of persons converted or saved by virtue of this grace (this *parcior occultiorque gratia, more sparing and secret grace*, as the good Writer *de Vocatione Gentium* calls it) are we forced to grant there were none such; but 1 Kings 19. 14, 18. as in *Israel* when *Elias* said, the children of *Israel* have *forsaken God's Covenant, thrown down his Altars, and slain his Prophets with the sword*; *And I, I only am left*; there were yet in *Israel*, living closely, *seven thousand knees, who had not bowed to Baal*: so among the generations of men, commonly overgrown with ignorance and impiety, there might (for all that we can know) be divers persons indiscernible to common view, who by complying with the influences of God's grace have obtained competently to know God, and to reverence him; sincerely to love goodness, and hate wickedness; with an honest heart, to observe the laws of reason and righteousness; in such a manner and degree, which God might accept; so that the grace afforded might not only *sufficere omnibus in testimonium (suffice to convince all men)* but *quibusdam in remedium (to correct and cure some)* as that Writer *de Voc. Gent.* speaks. The consideration of God's nature and providence doth serve farther to persuade the truth of this assertion. If Psal. 145. 9. God be *rich in mercy* and bounty toward all his creatures, as such (and such he frequently asserts himself to be) if he be all-present, and all-provident, as he certainly is, how can we conceive him to stand as an unconcerned spectator of what men do, in affairs of this consequence? that he should be present beholding men to run precipitantly into desperate mischiefs and miscarriages, without offering to stay or obstruct them; struggling with their vices and follies, without affording them any relief or furtherance; assaulted by strong temptations, without yielding any support or succour; panting after rest and ease, without vouchsafing some guidance and assistance toward the obtaining them? how can he see men invincibly erring and inevitably sinning, without making good what the *Psalmist* says Psal. 25. 8. of him: *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach sinners in the way*; to withhold his grace in such cases seemeth inconsistent with the kind and compassionate nature of God, especially such as now it stands, being reconciled to mankind, by the *Mediator of God and men, Christ Jesus*. He also, that is so bountifull and indulgent toward all men in regard to their bodies and temporal estate; *who preserveth their life from destruc-* Psal. 103. 4. *tion*, who protecteth them continually from danger and mischief; *who* 145. 16. *openeth his hand, and satisfieth the desires of every living thing, who satis-* 107. 9. *fieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness*. Who (as Acts 14. 17. St. *Paul* speaketh) *filleth mens hearts with food and gladness*, is it likely that he should altogether neglect their spiritual welfare; and leave their souls utterly destitute of all sustenance or comfort; that he should suffer them to lie fatally exposed to eternal death and ruine; without offering any

any means of redress or recovery? to conceive so of God, seemed very unreasonable even to a *Pagan* Philosopher: *Do you think* (saith *Max. Tyrius*) *that divination, poetry, and such like things, are by divine inspiration insinuated into mens souls, and that vertue* (so much better, and so much rarer a thing) *is the work of moral art? you have forsooth a worthy conceit of God, who take him to be liberal in bestowing mean things, and sparing of better things. He that* (as St. *Paul* saith) *giveth to all men life, breath, and all things*, will he withhold from any that best of gifts, and most worthy of him to give, that grace, whereby he may be able to serve him, to praise him, to glorify him, yea, to please and gratify him; to save a creature and subject of his; the thing wherein he so much delighteth? From hence also, that God hath vouchsafed general testimonies of his goodness, inducements to seek him, footsteps whereby he may be discovered and known, a light of reason and law of nature written upon mens hearts; attended with satisfactions, and checks of conscience; so many dispositions to knowledge and obedience (as St. *Paul* teacheth us) we may collect that he is not deficient in communicating interiour assistances, promoting the good use and improvement of those talents; for that otherwise the bestowing them is frustraneous and useless; being able to produce no good effect; yea, it rather is an argument of unkindness, being apt onely to produce an ill effect in those, upon whom it is conferr'd; an aggravation of sin, an accumulation of guilt and wrath upon them.

Max. Tyr. *Diss. XXII.*

Ἡ πολλῆς ἀξίον νομίζεις τὸ θεῖον, περὶ μὲν τὰ φαῦλα καλῶς ᾗ ἀφθόνως παρασκευασμένον, περὶ δὲ τὰ κρείττω ἀτόλμητον. Acts 17. 25.

If it be said, that having such grace is inconsistent with the want of an explicit knowledge of *Christ*, and of faith in him; why may not we say, that as probably (so St. *Chrysostome*, *vid. Mont. App. I.*) most good people before our Lord's coming received grace without any such knowledge or faith; that as to Idiots and Infants our Saviour's meritorious performances are applied (in a manner unknowable by us) without so much as a capacity to know or believe any thing; that so we (to whom God's judgments are inscrutable, and his ways uninvestigable) know not how grace may be communicated unto, and *Christ*'s merits may avail for other ignorant persons? in respect to whom we may apply that of Saint *John*; *The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehended it not.* However that such persons may have a grace capacifying them to arrive to that knowledge and faith, to which fuller communications of grace are promised; so that in reasonable esteem (as we shall presently shew) the revelation of Evangelical Truth and the gift of faith may be supposed to be conferred upon all men---- so that we may apply to them that in the *Revelation*; *Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in unto him, and sup with him; and he with me* (that is, Behold, I allure every man to the knowledge and embracing of Christianity; if any man will open his mind and heart; so as to comply with my solicitations, I am ready to bestow upon him the participation of Evangelical mercies and Blessings) and to such persons those promises and rules in the *Gospel*, may appertain; *He that asketh receiveth, He that seeketh findeth; to him that knocketh it shall be opened: The heavenly Father will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him. He that is ὁ ἐλαχίστῳ πιστὸς (faithful in the use of the least grace)* shall be rewarded. And, *to him that hath* (or that diligently keepeth and husbandeth what he hath) *shall more be given.*

Acts 14. 17. 17. 27. Rom. 1. 19. 2. 15. Rom. 11. 33. John. 1. 5. Apoc. 3. 20. Εἰ τυφλοὶ ἦτε οὐκ ἂν ἔχετε ἁμαρτίαν. Joh. 9. 41. 15. 22. Luke 11. 10, 13. Luke 19. 17. 19. 26.

And how God sometimes dealeth with such persons the eminent instances of St. *Paul* any *Cornelius* do shew. But concerning this point I spake somewhat before, and have perhaps been too large now; I shall only add

Puto quod pius sensus non debeat in ea quæstione turbari, quam de omnium & non omnium hominum conversione generatur; si ea quæ clara sunt non de his quæ occulta sunt obscuremus, & dum procaciter insistimus clausis excludamur ab apertis, &c. Lib. 1. cap. 8.

that saying of the wise Writer *de Voc. Gen.* *A pious mind* (saith he) *should not, I think, be troubled at that question, which is made concerning the conversion of all, or not all men; if we will not obscure those things which are clear, by those things which are secret; and while we wantonly insist upon things shut up, we be not excluded from those which are open and plain:* which in effect is the same with this; that since we are plainly taught, that our Lord is the Saviour of all men; and it is consequent thence that he hath procured grace sufficiently capacifying all men to obtain salvation; we need not perplex the business, or obscure so apparent a truth by debating how that grace is imparted; or by labouring overmuch in reconciling the dispensation thereof with other dispensations of providence.

Sermon XLI.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 Tim. IV. 10.

---The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

5. JESUS is *the Saviour of all men*, as the conducter of all men into and through the way of salvation. It is a very proper title, and most due to those brave Captains, who by their wisdom and valour have freed their Countrey from straits and oppressions. So were those *Judges* and *Princes*, who anciently delivered *Israel* from their enemies, commonly styled: *In the time of their trouble* (say the *Levites* in *Nehemiah*) *when they cried unto thee thou heardst them from heaven, and according to thy manifold mercies thou gavest them Saviours, who saved them out of the hand of the enemy*; so are *Othniel* and *Ehud* particularly called; and *Moses* signally: *The same* (saith St. *Stephen* of him) *did God send to be* ἄρχοντα καὶ λυτρωτὴν, *a Commander and a Saviour* (or *Redeemer*) *to the children of Israel*; for that he by a worthy and happy conduct did free them from the *Egyptian* slavery. And thus was *Demetrius* by the *Athenians* (for his delivering them from the *Macedonian* subjection, and restoring their liberty to them) entitled εὐεργέτης καὶ σωτὴρ, *a Benefactour and Saviour*. Thus with greatest reason is *Jesus* so called, as being ἀρχηγὸς τῆς σωτηρίας, *the Captain of Salvation* (so he is called by the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews*) ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς (*the Captain of Life*, as St. *Peter* names him, the chief leader unto eternal life) ἀρχηγὸς πίστεως (*the Captain of our faith*; he that hath revealed

Neh. 9. 27.
Judg. 3. 9, 15.
Acts 7. 35.
Heb. 2. 10.
Acts 7. 35.
Heb. 12. 2.
Rom. 1. 16.

vealed that saving doctrine, which is the power of God to salvation) and these titles we have conjoyned by St. *Peter* in the *Acts*; *Him hath God* Acts 5. 31. *exalted* ἀρχηγὸν καὶ σωτῆρα, *as a Captain and a Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins.* This he is to us several ways, by direction both instructive, and exemplary; by his protection and governance; by his mating and quelling the enemies of man's salvation; which things more specially and compleatly he hath perform'd in respect to faithful Christians, yet in a manner also he hath truly done them for and toward all men; as we shall distinctly consider.

6. *Jesus* is *the Saviour of all men* (we say,) as having perfectly discovered and demonstrated the way and means of salvation; the gracious purposes of God concerning it; the duties required by God in order to it: the great helps and encouragements to seek it; the mighty determents from neglecting it; the whole will of God, and concernment of man in relation thereto; briefly, all saving truths he hath revealed unto all men; *mysteries* of truth, which *were hidden from ages and generations*, which no Col. 1. 26. fancy of man could invent, no understanding could reach, no reason could Rom 16. 25. by discussion clear (concerning the nature, providence, will and purpose of God; the nature, original and state of man; concerning the laws and rules of practice, the helps thereto, the reward thereof, whatever is important for us to know in order to happiness) he did plainly discover, and bring to light; he did with valid sorts of demonstration assert and confirm. The doing which (as having so much efficacy toward salvation, and being ordinarily so necessary thereto) is often called *saving*; as Jam. 5. 20. particularly by St. *James*; when he saith, *He that turns a sinner from the errour of his way shall save a soul from death.* And by St. *Paul*; *Take heed* 1 Tim. 4. 16. *to thy word and doctrine, for so doing thou shalt save thy self, and thy hearers* That our *Lord* hath thus (according to his design, and according to reasonable esteem) *saved all men*, we are authorized by the *holy Scripture* to 1 Cor. 9 22. say; for he is there represented to be *the light of the world*; *the true light* Rom. 11. 14. *that enlightneth every man coming into the world*; *the day-spring from on* 2 Tim. 3. 15. *high, which hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and the* σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν. *shadow of death, and to guide our feet in the way of peace.* By him *the sa-* John 8. 12. *ving grace of God hath appeared unto all men.* By him (as *Esay* prophe- 1. 9. Luke 1. 79. sied, and St. *John* the *Baptist* applied it) *all flesh did see the salvation of* Tit. 2. 11. *God.* Of him it was also foretold (as St. *Paul* teacheth us) *I have set* 3. 4. *thee for the light of the Nations, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the* 2 Tim. 1. 10. Luke 3. 6. *ends of the earth. Coming he preached peace* τοῖς μακρὰν καὶ τοῖς ἐγγύς (*lon-* Acts 13. 47. *gè latéque*) *to them that were far, and them that were near*, that is, *to all* Eph. 2. 17. *men every where. While I am in the World*, said he, *I am the light of the* John 9. 5. *world*; *shining, like the Sun*, indifferently unto all; and when he withdrew his corporal presence, he farther virtually diffused his light, for he sent his messengers with a general commission and command to teach all men concerning the benefits procured for them, and the duties required from them; *Going into the world, make all nations disciples, teaching them to ob-* Mat. 28. 19. 20. *serve all that I commanded you. Going into the world, preach the Gospel un-* Mark 16. 15. *to every creature* (or *to the whole creation*:) *So it ought to be, that in his* Luke 24. 47. *name should be preached repentance and remission of sins unto all Nations.* And, such was the tenour of the *Apostolical* commission; *Thou shalt be witness* Acts 22. 15. *for him toward all men*; said *Ananias to* St. *Paul*. Accordingly, in compli- 26. 17. ance with those orders, did the *Apostles*, in God's name, instruct and admonish all men, plainly teaching, seriously inviting to, strongly persuading and earnestly entreating all men to embrace the truth, and enjoy the benefits of the Gospel, and consequently to be saved; *The times of igno-* Acts 17. 30. *rance*

rance (saith St. *Paul*) *God having winked at, doth now invite all men every-*
2 Cor. 5. 20. *where to repent*; And, *We are Embassadours for Christ, as though God did be-*
seech you by us, We pray you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God ---- we
pray you, you as members of that world, which God was in *Christ* reconci-
Colos. 1. 28. ling to himself; And, *We preach Christ ---- Warning every man, and teaching*
Acts 2. 40. *every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ*
Jesus (or *render every man a good Christian.*) Thus was the Gospel ac-
cording to our Saviour's intent and order preached (as St. *Paul* saith of
Col. 1. 23. it) ὃν πάσῃ τῇ κτίσει τῇ ὑπὸ τὸν οὐρανόν, *in the whole creation under heaven*;
thus did God shew, that he would *have all men to be saved, and to come*
1 Tim. 2. 4. *to the knowledge of the truth*; whence our *Lord* (in regard to the nature
and design of his performance in this kind) is the common Saviour, as the
common Master of truth, and Enlightner of the world, and Proclaimer
John. 1. 18. of God's will to mankind.

If now it be required or objected; why then is not the Gospel revea-
led unto men? how comes it to pass that no sound of this saving word,
no glimpse of this heavenly light doth arive to many Nations? how can
so general and large intention consist with so particular and sparing execu-
tion? what benefit can we imagin them capable to receive from this
performance of our Saviour, who still do sit in total ignorance of the
Luke 1. 74. *Gospel*, in darkness, and the shadow of death? *How can they call upon him,*
Mat. 4. 16. *in whom they believe not? and how can they believe in him, of whom they*
Rom. 10. 14. *have not heard?*

To this suggestion I answer,

1. That God's intentions are not to be interpreted, nor his performan-
ces estimated by events, depending on the contingency of humane acti-
ons, but by his own declarations and precepts, together with the ordina-
ry provision of competent means, in their own nature sufficient to produce
those effects, which he declares himself to intend, or to perform. What
he reveals himself to design he doth really design it, what he says, that
he performeth, he (according to moral esteem, that is so far as to ground
duties of gratitude and honour, proceedings of justice and reward) doth
perform, although the thing upon other accompts be not effected.

Thus for instance, God would have all men to live together here in
peace, in order, in health, conveniently, comfortably, chearfully; accor-
ding to reason, with vertue and justice; and in the best state toward hap-
pines; for these purposes he hath endewed them with reasonable facul-
ties, he hath engraven on their minds a natural law, he hath furnished
them with all sorts of instruments and helps conducible to those ends, he
promoteth them by dispensations of providence, and (probably) by inter-
nal influences of grace; yet often all those means (by the perverseness
and stupidity of men) do prove ineffectual, so that wars, disorders, di-
seases, vices, iniquities and oppressions, troubles and miseries do common-
ly abound in the world. Likewise God desires, that in his Church know-
ledge and piety, peace and charity, and good order should grow and flou-
rish; to which purposes he hath appointed Teachers to instruct, and Go-
vernours to watch over his People; he hath obliged each man to advise and
admonish his brother; he hath declared holy precepts and rules of pra-
ctice; he hath propounded vast encouragements and rewards, and threat-
ned dreadfull punishments; he hath promised and doth afford requisite as-
sistances; being himself always present and ready to promote those ends
by his grace; yet notwithstanding by the voluntary neglect or abuse of
these means (the guides being blind, negligent, unfaithfull; or the peo-
ple being indocil, sluggish, refractary; or both perverted with bad affe-
ctions)

ctions) often ignorance, errour and impiety prevail, love is cool and dead, schisms and factions are rife in the Church. Which events are not to be conceived derogatory to God's good-will and good intentions, or to his kind and carefull providence toward men; but we are notwithstanding to esteem and acknowledge him the author and donour of those good things; in respect to them no less blessing and praising him, than if they were really accomplished by man's concurrence and compliance; he having done his part in that due measure and manner, which wisdom prompts; having indeed done the same, as when they are affected. So God having expressly declared that he would have all men to know and embrace the Gospel, having made a universal promulgation thereof, having sent forth *Apostles* to disseminate it every-where, having obliged every man to confer his best endeavour toward the propagation thereof; if by the want of fidelity, zeal, or industry in them, to whom this care is intrusted, or upon whom this duty is incumbent; or if by the carelesness and stupidity of those, who do not regard what is done in the world; or if by mens voluntary shutting their eyes, or stopping their ears (as the *Jews* did of old to the Prophetical instructions and admonitions) God's heavenly truth becometh not universally known; 'tis not reasonable to impute this defailance to God, or to conceive him therefore not universally to desire and design mens instruction and salvation consequent thereon. Let me (for the illustration of this matter) put a case, or propound a similitude. Suppose a great Kingdom consisting of several Provinces should have revolted from their Sovereign; disclaiming his authority, neglecting and disobeying his laws; That the good Prince, out of his goodness and pity toward them (and upon other good considerations moving him thereto, suppose the mediation of his own Son) instead of prosecuting them with deserved vengeance, should grant a general pardon and amnesty, in these terms, or upon these conditions, that whoever of those rebels willingly should come in, acknowledge his fault, and promise future loyalty, or obedience to his laws declared to them, should be received into favour, have impunity, enjoy protection, and obtain rewards from him. Farther, for the effectuating this gracious intent, suppose that he should appoint and commissionate Messengers, impowering and charging them to divulge the purport of this act of grace to all the People of that Kingdom. Admit now, that these Messengers should go forth, and seat themselves only in some Provinces of that Kingdom, proclaiming this universal pardon (universal as to the design, and as to the tenour thereof) only in those, neglecting others; or that, striving to Propogate it farther, they should be rejected and repelled; or that from any the like cause the knowledge thereof should not reach to some remoter Provinces; it is plain, that indeed the effect of that pardon would be obstructed by such a carriage of the affair; but the tenour of that act would not thereby be altered; nor would the failure in execution (consequent upon the Ministers or the peoples misbehaviour) detract from the real amplitude of the Prince's intent; no more, than the willful incredulity, refusal, or non-compliance of some persons where the business is promulged and notified, would prejudice the same. 'Tis plain the Prince meant favourably toward all, and provided carefully for them; although by accident (not imputable to him) the designed favours and benefits do not reach all. The case so plainly sutes our purpose, that I need not make any application. The *holy Fathers* do by several like similitudes endeavour to illustrate this matter, and somewhat to assoil the difficulty. They compare our Saviour to the Sun, who shines indifferently to all the world, although there be some private corners and secret caves,

caves, to which his light doth not come; although some shut their windows or their eyes and exclude it; although some are blind and do not see it. That mystical Sun of righteousness (saith St. *Ambrose*) is risen to all, came to all, did suffer and rose again for all ----- but if any one doth not believe in *Christ*, he defrauds himself of the general benefit. As if one shutting the windows should exclude the beams of the Sun, the Sun is not therefore not risen to all. They compare our Lord to a Physician, who professes to relieve and cure all, that shall have recourse to his help; but doth cure only those, who seek for remedy, and are willing to take the medicine; because all (saith * St. *Ambrose* again) do not desire cure, but most do shun it, lest the ulcer should smart by medicaments, therefore *volentes curat, non astringit invitos*; he cures only the willing, doth not compel those that are unwilling; they onely receive health, who desire medicine. Evangelical grace (say they) is like a fountain standing openly, to which all men have free access; at which all men may quench their thirst; if they will enquire after it, and go thereto. *The fountain of life* (saith *Arnobius*) *is open to all; nor is any man hindred or driven from the right of drinking it.* The covenant of grace is (say they) a door standing open to all, whereinto all have liberty to enter ---- *when an entrance* (saith St. *Chrysostome*) *being opened to all, and there being nothing that hinders, some being wilfully naught abide without, they have no other but their own wickedness to impute their destruction unto.*

And again he puts the question, *If Christ enlighteneth every man that cometh itno the world, how is it that so many remain unenlighten'd*, &c. To which he answers, that *if some, wilfully shutting the eyes of their minds, will not receive the beams of this light, it is not from the nature of light that those remain still in darkness, but from the wickedness of those who wilfully deprive themselves of the gift of it*, &c.

Ἀκούσατε ἓν οἱ μακρὰν· ἀκούσατε οἱ ἐγγύς· οὐκ ἀνεκρύβη πνὰς ὁ λόγος· φῶς δὲι κοινὸν, ἐπλάμπει πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις· οὐδὲις Κιμμέριος ὢν λόγῳ. Clem. Alex. *Protrep.*

Hear ye that are far: hear ye that are near: the word is not hid to any: 'tis a common light; it shineth to all men; there is no Cimmerian to the word.

Nunquid non medicus idcirco preponit n publico, us omnes se ostendat velle salvare si velint. Ambr. *I.* Tim. 2.

* *Venit — ut vulnera nostra curaret, sed quia non omnes medicinam expetunt, sed plerique refugiunt, nè medicamentis compungatur vis ulceris; idò volentes, &c.* Ambr. *de* David. 3. 11.

Patet omnibus fons vitæ, neque ab jure potandi quisquam prohibetur, ut pellitur. Arnob. *lib.* 2.

Ὅταν τὸ ὠσὶν ἅπασιν ἀνεωγμένον, καὶ μηδενὸς τὸ κωλύοντος ὄντος, ἐθελοκακήσαντες τινες ἔξω μένωσι, παρ' οὐδένα ἕτερον, ἀλλ' ἢ παρὰ τὴν οἰκείαν πονηρίαν ἀπόλλυνται. Chrys. *in* 1 Joh. *homil.* 7.

Εἰ φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον ἐρχόμενον εἰς τὸν κόσμον, πῶς ἀρτίως μεμενήκασι τοσοῦτοι· ἢ γὰρ δὴ πάντες ἐπείγονται τῷ Χριστῷ τὸ σῴζειν· πῶς οὖν φωτίζει πάντα ἄνθρωπον; τόγε εἰς αὐτὸν ἥκον· οἱ δὲ τίνες ὀκνοῦντες τὰς τῆς διανοίας ὀφθαλμοὺς μύσαντες οὐκ ἐθέλουσαν παραδέξασθαι τὸ φῶς τοῦτο τὰς ἀκτῖνας, ἀ παρὰ τὴν τῆς φωτὸς φύσιν ἡ σκότωσις ἐκείνοις, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν κακουργίαν τῶν ἑκουσίως ἀποστερούντων ἑαυτοὺς τῆς δωρεᾶς· ἣ μὲν γὰρ χάρις εἰς πάντας ἐκτέτακται——πάντας ὁμοίως παρεσκεύασε, καὶ μὴ τὸ ἴσης καλοῦσα τι μᾶς· οἱ δὲ μὴ θέλοντες ἀπολαῦσαι τῆς δωρεᾶς ταύτης, ἑαυτοῖς δίκαιοι ταύτην ἂν εἶεν λογίσασθαι τῶν πόνων. Chrys. *in* Joh. 1. *homil.* 7.

Mysticus Sol ille justitiæ omnibus ortus est, omnibus venit, omnibus passus est & omnibus resurrexit — si quis autem non credit in Christum, generali beneficio se fraudat, ut si quis clausis fenestris radios solis excludat, non ideò Sol non ortus est omnibus, &c. Amb. *in* Psal. 118. *Ser.* 8.

Si dies omnibus æqualiter nascitur, & si Sol super omnes pari & æquali luce diffunditur, quanto magis Christus Sol & dies verus, in Ecclesia sua lumen vitæ æternæ pari æqualitate largitur? Cypr. *Ep.* 76.

——ὃς ἀέρῳ πνεῦσιν, ὃς φωτὸς χύσιν, καὶ ὥρᾶν ἀλλαγὰς, καὶ κλίσεως δίαν—— Naz. *Orat.* 40.

St. *Gregory Nazianzen* resembles the grace of Baptism (as to its community and freedom of use) to the breathing of the air, to the spreading of light, to the vicissitude of seasons, to the aspect of the creation; things most obvious and common to all.

If this answer do not fully satisfie, I adjoyn farther,

2. That God beside that ordinary provision is ready to interpose extraordinarily in disclosing his truth to them who are worthy of such favour and fit to receive it: and that God's general desire and design of revealing his truth to all men is very well consistent with his providential (not only

onely negative and permissive, but even positive and active) withholding the discovery thereof from some persons, yea some Nations; for that neither his wisdom, goodness, or justice might permit him, that he should impart that revelation to such persons whom he seeth altogether indisposed to comply therewith, and unfit to profit thereby; who have extremely abused the lesser graces and not improved or mis-improved the lesser talents afforded them; detained inferiour truths in unrighteousness, and *have not liked to retain God in their knowledge*, have therefore justly been delivered up to a reprobate sense; who have so depraved their minds with wicked prejudices and affections, that the truth being offered to them, they would certainly either stupidly neglect it, or scornfully reject it, (or if admitting it in shew) would unworthily abuse it; so that from the imparting the means of knowing it, no glory to God, no benefit to man would accrue, but rather contempt of God, and prejudice to men would ensue upon it: there are some persons of that wicked and *Gigantick* disposition (contracted by evil practice) that should one offer to instruct them in truth, or move them to piety, would be ready to say with *Polyphemus* in *Homer*:

Rom. 1. 18. 28. Esa. 30. 10.

Νήπιε ἦ ἔ ξεῖν', ἢ τηλόθεν ἠλιτόβιος,
Ὅς με θεοὺς κέλεαι ἢ δείδιμεν, ἢ ἀλέασθαι.

Odyss. 1.

Friend, you are a fool, or a great stranger to me,
who adviseſt me to fear or regard the Deity.

Or (which is the same) with *Pharaoh*: *Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go*, (or neither will I doe as you in God's name admonish me) who like that unhappy Prince, by no efficacy of arguments, no wonders of power are to be convinced of their folly, or converted from their wickedness: some, like those of *Chorazin* and *Bethsaida*, whom not all the powerfull discourses spoken to them, all the mighty works done in them, sufficient to have brought *Tyre* and *Sidon* to repentance) can induce to mind or obey the truth: unto which sort of people (except upon some particular occasions, and for special reasons) it is not expedient that divine truth should be exposed. We may also observe how our Lord being asked by St. *Jude* a question like to ours; *Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thy self unto us, and not to the world?* thus resolves it; *If a man love me he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him and make our abode with him*: implying the ordinary reason of God's making a difference in the discoveries of himself to be the previous disposition and behaviours of men toward God; and interpretatively toward our Lord himself.

Exod. 5. 2. Prov. 1. 24. Luke 11. 33. Joh. 14. 22.

That God doth commonly observe this method (plainly suitable to divine justice, wisdom and goodness) to dispense the revelation of his truth according to mens disposition to receive it, and aptness to make a fruitfull and worthy use of it, *to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance*, as Saint *John Baptist* spake; and to withhold it from those who are indisposed to admit it, or unfit to profit by it: we may, from divers expresse passages and notable instances (beside many probable intimations) of *Scripture* learn. We may on the one hand observe, that those whom our Saviour did chuse to call, were persons disposed easily upon his call to comply: to forsake their Fathers, and their nets; to leave their receipts of custome; to relinquish all (relations, occupations, estates) and to follow him; faithfull *Israelites*, without guile, like *Nathanael* (that is, as is probably conjectured St. *Bartholomew*) men honestly devout, and charitable, like *Zacheus*; that he chose to converse with publicans and sinners, men apt to be convinced of their errours, and touched with the sense of their sins;

Matt. 3. 8. 1 Cor. 12. 7. Matt. 4. 18. Joh. 1. 24, 37. Matt. 19. 27. Luke 19. 8, 9. John 1. 47. Luke 19. 8, 9. Matt. 21. 31. Luke 5. 31.

apt

apt to see their need of mercy and grace, and therefore ready to entertain the overtures of them: that he blesses God for revealing his mysteries to babes (to innocent and well-meaning, imprejudicate and uncorrupted persons) such as if men were not, they could in no-wise enter into the Kingdom of heaven, or become Christians; those *poor in spirit, of whom is the Kingdom of heaven*; those *foolish things* which God chuses as most fit objects of his mercy and grace; that he enjoyn'd his Disciples, in their travels for the promulgation and propagation of the Gospel, to inquire concerning the worthiness or fitness of persons, and accordingly to make more close applications to them: (*Into what City or Village ye enter, enquire who therein is worthy*; and entring in abide there) of this proceeding we have a notable instance in *Cornelius*, who for his honest piety (correspondent to the proportion of knowledge vouchsafed him) was so acceptable to God, that in regard thereto he obtained from him the revelation of truth in a peculiar and extraordinary manner. And St. *Paul* was another most remarkable example thereof; who for the like reason was so wonderfully called, as himself intimates, describing himself to have been ζηλωτὴς θεοῦ, *zealously affected toward God*; *according to the righteousness in the law, blameless*; one that had *continually* * *behaved himself with all good conscience toward God*; who even in the persecution of God's truth did proceed with an honest meaning and according to his conscience, for which cause he saith, that God had mercy on him; foreseeing how willingly he would embrace the truth, and how earnestly promote it: we may also observe, how in the *Acts* of the *Apostles*, *the Holy Spirit* commonly directed the *Apostles* to such places, where a competent number of people were well disposed to receive the truth; who were εὖ θέλοι εἰς τὴν βασιλείαν τ. θεοῦ, *well-disposed to the Kingdom of heaven*, and consequently by God's foresight, (τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον) *ordained to have the word of eternal life* (the τὸ σωτήριον θεοῦ, as it is in a parallel place called) discovered to them; such people as the *Beræans*, men *ingenuous* and tractable; who consequently entertained the word, μετὰ πάσης προθυμίας, with all promptitude and alacrity. To such persons God sometimes by extraordinary revelation directed the *Apostles* to preach; as to the *Corinthians*, in respect to whom, the Lord spake to St. *Paul* in a vision, saying, *Fear not, but speak and be not silent, for I am with thee, because* ---- πολύς ἐστι μοι λαὸς, *there is for me much people in this City*; *much people* whom I see disposed to comply with my truth. So in behalf of the *Macedonians*, ἀνήρ τις Μακεδών, *a certain man of Macedonia* was in a vision seen to St. *Paul*, *exhorting him and saying*, *Passing into Macedonia help us*: thus on that hand doth God take special care that his truth be manifested to such, as are fitly qualified to embrace it and use it well: thus is God ready to make good that answer of *Pothinus* (Bishop of *Lions*, and immediate successour to St. *Irenæus*) to the *Prefect*, who asking him *who was the Christians God*, was answered, ἐὰν ἧς ἄξιος γνώσῃ, *If thou be worthy, thou shalt know*; thus (as the *Wise-man* divinely saith) the divine wisdom, ἄξιος αὐτῆς περιέρχεται ζητῶν, *Goeth about seeking such as are worthy of her*; *sheweth her self favourable unto them in their ways, and meeteth them in every thought.*

Matt. 18. 3. 19. 14. 5. 3. 1 Cor. 1. 27. Matt. 10. 11. Acts 22. 3. 23. 1. Phil. 3. 6. * Πεπολίτευμαι. Acts 26. 9. Gal. 1. 14. Acts 26. 1 Tim. 1. 3. Luke 9. 62. Acts 13. 48. 17. 11. 28. 28. Acts 18. 9. Acts 16. 10. Euseb. V. 1. Sap. 6. 16.

And on the other hand, that God with-holds the special discoveries of his truth, upon account of mens indispositions and demerits, may likewise very plainly appear. We may suppose our Lord to have observed himself, what he ordered to his Disciples; *Not to give that which is holy to dogs*, nor to cast their pearls before swine (not to expose the holy and precious truth to very lewd and fierce People, who would snarl at it and trample upon it) we may allow God in his dispensation of his truth and

Matt. 7. 6.

grace

grace to do, what ye bids the Apostles to do: before he enters into any house, or applies himself to any person, to * examine whether the house or person be worthy; that is willing to receive him, and apt to treat him well; if not, to decline them. Our Lord we see did leave even his own Country, seeing men there were not disposed to use him with due honour and ragard; seeing they were possessed with vain prejudices, apt to obstruct the efficacy of his divine instructions nnd miraculous performances; so that he was not likely (according to the ordinary way of divine providence) to produce any considerable effect towards their conversion. *He could not* (it is said) *do many miracles there, because of their unbelief*; he could not, that is (according to the most just and wise rules he did observe, he would not do them; because he perceived the doing them would not conduce to any good purpose; that they were not apt to look upon those works as the effects of divine power and goodness, performed for their benefit (for inducing them to faith and repentance) but rather that the doing them would expose God's mercy to contempt or reproach, at least to neglect or disregard. Hence our *Saviour* declined conversing with persons indisposed to (those ψυχικοὶ, who cannot δέχεσθαι τὰ τῦ πνεύμα[τ]ος) receive benefit by his instruction and example; to grow wiser or better by his conversation; as the *Pharisees* and *Scribes*; men prepossessed with corrupt opinions and vitious affections, obstructive to the belief of his doctrine, and observance of his laws; and worldly persons; proud and self-conceited, crafy and deceitful, covetous, ambitious and worldly men, incorrigibly tinctured with that φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *carnal wisdom and affection*; which *is enmity to God*; *so that it is not subject to the Law of God, nor can be*; inextricably engaged in the friendship of the World, which is enmity to God: To such men the Gospel would certainly be a scandal or a folly: they would never be able to relish or digest the doctrine of purity, self-denial, patience, and the like doctrines opposite to carnal sense and conceit which it teacheth. From such wise and prudent men (conceited of their little wisdoms, and doting upon their own fancies) God did conceal those heavenly mysteries; which they would have despised and derided: Those *many wise according to the flesh, many powerful; many noble*, God did not chuse to call into his Church: accordingly we may observe in the history of the Apostles, that God's Spirit did prohibit the Apostles passing through some places, it discerning how unsuccessful (at those seasons in those circumstances, according to those dispositions of men) their preaching would be: *Passing through Phrygia and Galatia, being hindred by the Spirit to speak the word in Asia*; *coming to Mysia, they assayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not.* Moreover there is plainly the like reason, why God should with-hold his saving truth from some people, as why he should withdraw it from others; when it is abused or proves fruitless: but of such withdrawing we have many plain instances, attended with the declaration of the reasons of them, *Our Lord* propheſied thus concerning the *Jews*; *I say unto you, that the Kingdom of God shall be taken from you and shall be given to a nation doing the fruits thereof*; they when our Saviour would have gathered them under his wings wilfully refusing. *Our Lord* charged his Disciples, when by any they were repulsed or neglected in their preaching, to leave those persons and places *shaking off the dust from their feet*, in token of an utter (εἰς μαρτύριον ἐπ' αὐτοὺς) detestation and desertion of them: and accordingly we see them practising in their Acts; when they perceived men perversely contradictious, or desperately senseless and stupid, so that they clamoured against the Gospel, and thrust it from them, they abstained from farther

* Ἐξετάζετε. Mat. 6. 5. Mar. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Mat. 21. 31. Rom. 8. 7. James 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15. 1 Cor. 1. 23. Mat. 11. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 26. James 2. 5. Acts 16. 6. Mat. 21. 43. Mat. 10. 14. Luke 9. 5. Acts 13. 52. Acts 18. 6.

dealing with them, turning their endeavours other-where, toward persons of a more docile and ingenuous temper; thence more susceptive of Faith and repentance: *To you* (say *Paul and Barnabas* to the contradicting and reproachful *Jews*) *it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken, but seeing you put it from you* (or thrust it away from you, ἀπωθεῖσθε αὐτὸν) *and judge your selves unworthy of everlasting life, we turn to the Gentiles.* So when the Church of *Ephesus* was grown cold in charity, and deficient in good works, God threatens to remove her Candlestick; or to withdraw from her that light of truth, which shone with so little beneficial influence. It seems evident that God for the like reasons may withhold the discovery of his truth, or forbear to interpose his providence; so as to transmit light thither, where mens deeds are so evil, that they will love darkness rather than light, where their eyes are so dim and weak, that the light will but offend and by the having it hurt them; where they by the having it declared to them will only incur farther mischief and misery; it would prove to them but ὀσμὴ θανάτου, a *deadly scent*, as the most comfortable perfumes are offensive sometimes and noxious to distempered bodies. Wherefore as where the light doth shine most clearly, it is mens voluntary pravity, that by it many are not effectually brought to salvation; so it is mens voluntary depraving and corrupting themselves, (misusing their natural light, choaking the seeds of natural ingenuity, thwarting God's secret whispers and motions, complying with the suggestions of the wicked one) so as to be rendred unmeet for the susception of God's heavenly truth and grace, which hinders God (who proceedeth ordinarily with men, in sweet and reasonable methods, not in way of impetuous violence and coaction) from dispensing them: we may say of such in the words of the Prophet, *They have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations: Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have with-holden good things from you.* Τῇ ἑαυτῆ ἀγαθότητι πᾶσιν ὁ κύριος ἐγγίζει· μακρύνομεν δὲ ἑαυτοὺς ἡμεῖς διὰ τὰ ἁμαρτήματα, *God doth by his goodness approach to all, but we set our selves at distance by sin*, saith St. *Basil*; and, ὅπου αὐτὸ περαιρεῖται πονηρία, ἐκεῖ καὶ ἀποχὴ τῆς χάριτός ἐστι, *where there is self-chosen, or affected wickedness, there is a with-holding of grace*, saith another *Father* (*apud* Cyrill. Hier.) The *Gospel, if it be hidden*, 'tis (as St. *Paul* says (*hidden* ἐν τοῖς ἀπολλυμένοις, *in viris perditis, among lost men* (that is men desperately gone in wickedness, incorrigible, unreclaimable people) *in whom the God of this world* (that is as St. *Chrysostome* expounds it, not the Devil, but the good God himself) *hath blinded minds of them which believe not, so that the light of the glorious Gospel hath not shined to them* (πῶς ἔν ἐτύφλωσεν; how then did God blind them? saith St. *Crysostome*) οὐκ ἐνεργήσας εἰς τοῦτο, ἀπαγε· *not by any efficacy of his upon them toward that; fy on that: but by permission and concession*; for so the *Scripture* is wont to speak: Ἐπειδὴν γὰρ αὐτοὶ ἠπίστησαν πρῶτοι, καὶ ἀναξίως ἑαυτοὺς κατεσκεύασαν τῆς ἰδέας τὰ μυστήρια, καὶ αὐτὸς λοιπὸν ἔασεν· ἀλλὰ τί ἔδει ποιῆσαι; πρὸς βίαν ἕλκειν, καὶ ἐκκαλύπτειν μὴ βουλομένοις ἰδεῖν; ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἂν κατεβρύνησαν, καὶ οὐκ ἂν εἶδον· *Seeing* (saith he) *they disbelieved first, and constituted themselves unworthy to see the mysteries, even God at last let them alone for what should he have done? should he have drawn them violently, and discovered it to them being unwilling to see? they would then have more despised it and not have seen it.* God is ever willing and ready to dispense his mercies and favours, but he is not wont to do it extraordinarily (or beside the course of his ordinary provision) but in a proper and fit season; (in that καιρὸς εὐπρόσδεκτος, *acceptable time and day of salvation*, when he seeth men capable of receiving them

Act. 13. 46. 28. 26.
Apoc. 2. 5.
Καὶ γὰρ τὰς ὕς (φασὶ) τὸ μῦρον πνίγει Chrys.
John 3. 19.
2 Cor. 2 16.
Isa. 66. 3.
Jer. 5. 25.
Bas. *in* Ps. 33.
2 Cor. 4. 3.
Εἰς τὸ μὴ αὐγάσαι αὐτοῖς. Chrys. *in* 2 Cor. 4. 4.
Luke 19. 44.
2 Cor. 6. 2.
Rom. 13. 11.

them) which season commonly dependeth upon man's will and choice, or the results of them. Καθόλου γὰρ ὁ θεὸς οὐδὲν πρός τε ἀξίας ἢ ἀναξίων, καὶ μὴ ὄντων τὰ πρόσκαιρα ἐκάστοις διδοὺς εἰκῇ. Σωτὴρ γάρ ἐστιν· ἐκεῖ ἢ μὲν ἢ δ' ὁ πρὸς δὲ ὅσον ἐπιδεκτικὸν ἕκαστος εἶχεν, τοῦτο ἑαυτῷ δίνεμεν εὐεργασίαν. Clem. *Strom.* VII. p. 105. for (saith *Clemens Alex.* in his 7th of the *Stromata*, where he clearly and fully affirms our present doctrine) *Our Lord is not the Saviour of some, and not of others: but according as men are fitly disposed, he hath distributed his beneficence to all.* St. *Augustine* himself somewhere speaketh no less; or rather more: *Præcedit aliquid in peccatoribus* (saith he) *quo quamvis nondum sint justificati, digni efficiantur justificatione: & idem præcedit in aliis peccatoribus quo digni sint obtusione.* But, *Quæst.* 68, & *Quæst.* 83. *Tom. IV. Part. I. Venit de occultissimis meritis, &c.* Ibid.

3. If all these considerations do not throughly satisfie us concerning the reason of God's proceedings in this case, we may consider that God's providence is inscrutable and impenetrable to us; that (according to the *Psalmist*) as *God's mercy is in the Heavens, and his faithfulness reacheth to the clouds*; so *his righteousness is like the great mountains* (too high for our reason to climb) *and his judgments*, πολλὴ ἄβυσσος, a great abyss, too deep for our feeble understanding to fathom; that his ways are more subtile and spiritual than to be traced by our dim and gross sight. So upon contemplation of a like case, although as it seems, hardly so obscure or unaccomptable as this, the cause concerning God's conditional rejection of that people, whom he in a special manner had so much and so long favoured) St. *Paul* himself doth profess. That therefore although we cannot fully resolve the difficulty, we notwithstanding without distrust should adhere to those positive and plain declarations, whereby God representeth himself seriously designing and earnestly desiring, *that all men should come to the knowledge of the truth*; *that none should perish, but that all should come to repentance*; not doubting but his declared mind, and his secret providence, although we cannot throughly discern or explain their consistency, do yet really and fully conspire. But no farther at this time. Psal. 36. 6. Rom. 11. 33. 2 Pet. 3. 9.

Sermon XLII.

The Doctrine of Universal Redemption asserted and explain'd.

1 Tim. IV. 10.

—— The living God; who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe.

8. AS our *Saviour* was such to all men by his doctrine, or the general discovery of all saving truth; so may he be esteemed such in regard to his exemplary practice; whereby upon the open stage of the world and in the common view of all that would attend unto him He did represent a living pattern of all goodness; by imitating which, we may certainly attain Salvation. He that will consider his practice shall find it admirably fitted for general instruction and imitation; calculated for all places and all sorts of people; suted to the complexions, to the capacities, to the degrees, to the callings of all men; so that every sort of men may from it draw profitable direction, may in it find a Coppy even of his particular behaviour: for He was a great Prince, illustrious in birth, excellent in glory, and abounding in all wealth, yet was born in obscurity, lived without pomp, and seemed to possess nothing; so teaching men of high rank to be sober, mild and humble, not to rest in, not to regard much, not to hug and cling to the accommodations and shews of worldly state; teaching those of mean degree to be patient, content and chearful in their station. He was exceedingly wise and knowing, without bound or measure; yet made no ostentation of extraordinary knowledge; of sharp wit, of deep subtilty; did not vent high, dark or intricate notions; had in his practice no reaches and windings of craft or policy; but was in his doctrine very plain and intelligible, in his practice very open and clear; so that what he commonly said or did, not only Philosophers and Statesmen, but almost the simplest idiots might easily comprehend; so that those might thence learn not to be conceited of their superfluous wisdom; these not to be discouraged in their harmless ignorance, both having thence an equally sufficient instruction in all true righteousness, a complete direction in the paths to happiness, being thereby σοφιζόμενοι εἰς σωτηρίαν, made wise and learned to salvation. He did
2 Tim. 3. 15. not immerse himself in the cares, nor engage himself into the businesses of this World; yet did not withdraw himself from the company and conversation of men: he retired often from the crowd, that he might converse with God and heavenly things; he put himself into it, that he might impart good to men, and benefit the World, declining no sort of so-

society; but indifferently conversing with all; disputing with the Doctors and eating with the *Publicans*; whence thereby both men of contemplative and quiet disposition or vocations, and men of busie spirits, or of active lives may be guided respectively; those not to be morose, supercilious, rigid, contemptuous toward other men; these not to be so possessed or intangled with the World, as not to reserve some leisure for the culture of their minds, not to employ some care upon the duty of piety and devotion; both may learn whether in private retirement or in publick conversation and employment especially to regard the service of God and the benefit of men; thus was the example of our accommodated for all men; especially conducting them in the hardest and roughest parts of the way leading to bliss, the acclivities and asperities of duty; self-denial, or neglect of worldly glory and fleshly pleasure, patience, humility, general charity; shewing us the possibility of performing such duties, and encouraging us thereto. Through these difficult and dangerous passages (as a resolute Chieftain of life) he undauntedly marched before us, charging, beating back, and breaking through all opposite forces; all enemies, all temptations, all obstacles; enduring painfully the most furious assaults of the World; boldly withstanding and happily conquering the most malitious rage of Hell; so that victory and salvation we shall be certain of if we pursue his steps, and do not basely (out of faintness or falshood) desert so good a leader; we shall not fail of the unfading Crown, if *with patience we run the race that is set before us, looking unto the Captain and Perfectour of our faith, Jesus who for the joy proposed unto him, endured the cross, despised the shame, and hath set down at the right hand of the throne of God.* Would it not raise and enflame any courage to see his Commander to adventure so boldly upon all hazards, to endure so willingly all hardships; whom would not the sight of such a * forerunner animate and quicken in his course; who by running in the streight way of righteousness, with alacrity and constancy, hath obtained himself a most glorious Crown, and holdeth forth another like thereto, for the reward of those, who follow him. Now as our Lord's doctrine, so did his example, in the nature and design therof, respect and appertain to all men, it being also like the light of Heaven, a common spectacle, a publick guide (*to guide our steps in the way of peace*) if it do not appear so, if it do not effectually direct all; it is by accident and beside God's intention; 'tis by the fault of them who should propound it, or of them who have not eyes fit, or worthy to behold it; briefly, what was said concerning the universal revelation of Christian doctrine may be applied to Christ's practice,

Saviour

Αρχηγὸς ζωῆς. Acts 3. 15.

1 Pet. 2. 21. Heb. 12. 2. 1 Pet. 5. 4. Ἀμαραντινον τῆς δόξης στέφανον. — στέφανος ζωῆς. Apoc. 2. 10. Jac. 1. 12.

* Πρόδρομος. Heb. 6. 20.

9. *Jesus* is the *Saviour of all men* as having combated and vanquished all the enemies of man's welfare and happiness; *dispossessing* them of all their pretences and usurpations over man, disarming them of all their power and force against him; enabling us to withstand and overcome them: Man's salvation hath many adversaries of different nature and kind; some directly oppugning it, some formally prejudicing it, some accidentally hindring it; some alluring, some forcing, some discouraging from it, or from the means conducing to it; the chief of them we may from the Scripture (with consent of experience) reckon to be the *Devil* with all his envy and malice, his usurpations, his delusions and his temptations to sin; the *World* with its snares and baits, its violences, persecutions, and menaces; the flesh or natural concupiscence, with its bad inclinations and propensities to evil, its lusts and pleasures; *Sin*, with its guilt, and mischievous consequences; the *Law* with its rigorous exactions,

actions, hard measure and harsh boding; *Conscience* with its accusations and complaints, its terrours and anguishes; *Divine anger* with its effects *Death* and *Hell*: all these *our Lord* hath in several and suitable ways defeated; as to their malignity, contrariety, or enmity in respect of man's salvation; he hath (as *Zachary* prophesieth, in his *Benedictus*) *Saved us from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us: So that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might (ἀφόβως) safely and securely, without danger or fear serve him, in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of our life.*

—ὁ χειρὸς ἦν τὰ ἴδια πεποίηκεν ἀεὶ σκεδάσαι τὰ ἀρχαῖα τῆ κόσμω τούτω. Athan. *contra Apoll. p* 628.

Luke 1. 71, 74.

The *Devil* (that *enemy*, that *adversary*, that *accuser*, that *slanderer*, that *murtherer*, that *greedy Lion*, that *crafty Serpent*; the *strong one*, the *mischievous one*, the *destroyer*) who usurped an authority and exercised a domination over mankind, as *the Prince of this world*; who made prise of them, *captivated them at his pleasure*; who detained them under the power (or authority) of darkness and wickedness; who had the power of death; him our Saviour hath destroyed or defeated (καταργήσαν, as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* speaketh; that is, abolished him as to any farther pretence of empire or power over us) him he hath dejected from Heaven (*I saw Satan like lightning falling down from Heaven*) him *he hath cast out: Now is the Judgment of this world, now shall the Prince of this world be cast out*; all *his works he hath dissolved*; *For this cause* (saith St. *John*) *the Son of God did appear, that he might dissolve the works of the Devil.* He combated *this strong one* (this mighty and dreadful foe of ours) and baffled him, and bound him, and disarmed him (taking away πανοπλίαν αὐτοῦ, *the whole armour* in which he trusted) and *spoiled him* (τὰ σκεύη διήρπασεν, *rifled all his baggage*, bare away all his instruments of mischief) and plundered all his house; leaving him unable (without our fault, our baseness, our negligence) to do us mischief; (as is intimated in the 12th of St. *Matthew*, and 11th of St. *Luke*) yea *he triumphed over* all those infernal principalities and powers, and exposed them (as St. *Paul* saith:) he imparted to his Disciples ability to *trample upon all his power*, by him all his followers are so fortified as *to conquer the wicked one* (as St. *John* says) he affordeth light to discover *all his wiles, and snares*; strength and courage *to withstand all his assaults, to repel all his fiery darts, to put him to flight.*

Matt. 13. 28. Luke 11. 19. 1 Pet. 5. 8. *Dragon*, Apoc. 12. 3. &c. Acts 10. 38. 1 John 2. 14. Apoc. 12. 9. John 12. 31. 16. 11. 14. 30. Ephes. 2. 2. 6. 12. 2 Cor. 4. 4. Coloss. 1. 13. Acts 26. 18. Acts 10. 38. 2 Tim 2. 25.

Heb. 2. 14.

Luke 10. 18. John 12. 31. 16. 11.

1 John 3. 8.

Mat. 12. 29. Luke 11. 21.

Colos. 2. 15.

ἐθριάμβευσεν, Luke 10. 19. 1 John 2. 14. Eph. 6. 11. 2 Cor. 2. 11. Eph. 6. 16. 1 Pet. 5. 9. Eph. 4. 27. Jam. 4. 7.

The *World* also (that is, the wicked principles, the bad customs, the naughty conversation and example which commonly prevail here among men; alluring to evil and deterring from good; the cares also, the riches, the pleasures, the glories of the world, which possess or distract the minds, satiate and cloy the desires, employ all the affections and endeavours; take up the time of men; all in the world which fasteneth our hearts to earth, and to those low transitory things; or which sink them down toward hell; and which detain them from soaring toward heaven) is an enemy; an irreconcileable enemy to our salvation; the friendship thereof being inconsistent with a friendship in us toward the God of our salvation; or in him toward us: for *the friendship of the world is enmity with God*; and, *If any man love the world, the friendship of the father is not in him.* And this enemy our Lord hath vanquished, and enabled us to overcome. *Being of courage* (saith he) *I have overcome the world*; *he*, by a constant self-denial and temperance, defeated the bewitching pleasures, and flattering glories of it; *he*, by an immovable patience,

Jam. 4. 4. 1 John 2. 15.

John 16. 33.

patience, baffled the terrible frowns, and outrageous violences of it; *he*, by a resolute and invincible maintenance of truth, in great measure routed and dissipated the errours and oppositions thereof; *he*, by a general and intense charity, surmounted the provocations, envies and enmities thereof: *he* did it himself for us, and *he* also enabled us to do it; furnishing us with sufficient strength, and fit weapons whereby we may combat and conquer it; may sustain and repel its force; may shun and elude its baits; for, *every one that* (by faith in him) *is born of God doth overcome the world: and this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith: Who is he that overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?* In all these things (that is in whatever concerns the world and its enmity; *tribulation*, or *distress*, or *persecution*, or *famine*, or *nakedness*, or *peril*, or *sword*) *we are* (saith St. *Paul*) *more than conquerors through him that loves us; thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ:* Our Lord hath procured for us hopes that will raise our minds and affections above the world; objects employing our care and endeavour far beyond it; satisfactions that will chear our hearts, and satiate our desires without it; comforts, that will support and sustain our spirits against all the terrours, all the assaults, all the evils thereof; by his means it is, that we have no reason either to love it; or to fear it, or to value it, or to be concerned about it; but to contemn it as a thing unworthy of us and below us.

1 John 5. 4. Rom. 8. 38. 2 Cor. 2. 14. Phil. 1. 28.

The *Flesh* also (that is, all that within us of bodily temper, or natural constitution, which inclineth and swayeth us to vitious excess in sensual enjoyments; which disposeth us to the inordinate love of ourselves and of other creatures; which *lusts against the spirit*, and is adversary thereto: which blindeth and darkneth our minds in the apprehension of our judgment concerning divine things; which perverteth and disableth (enfeebleth) our wills in the choice and prosecution of what is good; which discomposeth and disordereth the affections and passions of our soul; which continually enticeth and seduceth us to sin) is also an enemy; a very powerful, very treacherous, very dangerous and very mischievous enemy to us and our welfare; rendring us enemies to God (for *the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be,*) being *another law in our members, warring against the law of our mind, and captivating us to the law of sin*; engendring and fostering those *fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*; whose works and fruits are all sorts of intemperance, impurity, pride, envy, contentiousness; this capital enemy of ours *our Lord* did in his own person first subdue, rejecting all the suggestions and thwarting the impulses thereof; entirely submitting to and performing the will of God; even in willingly drinking that cup, which was so distasteful, so grievous to natural will and fleshly desire. He so conquered the flesh in himself for us; he also conquers it in us, by the guidance and assistance of his grace enabling us to withstand it, and to overcome it. *The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus* (saith St. *Paul*) *hath freed me from the law of sin and death.* He infuses a light discussing those foggs which steam from carnal sense and appetite; so that we may clearly discern divine truths, the will of God, the way to happiness; he inserteth principles of spiritual life and strength counterpoising and overswaying corporeal and sensual propensions; so that we can restrain sensual desires, and compose irregular passions; and submit readily to God's will; and observe chearfully God's law; and freely comply with the dictates of the Spirit or of right reason; he so continually aideth, en-

Gal. 5. 24. 1 Cor. 2. 14. Matt. 26. 41. Gal. 5. 17. Rom. 7. 18, 19. Jam. 1. 14. Rom. 8. 7. Rom. 7. 23. 1 Per. 2. 11. Gal. 5. 19. 1 Cor. 3. 3. Col. 3. 5. Luke 22. 42. Matt. 26. 39. John 17. 19. Heb. 2. 10. Rom 8. 2. 2 Cor. 4. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 15. 1 John 2. 27. Eph. 5. 8. Rom. 12. 2. 1 John 5. 3. Phil. 2. 13. Phil. 4. 13. 2 Cor. 3. 5.

Heb. 13. 21. encourageth and upholds us, that we *can do all things through Christ that*
Gal. 5. 24. *strengtheneth* us; so that by his power and help *the flesh with its affections*
Coloss. 3. 5. 2. 11. *and lusts are crucified*; the *earthly members are mortified*; *the old man*
Eph. 4. 22. *(which was corrupted according to deceitful lusts) is put off*; *the body of*
Rom. 6. 6, 12. *sin is so destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin*; *sin doth not reign*
Rom. 8. 13. *in our mortal bodies, so that we* (must) *obey it in the lusts thereof*; *we are*
Heb. 12. 1. *renewed in the spirit of our minds*; and *do put on the new man, which is crea-*
Eph. 4. 23. 2. 10. *ted according to God in righteousness and true holiness.*
Coloss. 3. 10.

Our *Sins* also are very grievous enemies of ours, loading us with hea-
Heb. 12. 4. Πρὸς ἁμαρτίαν ἀνταγωνιζόμενοι. vy guilt, stinging us with bitter remorse, and anxious fear, keeping us under miserable bondage, exposing us to extreme mischief and misery; them our Lord hath also routed and vanquished: in regard to this per-
Matt. 1. 21. formance was the name *Jesus* assigned to him; as the *Angel* told *Joseph*: *She shall bear a Son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins*: [*From their sins*; taking in all the causes and the consequences of them; from all those spiritual enemies, which draw us, or drive us into them; from the guilt and obnoxiousness to punishment; the terrour and anguish of conscience; the wrath and displeasure of God following upon them; the slavery under their dominion; the final condemnation and sufferance of grievous pains for them;] the guilt of sin he particularly freed us from; for *he loved us, and washed us from our sins in his*
Rev. 1. 5. *own blood.* Christ died for sinners (for us then being sinners) that is,
1 Pet. 1. 19. that he might deliver us from our sins, with all their causes, adjuncts and
1 Pet. 2. 24. consequences. *He bare our sins on his own body on the tree*; *the blood of*
3. 18. *Christ cleanseth us from all sin: he is the propitiation for our sins, and for*
1 John 1. 7. *the sins of the whole world*; *he was manifested to take away our sins*; *once in*
2. 2. 3. 5. *the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin* (εἰς ἀθέτησιν ἁμαρτίας,
4. 10. *to the abolition of sin*) *by the sacrifice of himself*; we are *justified freely by*
Heb. 1. 3. 9. 26, 28. *God's grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus*; *by his obedience*
Rom. 3. 24. *many are constituted righteous* (or free from the guilt and imputation of
Rom. 5. 19. sin) he *justifies the ungodly*; *covering their sins* and *not imputing them unto*
Rom. 4. 5, 6, 7. *them.* So doth he wipe away the guilt of sin; and he voids the condem-
Rom. 8. 1. nation passed for them; for *there is no condemnation to them that are in*
Rom. 8. 34. *Christ Jesus*; *who is there that can condemn, since Christ hath died, or rather hath risen again?*

He hath also appeased God's wrath for sin, and removed the effects of
Rom. 5. 10. 1. it, (the punishment and vengeance due to sin and threatned for it.) So that *being enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son*; *being justified by faith we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ*:
1 Thes. 1. 10. *Jesus* is the ὁ ῥυόμενος, *who delivers us from the wrath to come*; *being justi-*
Rom. 5. 7. *fied by his blood, we shall be saved by him from wrath.*

The strength and dominion of sin he hath also broken; by the grace af-
Rom. 6. 14. forded us, whereby we are able to resist and avoid it; so that *sin henceforth*
Rom. 6. 12. *shall not domineer over us, or reign in our mortal body*: *Being freed from sin*
Rom. 6. 18, 22. *we are enslaved to righteousness and made servants to God. The body of sin is*
Rom. 6. 6. *destroyed so that we no longer serve sin*------- Whence consequently he hath subdued, utterly weakned, or quite destroyed (as to any force or mischievous influence upon us) those other adversaries, which depend upon sin, and by its power oppose and afflict us,

Ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ θεοῦ ὁ κύριος ἡμῶν τῷ γένει πᾶν ἀνθρώπων διὰ τὸ ἰδίᾳ πάντας σπερμαντῶν ἀπέδωκε τὴν σωτηρίαν, ἵνα ὅλον τὸν ἄνθρωπον τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἐκχώμων πάσης ἁμαρτίας ἐλευθερώσῃ. Damasus *Epist. apud* Theod. 5. 9. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

Our *Conscience* is such an enemy accusing us, condemning us, vexing us with the memory and sense of sin; suggesting to us the depth of our guilt and the danger of our state, terrifying us with the expectation of punish-

punishment and vengeance: but *our Lord* (by securing us of mercy and favour upon repentance and sincere obedience) hath silenced and stilled this *adversary*; hath *by his blood* (as the *Apostle* to the *Hebrews* says) *purged our conscience from dead works; hath delivered them, who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage*; so that thence we obtain a steady peace of mind, a joyful satisfaction in the service of God, a comfortable hope of future bliss: *peace, comfort* and *joy* are the adjuncts of that state he shall put us into, and the fruits of that Spirit he bestoweth on us.

Heb. 9. 14. 2. 15. Rom. 15. 13. Rom. 14. 17. Gal. 5. 22.

The *Law* also (in its rigour, as requiring exact obedience, and as denouncing vengeance to them who in any point violate it;) is, by reason of our weakness and inability so perfectly to observe it, an enemy to us; justifying no man, perfecting no man, causing, encreasing, aggravating, *quickening, declaring* sin; *yielding occasion to sin of killing us, working wrath, ministring death and condemnation, subjecting us to a curse* (as St. *Paul* teacheth us) but our Lord by mitigating and abating the extreme rigour thereof, by procuring an acceptance of sincere (though not accurate) obedience, by purchasing and dispensing pardon for transgression thereof upon repentance, by conferring competent strength and ability to perform it in an acceptable degree, hath brought under this adversary; hath *redeemed us from the curse of the law*; hath *justified and imputed righteousness to us without the works of the law* (without such punctual performances, as the Law exacts) we are *delivered from the law* (as to those effects of it; the condemning, discouraging, enslaving us) we cease to be under the law (in those respects) being under grace, being led by the Spirit (as St. *Paul* tells us.) The Law indeed is still our rule, our guide, our governour; we are obliged to follow and obey it; but it ceases to be a tyrant over us, a tormentor of us.

Gal 2. 16. 3. 11. Heb. 7. 19. Rom. 10. 5. Rom. 8. 3. Rom. 3. 20. Gal. 3 12. 5. 3. Rom. 7. 13. Rom. 4. 15. 3. 20. 5. 20. 7. 7, 8, 10, 11. 1 Cor. 15. 56. 2 Cor. 3. 7, 9. Gal. 3. 12. Gal. 3. 13. Rom 3. 21. 28. Rom. 4. 6. Rom. 7. 6, 4. Rom. 6. 14. Gal. 5. 18.

Death is also an enemy (*the last enemy*, saith St. *Paul*, *which shall be destroyed, is death*;) the enemy, which naturally we most fear and abominate; that which would utterly destroy us.

1 Cor. 15. 26. Acts 2. 34. 1 Cor. 15. 20. Acts 26. 23.

This enemy our Lord hath vanquished and destroyed: by his death and resurrection he opened the way to a happy immortality; *he abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel: He* by his *death defeated him that had the power of death; and delivered them, who by fear of death were through their whole life subject to bondage*; he pulled out sin, which is the sting of death, and reversed the sentence of condemnation, to which we all stood obnoxious. *The wages of sin* (that which we had deserved, and was by law due to us for it) *was death*; *but the gift of God is everlasting life, by Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Col. 1. 18. Apoc. 1. 5. Acts 3. 15. Ἀρχηγὸς ζωῆς. 2 Tim. 1. 10. Heb. 2. 14. Rom. 6. 23.

Lastly *Hell*, (that is *utter darkness*, extreme discomfort, intolerable and endless misery) the most dismal of all enemies, our Lord hath, by the virtue of his merits, and the power of his grace, put us into a capacity of avoiding; *he hath* (as St. *Paul* before tells us) *delivered us from the wrath to come. O Hell, where is thy victory? Death and Hell shall be cast into the lake of fire.*

1 Thess. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 15. 55. Apoc. 20. 14.

Thus hath *our Lord* in our behalf vanquished and defeated every thing that is opposite, or prejudicial to our salvation and welfare. Many indeed of these things do in a more immediate, more peculiar, and more signal manner concern the faithful members of the *Christian Church*, and are directly applied to them, yet all of them in some sort, according to God's design, and in respect to a remote capacity, may be referred to *all men*. They are benefits which God intended for *all men*, and which *all men* (if they be not faulty and wanting to themselves) may obtain.

How they more especially appertain to the faithful we may shew afterward.

Application.

1. Hence ariseth great matter and cause of glorifying God; both from the thing it self, and its extent: for the magnitude of beneficence is to be estimated not only according to the degree of quality, but according to its amplitude of object; to redeem any doth signify goodness, to redeem many doth encrease it, to redeem all doth advance it to the highest pitch; the more are obliged, the greater is the glory due to the benefactour.

Hence the *earth being full of the goodness of the Lord, the Lord being gratious unto all, and his mercy being over all his works*, all creatures partaking of God's bounty is so often insisted upon in those divine hymns, as a ground of praise to God.

Some do indeed speak of glorifying God for his discriminating grace; as if grace the narrower it were, the better it were: but is not selfishness and envy at the bottom of this? Is not this the disposition of those in the *Gospel*, who *murmured ---- is thine eye evil, because mine is good?*

It is dangerous to restrain God's benevolence and beneficence within bounds narrower than they really are; thereby diminishing his glory.

2. Hereby is discovered the general obligation of men to love God; to praise him, to serve him in sense of his goodness, in regard to his beneficence, out of gratitude toward him. If God hath been so kindly affected toward men, and so careful of their welfare, as for procuring and promoting their salvation to provide a *Savicur* for them, to design his own beloved son to that performance, in prosecution thereof depressing him into so low a state, exposing him to such inconveniences and indignities, such crosses and afflictions, how much are then all men obliged to love him, as their gratious friend and Benefactor; to praise and celebrate him for his favour and mercy, to render all blessings and thanks unto him? this certainly is the duty of all, if the redemption in God's design reach to all; otherwise in reality it lieth on few, in practice it could scarce touch any. They cannot be obliged to thank God for their redemption, who are not obliged to him for the thing it self; they cannot heartily resent the kindness, who are not assured that it extends to them: And to such assurance (according to the doctrine of particular redemption) it is certain that very few men, especially of the best men, can arrive; it is a question whether any men arrive thereto.

Apoc. 5 9. Eph. 1. 6. Col. 1. 12.

According to the sense of all men it is also no easie thing to know certainly, whether a man at present be in the state of grace: and he that doth not know that, cannot (except upon the score of general redemption) be assured that he is redeemed; and therefore cannot thank God.

It hath been the common doctrine of *Christendom* for 15 hundred years together, that no man (without a special revelation) can in this life be assured of his perseverance, and consequently not of his salvation; and consequently not of his election or redemption, in case only they who are saved are in the design of God redeemed: no man therefore without that special revelation, can thank God heartily for his redemption, as being uncertain thereof, it being a secret reserved in God's breast.

It is yet a farther difficulty, supposing a man to have a good assurance of his present state, to be assured of his final perseverance in it: which he that hath not, cannot (except upon the said score) thank God for it.

The

The best men especially, who out of modesty and humility are apt to doubt of their present state; who studying their hearts and discovering many imperfections in themselves, who reflecting on their lives, and observing in them many defects, are apt to question whether they are qualified for God's favour, or fitted for the future accompt and enjoyment of heaven, who considering the treachery of their hearts, the feebleness of their reason, that unsteadiness of their resolution, will be apt to fear they may fall away, will be rendred hence uncapable to render God thanks for their redemption: only the bold and blind Bayards (who usually out of self-conceit are so exceedingly confident of their election and salvation) will be able to praise God for it.

Hence the assurance of salvation hapning to few, and of them to much fewer upon good grounds; it being necessary to none, it being perhaps (yet far more probably, according to the general sense of *Christendom*) groundless to any; few or none are capable to render God praise and thanks for it: so shall he lose in effect all thanks for the greatest benefit he did ever confer on mankind.

It is therefore a dangerous opinion, which checketh their gratitude, which stoppeth their mouths from praising God; which so depriveth God of his due praise. It is much more safe to praise God for the benefits we conceive we have, but have not, than to neglect to praise him, for that we have.

3. This doctrine doth afford great matter of comfort: if a man reflecting on his own heart and ways (observing in them many blemishes and defects) is apt to be discouraged, yet it will raise him to consider that he is not thereby excluded from a possibility of salvation, seeing he is assured of God's favourable inclination, and who hath expressed so much good-will and favour toward him in his redemption, seeing he is persuaded that he hath a Saviour so kindly and pitifully affected toward him; who wisheth him well; who is concerned in his salvation, that he might not be crossed or defeated in his designs, that he might not lose the effects of his endeavours, the price of his blood. But he that seeth himself in so doubtful a condition, as to his own qualifications, and withal hath no assurance that God was ever gratiously disposed toward him, cannot but thereby be much discouraged.

This doctrine therefore is safe and useful, it can do no man harm, it may do him great good by giving him hopes of being assisted and accepted of his Redeemer. But the other is dangerous, as tending to discourage and deject men.

4. This doctrine is a great incitement to the performanc of duty; both as working upon mens ingenuity, and disposing them in gratitude to serve God, from the resentment of their obligation for so great a favour; and as assuring them of acceptance in case of endeavour to obey. How can he but be moved willingly to serve God, who hath an apprehension of God's such merciful design to save him? of his having done so much in order thereto?

But how can he be moved to serve God in consideration of such a benefit, who is ignorant of its being intended him? how can any man apply himself chearfully to serve that master, whose favourable inclination toward him, whose readiness to accept his service he doubteth of.

The *Apostles* propound it as a ground of gratitude, and an obligation to the performance of duty, that they are redeemed by Christ; which supposeth they do all know and believe it. 1 Cor. 6. 20. 1 Pet. 1. 17.

Supposing Christ is not the redeemer of all but of those only, who shall be finally saved, these grounds of thankfulness and enforcements of duty cannot properly or pertinently respect all Christians, and indeed only those who are sure of their salvation.

My thanking Christ for his redeeming me, my diligently serving him as my redeemer, supposeth my opinion, and is grounded upon the truth of his being really so: ------I cannot heartily, confidently or comfortably do it, except I know it, and am assured thereof: which I cannot do except Christ died for all men, or that I am assured of my particular election.

So that either Christ is an universal Saviour, or the greatest part of Christians are disobliged and incapacitated reasonably to thank him, to praise him, to serve him, as they are enjoined to do.

5. It is a great aggravation of Infidelity, of Apostasie, of all disobedience, that we are guilty of them, do frustrate the designs and undertakings of Christ, do reject the overtures of his grace, do abuse the goodness and mercy of their redeemer; it consequently deterreth from those things.

Luke 7. 30. *The Pharisees and Lawyers rejected the counsel of God toward them,* (God therefore designed their good.)

Heb. 2 3. *How shall we escape, that neglect so great salvation?* a salvation which they were capable of, which was designed for them, which was offered to them; otherwise there would have been no danger in neglecting it, no fault in doing it.

Acts 13. 26, 46. It is said of the *Jews* at *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, that *they did,* ἀπωθεῖσθαι, *thrust away the Gospel* (*the word of salvation*, that was sent them) *judging themselves unworthy of eternal life:* God did think fit out of goodness seriously to offer it to them, but they did not think fit to embrace it.

2 Pet. 3 9. Rom. 2. 23. *Despisest thou the riches of God's goodness?* how can any man despise that, which doth not concern him, which never was offered him, which at least he hath no ground of confidence, that it extendeth to him?

John 5. 34. 38. *These things I speak that ye may be saved:* so *our Lord* saith to those ---*who did not believe in him.*

Mat. 23. 37. *How often have I willed,* &c.

2 Pet. 2. 1. *Denying the Lord that bought them.*

6. It is a great encouragement and excitement to devotion. Who can be backward of having recourse to his Redeemer; or of using his mediation? whom will not such an experiment of goodness invite and encourage?

But the contrary apprehension must needs damp devotion, and discourage from it. He can apply himself to God but faintly, and distrustfully, who distrusteth whether he hath any Redeemer or Mediatour or no. Who must thus conceive and say to himself: perhaps God hath loved me, and perhaps he never had nor will have any regard to my welfare. Perhaps *Christ* died with intention do do me good, perhaps he never did mean any such thing: perhaps those expressions of kindness sounding so generally do not include me, perhaps I am excluded, and only deluded by them. When a man cannot say to *Christ*, O my Saviour---O my Mediatour, *&c.* nor use his intercession with God for the procurement of faith, of grace, of any good thing.

7. It is a ground and motive of charity; there arising thence a more considerable relation between all men; being all the objects of *Christ*'s love and mercy, should endear men to one another; it rendereth every man valuable in our eyes, as dear and pretious in God's sight. It should make his salvation desireable to us.

Pray for all men, saith St. *Paul.*

The

The contrary opinion removeth this ground of charity; and so cooleth it.

8. It should consequently render us careful to promote the salvation of others, and fearful to hinder it by ill example, by ill doctrine, by any misbehaviour. So doth St. *Paul* argue, when he saith, *Destroyest thou him for whom Christ died?*

9. It is a piece of justice to acknowledge the right and interest of every man in his Saviour.

A wrong to exclude any; to confine and appropriate this great blessing; to engross, to enclose a Common; to restrain that by forging distinctions, which is so unlimitedly expressed.

The undertakings and performances of our Saviour did respect all men as the common works of nature do; as the air we breath in, as the Sun which shineth on us; the which are not given to any man particularly, but to all generally; not as a proper Inclosure, but as a Common---they are indeed mine, but not otherwise than as they do belong to all men.

A gift they are to all equally, though they do not prove to all a blessing; there being no common gift, which by the refusal, neglect, or ill use of it may not prove a curse ----- *a savour of death.*

Sermon XLIII.

The Nativity of our Lord tidings of great Joy.

LUKE II. 10.

And the Angel said unto them, Fear not, for Behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

Ἰδοὺ γὰρ εὐαγγελίζομαι ὑμῖν χαρὰν μεγάλην, ἥτις ἔσται παντὶ τῷ λαῷ.

THE proper business of a *Festival* is spiritual joy, conceived in our hearts, by reflexion on some notable blessing conferred on us; accompanied with a grateful sense and expression, answerable to the special bounty and mercy of God, in due proportion to the nature and degree of that blessing.

Such

1 Theſſ. 5. 16. Rom. 12. 12. Phil. 4. 4. Such joy is a duty, or a part of religious devotion, required by God, and very acceptable to him; for as God would have his ſervants perpetually content, well ſatisfied, and chearful in all ſtates, and upon all occurrences; ſo he doth eſpecially demand from us, that we ſhould entertain his favours with delight and complacence; it being proper, it being ſeemly, it being juſt ſo to do; for ſince joy is a natural reſult of our obtaining what ever we do apprehend good, or eſteem and affect; the conception of it is a plain argument, that we do well underſtand, do rightly prize, do cordially like, do thankfully embrace God's favours; as on the contrary a defect of it doth imply, that we do not mind them, or take them to be little worth, that we do not ſenſibly reliſh them, or accept them kindly. And if ever we are obliged, if ever we are concerned ſo to rejoyce, then ſurely it is now; when the faireſt occaſion, and higheſt cauſe of joy, that ever was, is preſented to us; when certain news from heaven, and the beſt that ever came from thence, of the moſt admirable, the moſt glorious, the moſt beneficial event, that ever happened in the world, is in a manner ſutably rare conveyed to us; for *Behold*, ſaith the *Angel*, *I bring you tidings of great joy, which ſhall be to all people.*

Upon which *Words* (each whereof is emphatical, and pregnant with matter obſervable) we ſhall firſt make a brief deſcant or paraphraſe, ſupplying the room of a curious *Analyſis*; then we ſhall urge the main duty couched in them.

Ἰδού, *Behold:* this is a word denoting *admiration*, exciting *attention*, intimating aſſurance: *Behold* and *admire*; it is no mean, no ordinary matter, that I report, but a moſt remarkable, a very marvellous event: *Behold*, and *attend*; it is a buſineſs not to be paſſed over with ſmall regard, but moſt worthy your conſideration, of high moment, and concernment, to you. *Behold*, and *ſee*; 'tis no uncertain, no obſcure thing; but that whereof you may be fully aſſured, as if it were moſt evident to your ſenſe, and which by conſpicuous proofs ſhall be demonſtrated; in the mean while you have no ſlight authority for it; for

Εὐαγγελίζομαι, *I bring good tidings*; *I*, an *Angel*, a ſpecial Meſſenger of God purpoſely ſent on this errand, that by the ſtrangeneſs of my apparition I may excite you to regard it, by the weight of my teſtimony I may incline you to believe it; by the dignity of my nature I may declare the importance of it: *I*, a faithful ſervant of God, and a kind friend to men, very willing at his command to perform good offices to them, do bring a meſſage, well becoming an Angel's mouth, worth my deſcent from heaven, and putting on this viſible ſhape; for *I bring*

Εὐαγγ χαρὴν μεγάλην, *good tydings of great joy*: I bring *tidings*, that may gratifie the curioſity of any man, the mind of man naturally being greedy of news; *good tidings*, thoſe are welcome to all men, and apt to yield more pleaſure, than any knowledge we had before: tidings *of joy*; ſuch as may not only miniſter a dry ſatisfaction to your reaſon, but ſenſibly touch your affections, by the comfortable nature, and beneficial tendency of them: tidings of *great joy*; as not touching any indifferent or petty buſineſs, but affairs of neareſt concernment, and higheſt conſequence to you: (ſuch indeed, as you ſhall underſtand, which do concern not the poor intereſts of this world, not the ſorry pleaſures of ſenſe, not any ſlender advantage of your preſent life, and temporal ſtate; but your ſpiritual welfare, your everlaſting condition, the future joy and happineſs of your ſouls) *tidings* indeed the moſt gladſome, that ever ſounded upon earth, that ever entred into mortal ear; theſe *I bring*

Τμῖν, *to you*: to you *ſhepherds*; perſons of mean condition, and ſimple capacity, leading this innocent and humble ſort of life, employed in your honeſt vocation, undergoing toilſome labour, and ſore hardſhip; witneſs the open field, witneſs the cold ſeaſon, witneſs the dark night in which I find you watching, and guarding your ſheep; to you, who could expect no very welcome tidings; who are little concerned in any great tranſactions; and can have ſmall ambition or hope of bettering your condition by any changes here; even to you (not in the firſt place to the mighty *Princes*, to the crafty *Stateſman*, to the ſage *Philoſophers*, or learned *Rabbies*, to the wealthy *Merchants*, or fine *Citizens*, who now are warm in their houſes, enjoying their eaſe and pleaſure; repoſing on their beds, or ſitting by their fires, or revelling at their banquets and ſports; but to you) poor, harmleſs, ſilly, induſtrious ſouls; who well may repreſent the greater and better part of mankind, in this ſurpriſing and abſolute free way, the gratious Lord of heaven by me his ſpecial miniſter doth vouchſafe to ſend from thence *tidings of great joy*; which ſhall be

Pauperibus atque vigilantibus, &c. Bern. *de Nat. Serm.* 5. Luke 2. 8.

Παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all people*; or rather to all *the people*; that is to God's ancient and peculiar people, in regard to which it is ſaid, *I was not ſent but to the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael*; to *that* people I ſay eſpecially, primarily, and more immediately this joy did appertain; it by a cloſer relation to God, and ſpecial intereſt in his promiſes having plaineſt title thereto; it from anticipations of knowledge, faith and hope being more capable to admit ſuch an overture; it indeed being the repreſentative of all the ſpiritual *Iſrael*, or faithful ſeed of *Abraham*, for whom the benefits which theſe tidings import were deſigned; to it firſt indeed, but mediately and conſequentially to all people diſperſed on the face of the earth: The expreſſion ſeemeth adapted to the preſent conceits of that Nation, which apprehended nothing about God's favourable intentions to the community of men; but in effect it is to be underſtood extenſively in reference to all people: for the *Saviour*, the *Chriſt*, the *Lord*, of whom this good news did report, was not only to be the Redeemer, and Governour of that ſmall people, but of the World, of every Nation, of all mankind: Here indeed we have παντὶ τῷ λαῷ, *to all the people*; but in the *nunc dimmittis* of old *Simeon*, we have πάντων τῶν λαῶν, *of all the peoples*; *Mine eyes* (ſaid he) *have ſeen thy ſalvation, which thou haſt prepared before the face of all the peoples*: As he was *the glory of his people Iſrael*; as in him *God did viſit and redeem that his people*; ſo he was *made a light to lighten the Gentiles, and to be for ſalvation to the uttermoſt ends of the earth*; He was *the expectation of Iſrael*; but he was likewiſe *the deſire of all nations*; He was deſtin'd *to rule in Sion*; but *the Heathen* alſo *were given for his inheritance, and the uttermoſt parts of the earth for his poſſeſſion*; He was *the root of Jeſſe, which ſhould ſtand for an enſign of the people, to which the Gentiles ſhould ſeek*; He was that *Royal perſon*, of whom the *Pſalmiſt* did ſing, *Men ſhall be bleſſed in him, all nations ſhall call him bleſſed.*

Matt. 15. 24. 10. 6. Rom. 9. 4. Luke 24. 47. Acts 13. 46. Iſa. 2. 3. Zech. 9. 9. Rom. 9. 4. Luke 2. 31. Luke 2. 32. 1. 68. Acts 13. 47. Iſa. 49. 6. 42. 6. Luke 2. 38. Hag. 2. 7. Pſal. 2. 8. Mic. 5. 2. Iſa. 11. 10. Pſal. 72. 17.

He was to be born by Nation a *Jew*, but a man by nature; *the Son of man*, was a ſtyle which he commonly did own, and affect no leſs, than the *Son of Abraham*, or of *David*; he was *born* indeed *under the law*, but *of a woman*; and therefore brother to us all, as *partaker of the ſame fleſh and blood*; Hence was he endued with an humane compaſſion, and with a fraternal affection toward all men; hence was he diſpoſed to extend the benefit of his charitable and gratious performances unto them all.

Gal. 4. 4. Heb. 2. 14.

Judæa

Judæa therefore must not engross this angelical Gospel; it is of importance most universal and unlimited, reaching through all successions of time, and all extensions of place; filling all ages and regions of the world, with matter, and with obligation of joy: Hence even by *Moses* antiently (according to St. *Paul's* interpretation) were all nations upon this account invited to a common joy; *Rejoyce*, said he, *O ye nations with his people.* Hence, in foresight of this event, the Holy *Psalmist* (as the *Fathers* expound him) did sing, *The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoyce, let the multitude of Isles be glad thereof*: Hence *Sing, O thou barren, thou that didst not bear, break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou that didst not travel with child---The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad, the desart shall rejoyce and blossom as the rose-----Sing unto the Lord a new song, and his praise from the end of the earth*, said the *Evangelical Prophet* in regard to this dispensation; In fine, this *Angel* himself did interpret his own words, when in consort with the heavenly *Choir* he sang that *Antheme*, *Glory be to God in the highest; on earth peace, and good-will toward men*; whence we may collect that a piece diffused over the earth, and a good-will extended toward all men were implied in these *tidings of great joy to all people.*

Rom. 15. 10. Deut. 32. 43.

Psal. 97. 1. 96. 1.

Ἵνα περίεργον τὸ πανταχοῦ ἐπιφανέν περιλέγω.

Totum ad Christum revocamus, si volumus iter rectæ intelligentiæ tenere. Aug. in Ps. 56. 7.

Isa. 54. 1. 35. 1. 42. 10.

Luke 2. 14.

We then are all concerned in these *tidings*, and we may look on them as by this heavenly *Evangelist* imparted to us; whence our duty must be to listen with reverent attention unto them, seriously to weigh the purport of them, diligently to contemplate the reasons of that great joy, which effectually should be produced in us by them, as their proper and due result; to further which practice, let us take some prospect of this *Gospel*, whereby it may appear pleasant, and apt to kindle a sprightly joy in our hearts. The matter of it, is the *Nativity* of our *ever blessed Lord*, and *Saviour Jesus Christ*; for, *To you*, saith our *Angel*, *is born this day a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord*, an occurrence fraught with all the greatest causes of joy imaginable; as importing innumerable, unexpressibly and unconceivably vast advantages thence springing to us.

It doth minister occasion of rejoycing for all the blessings which did flow from each of his salutary undertakings and performances; for all the mercies purchased by the merits of his obedience, and by the price of his blood; for all the graces issuing from his dispensation of the *Holy Spirit*; for all the benefits consequent on his illustrious resurrection, ascention and glorification; as being a good entrance to them, yea, a great progress in them, and a certain pledge of their full accomplishment; for all the work of our redemption was in a manner atchieved, when our Saviour did appear; his incarnation was the great step toward it; as being an act of the humblest obedience, and of the highest merit, that could any-wise be performed, for satisfying the justice of God, and winning his favour toward us: His *taking up life* may well seem more meritorious, than his *laying it down*, and the chief passion which he could ever undergo; His death was a passion, great as death could be; His life also was a continual passion, or exercise of huge patience; but his birth seemeth to be the greatest and strangest passion of all; involving the lowest submission, and the deepest suffering: What nobler sacrifice could there be, than God's offering himself up to mortality, to infirmity, to slavery? What obedience can be thought of comparable to that which he did express when he said, *Lo I come to do thy will, O God: I came down, not that I might do my own will, but the will of him that sent me?* for him to descend from heaven, the

Heb. 10. 7. John 6. 38.

regi-

region of light and bliſs, into this gloomy and ſad world, for him in a manner to deveſt himſelf of celeſtial Majeſty, and to aſſume the form of a ſervant; for him to be encloſed in a womb, and to come out wailing thence, to ſuck at a breaſt for life, to be carried in arms, and laid in a manger; to enter on a ſtage of *Being* ſo very low and homely; for him, I ſay, *the Lord of Glory*, thus *to empty*, and *abaſe* himſelf, may not this reaſonably be deemed more, than after his becoming man to ſuſtain all the grievances incident to our nature and ſtate? whence *the very aſſumption of fleſh was* (ſaith St. *Athanaſius*) *the redemption of all mankind:* He was at leaſt thence engaged in the way of acting and ſuffering what-ever was needful for our recovery; and having gone ſo far, aſſuredly he never would flinch or recoil, but would go through with all; being come he would ſhew himſelf come to purpoſe, leaving no part unfiniſhed of his grand deſign.

Phil. 2. 7, 8.
Ἐκένωσεν, ἐκένωσεν ἐταπείνωσεν.

Ἡ περίληψις ἦν σαρκὸς ἐλευθέρωσις ἦν πάσης τ ἀνθρωπότητ@. Ath. Or. 3. c. Arr. p. 385. vid. p. 618.

Λύχνον ἦλε τλὼ ἑαυτῷ σάρκα, &c. Greg. Naz. Or. 38.

Creatoris ad creaturam deſcenſio (redemptium eſt ad æterna provectio. Leo M. de Nat. Serm. 5.

So that as they, who celebrate the birth of a Prince, do mean thereby to expreſs their joy for all the good which they do hopefully preſume to enjoy from his protection and conduct afterward in all his life; and as they who welcome the Sun-riſing, do imply their ſatisfaction in the conveniences of his light through the whole enſuing day; ſo may the *Nativity* of our *Lord* afford matter of rejoycing for all the train of mighty bleſſings which do ſucceed it. We may therefore now well conſider him born to inſtruct us by his excellent doctrine, and to guide us by his perfect example; born to merit God's mercy and favour toward us by an entire ſubmiſſion to God's pleaſure; in the whole conduct of his life, and in the final reſignation of it: born to renew and ſanctifie our nature, to ſupport and ſtrengthen us in obedience to God's commandments, to ſuccour us in temptations, to comfort us in diſtreſſes by his grace; born to rear himſelf from the grave for confirming our faith, and enſuring our hopes of ſalvation; born to aſcend up above all the heavens to God's right hand, there effectually to intercede for us, thence liberally to diſpenſe all heavenly bleſſings to us: Well may we now rejoyce, as ſeeing him come to diſcloſe the way of happineſs, to eſtabliſh the covenant of Grace, to void all the obſtructions, and ſubdue all the enemies to our welfare: well may we celebrate this *birth*, as by its virtue bleſſing the *Patriarchs*, enlightning the *Prophets*, inſpiring *Martyrs* with faith and courage, endewing all the *Saints*, that e'er have been, with grace, and crowning them with glory; ſo that in this *Day* we have the *Paſſion*, the *Paſch*, the *Aſcenſion*, the *Pentecoſt*, the *Memorials* of every *Saint* ſuggeſted to us; the joys of all our *Feſtivals* do conſpire or commence in this; which is the head and ſpring, which is the fruitful ſeed, which is the hopeful morning of them all. Πάντα ταῦτα τ παρόντος ἡμέρας γάρις ἐστὶν· αὕτη γὰρ ἤρξατο πρῶτ ἐφεξῆς ἀγαθῶν. *All theſe things* (ſaith St. *Gregory Nyſſene*) *are the grace of this preſent day, for it began the goods, which did in order ſucceed.*

Οὐκοῦν χ τὰ τῆς ἡμέρας καὶ λαμπρὰ περὶ τὴν ἡμέραν εὐφημιῶν μέ@ ἐστι. Greg. Nyſſ. Tom. 2. p. 784.

But waving the numberleſs benefits ſo conſequent on the *Nativity*, we ſhall only touch ſome of thoſe which have a more formal and cloſe relation thereto.

I paſs over the contemplation of that ſweet harmony between the old, and the new World; in which, to our comfortable ſatisfaction, the ſweeteſt attributes of God (his goodneſs, his wiſdom, his fidelity and conſtancy) do illuſtrate themſelves, by completion of the ancient promiſes, prefigurations and predictions touching this event.

I forbear also to reflect on the happy alteration and amendment of the World, which our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the state of things before it, with that which followed it; the consideration of which case is very pleasant, and productive of joy. *First* then,

Sapientia & benignitas Dei ac salutiferi operis mora capaciores nos suæ vocationis effecit, ut quod multis signis, multis vocibus, multisque mysteriis per tot fuerat secula pronunciatum, in his diebus Evangelii non esset ambiguum, &c. Leo *P. de Nat. Serm.* 3.

1. Let us consider, that the *Nativity* doth import the completion of many ancient promises, predictions and prefigurations concerning it; that whereas all former dispensations of favour and mercy were as preludes or preambles to this; the *Old Law* did aim to represent it in its mysterious pomps; the chief of providential occurrences did intimate it; the Prophets often in their mystical raptures did allude to it, and often in clear terms did express it; the gracious designs of God, and the longing expectations of mankind being so variously implied in regard thereto; now all is come to be fulfilled, and perfected in most clear, most effectual, most substantial accomplishment: Now is sprung up that *seed of the woman*, which according to the first *Gospel* preached to *Abraham*, should *bruise the serpent's head*; Now is the mysti- Gen. 3. 15. 22. 18. cal *Isaac*, the miraculous *Son of promise* born; Now is that grant to *Abra-* Gal. 3. 8, 16. *ham*, *In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed*, made good; Now is Gen. 49. 10. *Shiloh come*, of whom *Jacob* foreboded, *unto him the gatherings of the people* Deut. 18. 15. *shall be*; Now is that *Oracle* of *Moses* more than verified, *A Prophet shall* Acts 3. 22. 7. 37. *the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like to me, him shall ye* Num. 24. 16. *hear*; Now *the star is come out of Jacob*, The vision whereof dazled *Balaam*, and stopped him from cursing that people, in which it should arise; Psal. 132. 11. Now is that oath discharged, to *David*, *Of the fruit of thy body will I set* Luke 1. 33. *upon thy throne*; Now those illustrious predictions of *Isay*, *There shall come* Is. 11. 1. 7. 14. *forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse*-----*A Virgin shall conceive and bear a son*; 9. 6. 59. 20. Rom. 11. 26. *to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be on his* Jer. 22. 5. *shoulders*; *There shall come out of Sion the deliverer, and shall turn ungodli-* 33. 15. Zech. 3. 8. *ness from Jacob*, are fully accomplished: *Now the righteous branch* (of 6. 12. which *Jeremy* and *Zachary* spake) is sprouted forth; And *Ezekiel's One* Ezek. 34. 23. *Shepherd*, *Daniel's Son of man*, *coming with the clouds of heaven*; *Micah's* 37. 25. Dan. 7. 13. *Ruler in Israel*, *whose goings forth have been from old*; *Haggay's Desire of all* Mic. 5. 2. *Nations*; *Malachy's Angel of the Covenant*, and *Son of Righteousness* have Matt. 2. 6. Hag. 2. 7. all in truth appeared: Now is that glorious *King* and *Captain* arrived, Mal. 3. 1. 4. 2. whom the *holy Oracles* do so magnificently describe; whom *Moses* and *Joshua*, whom *David* and *Solomon* in so many pat circumstances did fore- Ps. 2. 6. 45. 6. shadow; whom God would *set upon his holy hill of Sion*; *The sceptre of* 72. 11. Acts 15. 16. *whose Kingdom is a mighty sceptre*; who should *raise the tabernacle of David* Am. 9. 11. *that is fallen*; *before whom all Kings should fall down, and whom all nations* Luke 1. 13. *should serve*; who *should reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of whose* Dan. 7. 13. Mic. 4. 7. *Kingdom there shall be no end.*

Aug. *in* Ps 96. Now what can be more delightful, or satisfactory to our mind, than to reflect on this sweet harmony of things, this goodly correspondence between the old, and new World; wherein so pregnant evidences of God's chief attributes (of his goodness, of his wisdom, of his fidelity and constancy) all conspiring to our benefit do shine?

Non itaque novo consilio Deus rebus humanis, nec serâ miseratione consuluit, sed à constitutione mundi unam eandémque omnibus causam salutis instituit. Leo *P. de Nat. Serm.* 3.

Is it not pleasant to contemplate how provident God hath ever been for our welfare? what trains from the world's beginning, or ever since our unhappy fall he hath been laying to repair and restore us? how wisely he hath ordered all dispensations with a convenient reference and tendency to this masterpiece of grace? how steady he hath been in prosecuting his designs, and how faithful in accomplishing his promises concerning it?

If

If the *holy Patriarchs did see this day, and were glad*; if a glimpse thereof did cause their hearts * *to leap* with them; if its very dawn had on the Spirits of the *Prophets* so vigorous an influence; what comfort and complacence should we feel in this its real presence, and bright aspect on us? how sensibly should we be affected with this our happy advantage above them; the which our Lord himself then did teach us to estimate duly, when he said, *Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear; for verily I say unto you, that many Prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.* Jo. 8. 56. Mat. 13. 16, 17.

* Ἠγαλλιάσατο. *Magnam enim jocunditatem tunc carpebant ipsi Sancti Prophetæ, cùm ea videbant in Spiritu, non jam impleta, sed adhuc futura* —Aug. *in* Ps. 96.

2. Let us consider what alteration our Lord's coming did induce, by comparing the state of things before it to that which followed it. The old World then consisting of two parts, severed by a strong wall of partition, made up of difference in opinion, in practice, in affection, together with a strict prohibition to one of holding entercourse with the other. Eph. 2. 14. Acts 10. 28.

Of one, and that far the greater part, St. *Paul* hath given us these descriptions and characters; *They were aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenant, having no hope, and being without God in the world*; They were *by nature the children of wrath, and of disobedience*; They were *dead in trespasses and sins, walking according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air, the Spirit that worketh in the children of disobedience*; They did *walk in the vanity of their mind, having their understanding darkned, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their heart; and being past feeling, did give themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness*; They *had their conversation in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind*; being *foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another:* Such was the case (the dismally wretched case) of the *Gentile* world; such were our forefathers (such after them of course, by fatal consequence, should we have been) They were in their minds blinded with gross ignorance, and deluded with foul errours; they were in their wills and affections corrupted with great disorder, perverseness, sensuality, malice; they did in their conversation practice all sorts of impiety, iniquity and impurity; their conceptions of God were very unworthy, and their worship answerably such (full of sottish, savage, beastly superstitions) their principles were vain, and their life conformably dissolute; in short, they lived under the domination and influence of wicked Spirits; who thence are styled *Lords* and *Princes of this world, of this air, of this secular darkness:* Even of the wisest among them (the number of whom, notwithstanding the clatter their writings made, was very small and inconsiderable) of those who by the conduct of natural light strove to disengage themselves from vulgar mistakes and miscarriages, the case was little better; for even their minds after all their studious disquisitions and debates) proved dark and giddy; full of ignorance, of errour, of doubt in regard to the main points of religion, and of morality; some of them flatly denying the existence, or (which in effect is the same) the providence of God; the natural distinction between good and evil, the spiritual nature and future subsistence of our souls, the dispensation of rewards and punishments after

Eph. 2. 12. 2. 3. 2. 1. Eph. 4. 17— 2. 3.
Tit. 3. 3. Col. 3. 7. (Eph. 5. 8. Col. 2. 13. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 4. 1 Thess. 4. 5. 1 Pet. 4. 3. Gal. 4. 8. Rom. 1. 29.)
Eph. 6. 12. 2. 2. (John 12. 31. 14. 30. 16. 11. 2 Cor. 4. 4. 2 Tim. 2. 16. Col. 1. 13. 2. 15. Acts 26. 18.)

after this life; others wavering in doubt, or having but faint perſuaſions about theſe matters; few or none having clear notions, or ſteady opinions about any ſuch things; whence their practice, in correſpondence to their rules, muſt needs have been very looſe, or very lame; ſo that well might
Διαλογισμοῖς. Rom. 1. 21—28. our *Apoſtle* ſay of them, *They became vain in their reaſonings, and their fooliſh heart was darkned; profeſſing themſelves wiſe, they became fools; And as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do thoſe things which are not convenient.*

As for the other part, or little parcel of men, the condition of that was alſo very low; if the reſt of the world did lie in dark night, they did live
Col. 2. 17. Heb. 8. 5. 10 1. but in a dusky twilight; their Religion was much wrapt up in ſhadow and myſtery; they had but dilute *Idea's* of God's nature, and ſcant diſcoveries of his will; their law or rule of practice, in divers reſpects was de-
Rom. 8. 3. Gal. 3. 21. Heb. 7. 18, 19. fective and infirm; they were lock'd under the diſcipline of childiſh rudiments, ſuting their raw capacities, and under the bondage of ſlaviſh yokes befitting their ſtubborn diſpoſitions; which defailances in notion their practice commonly did out-ſtrip; being fond, corrupt, hypocritical, void of interiour, ſubſtantial and genuine righteouſneſs; as the old *Prophets* did often complain, and as our Lord, with his *Apoſtles*, did urge.

Such was the ſtate of the World in its parts, and joyntly of the whole it
Gal. 3. 22. may be ſaid, that it was *ſhut up under ſin* and guilt; under darkneſs and
Rom. 11. 32. weakneſs, under death and corruption, under ſorrow and woe: that no
3. 9, 19. full declaration of God's pleaſure, no clear overture of mercy, no expreſs grant of ſpiritual aid, no certain redemption from the filth, or the force of ſin, from the ſtroak of death, from due puniſhment hereafter; no encouragements ſutable to high devotion, or ſtrict virtue, were any-wiſe in a
Iſa. 9. 1. Mat. 4. 15. ſolemn way exhibited or diſpenſed before our *Lord's* appearance: ſo that well might all men be then repreſented as *Cimmerians, ſitting in darkneſs, in the region and ſhadow of death*; well may we ſuppoſe all ages foregoing to have teemed with hope, and deſire of this happy day; or that (as
Rom. 8. 22. St. *Paul* ſaith) *the whole creation* (that is, all mankind) *groneth together, and travelleth together until now*; as labouring with pangs of implicit deſire, or under a painful ſenſe of needing a *Saviour*; well might *Eſay* thus
Iſa. 60. 1. proclaim his coming; *Ariſe, ſhine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee; for behold darkneſs ſhall cover the land, and groſs darkneſs the people; but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee, and the Gentiles ſhall come to thy light, and Kings to the*
Pſal. 98. 2. *brightneſs of thy riſing*: for, Now *the Lord hath made known his ſalvation, his righteouſneſs hath he openly ſhewed in the ſight of the heathen; The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth do ſee the ſalvation of our God.*

1 Theſſ. 5. 5. (2 Cor. 3. 18 4. 6.) Heb. 8. 11. Jer. 31. 33. Now *we are all children of the light, and of the day*; all *do know God from the leaſt to the greateſt*; the rareſt, the deepeſt notions are grown common and obvious; every Child is inſtructed in the higheſt truths, every Peaſant is become a great Philoſopher, (beyond *Ariſtotle*, or *Plato*, or *Epictetus*) skilful of the beſt knowledge, able to direct his life in the beſt way, capable of obtaining the beſt good.

Acts 2. 17. Joel. 2. 16. Tit. 2. 11. Luke 24. 47. Now the Spirit of God (the ſpirit of direction, of ſuccour, of comfort ſpiritual) is poured upon all fleſh. *Now the grace of God, that bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared to all men*; fully inſtructing them in their duty, and ſtrongly enabling them to perform it, freely offering them mercy, mightily encouraging them with hopes of moſt bleſſed rewards.

Now *Jew* and *Gentile* are re-united and compacted in one body; walking in the ſame light, and under obligation to the ſame laws; ſharing in a com-

common redemption and inheritance; being inseparably linked together with the bands of faith, of charity, of spiritual fraternity; thus *old things are passed away, behold all things are become new*, in virtue and consequence of our Lord's appearance: In contemplation of which so great, so general, so happy a change, how can we forbear to rejoyce? Eph. 3. 6. 2. 15. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Δόξα Θεοῦ. Heb. 9. 10.

But farther, that we may yet more nearly touch the point:

3. Let us consider that the Nativity of our Lord is a grand instance, a pregnant evidence, a *rich* earnest of Almighty God's very great affection and benignity toward mankind: for, *In this* (saith St. *John*) *the love of God was manifested, that God sent his only begotten Son into the world*; and *Through the tender mercies of our God* (sang old *Zachary*) *the day spring from on high did visit us*: This indeed is the peculiar experiment, wherein that most divine attribute did shew and signalize it self. The power of God doth brightly shine in the creation, the wisdom of God may clearly be discerned in the government of things; but the incarnation of God is that work, is that dispensation of grace, wherein the divine goodness doth most conspicuously display it self: How indeed possibly could God have demonstrated a greater excess of kindness toward us, than by thus for our sake and good sending his dearest Son out of his bosom into this sordid and servile estate, subjecting him to all the infirmities of our frail nature, exposing him to the worst inconveniences of our low condition? what expressions can signifie, what comparisons can set out the stupendious vastness of this kindness? If we should imagine, that a great prince should put his only son (a son most lovely, and worthily most beloved) into rags, should dismiss him from his Court, should yield him up into the hardest slavery, merely to the intent, that he thereby might redeem from captivity the meanest and basest of his subjects, how faint a resemblance would this be of that immense goodness, of that incomparable mercy, which in this instance the King of all the World hath declared toward us his poor vassals, his indeed unworthy rebels? 1 John 4. 9. Joh. 3. 16, 17. Eph. 2. 4. Luke 1. 78.

Apparuerat antè potentia in rerum creatione, apparebat sapientia in earum gubernatione, sed benignitas misericordiæ nunc maximè apparuit in humanitate. Bern. *de Nat. Serm.* 1.

Semper quidem diversis modis, multisque mensuris humano generi bonitas divina consuluit, & plurima providentiæ suæ munera omnibus retrò seculis clementer impartiit; sed in novissimis temporibus omnem abundantiam solitæ benignitatis excessit; quando in Christo ipsa ad peccatores misericordia, ipsa ad errantes veritas, ipsa ad mortuos vita descendit, &c. P. Leo *M. de Nat. Serm.* 4.

(Psal. 36. 6. 108. 4.)

And what greater reason of joy can there be, than such an assurance of his love, on whose love all our good dependeth, in whose love all our felicity consisteth? what can be more delightful than to view the face of our Almighty Lord so graciously smiling upon us?

Should we not be extremely glad, should we not be proud, if our earthly prince by any singular mark would express himself kindly affected to us? how much more should we resent such a testimony of God's favour; how worthily may our souls be transported with a sense of such affection?

4. We may consider our Lord's nativity, as not only expressing simple good-will, but implying a perfect reconciliation, a firm peace, a steady friendship established between God and us: or that it did not only proceed from love, but did also produce love to us. We did stand at a great distance, in estrangement, yea in enmity toward God; our first parents had by presumptuous disobedience revolted from him; and we insisting on the footsteps of their Apostasie continued in *defiance of him*; *all men had sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God*; *There was not a righteous man upon earth, that did good, and sinned not*; whence unavoidably the wrath of the most holy God was incensed, the justice of the most righteous Lord was engaged against us; thence did issue a sad doom, thence a just sentence of capital punishment was denounced on us; no pretence of favour, no Rom. 3. 24. 9. 23. Gal. 3. 22. Eccl. 7. 20. Leo *de Nat. Serm.* 2.

over-

overture of peace, no hope of redreſs did then appear; we no-wiſe being able to expunge our guilt, to repair our offences, to recover out of that corruption in the mind and will, which did ſeal us up to ruine, indiſpoſing us either to find, or to entertain mercy; But our Lord's coming did appeaſe that anger, did mollify that juſtice, did ſuſpend that condemnation, did cloſe the breach, and *ſlay the enmity*; *God* (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh) *ſending his Son in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for ſin, did condemn ſin in the fleſh*: for, how can God now avert his face from us, whom his only dear Son hath vouchſafed to make and own for his brethren? how can he look with an eye of diſpleaſure on that nature, wherewith that Son of his love ſtandeth clothed before him? how can he abide offended with our race, in which pure innocence and perfect obedience are found; he now appearing with us, and for us, in whom no the ſtricteſt juſtice, no the ſhrewdeſt malice can deſcry any fault or blemiſh; *in whom* therefore *God is* throughly *well-pleaſed*? Since we have *Emanuel, God with us,---God manifeſted in our fleſh. The Lord our righteouſneſs* partaker of our infirmity, interceſſour and advocate for his own fleſh and blood, ready to do and ſuffer whatever God pleaſeth to require on our behalf, how can God be againſt us? Shall God and man perſiſt at diſtance or diſaffection, who are ſo cloſely related, who are indeed ſo intimately united in one perſon? ſhall heaven and earth retain enmity, which have ſo kindly embraced, and kiſſed each other; ſince *truth hath ſprouted from the earth, and righteouſneſs hath looked down from heaven*? ſhall the war go on, when the great Mediatour and Umpire of peace is *come*; *preaching peace to them that are afar off and to them that are near*? Can death any longer reign over us, or our diſgrace and miſery continue, now that *the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, the Captain of ſalvation* doth appear for our relief?

Now then what can be more worthy of joy, than ſuch a bleſſed turn of affairs? how can we otherwiſe than with exceeding gladneſs ſolemnize ſuch a peace? a peace accorded with him, who in forces ſo infinitely doth overmatch us; who at his pleaſure can utterly quell us; who with the greateſt eaſe, with leſs than a word of his mouth, can daſh us to nothing, or hurl us down into an abyſs of remedileſs woe? how can we avoid being extremely ſatisfied at the recovery of his favour and friendſhip, which alone can be the foundation of our ſafety and welfare, which is the ſole fountain of all good, of all comfort, of all felicity?

5. Our Lord's nativity doth infer a great honour, and a high preferment to us: no-wiſe indeed could mankind be ſo dignified, or our nature ſo advanced as hereby: No wiſdom can deviſe a way beyond this, whereby God ſhould honour his moſt ſpecial favourites, or promote them to a nearneſs unto himſelf. For hence we become allied to God, in a moſt ſtrait affinity, his eternal Son being made our brother; hence as touching the blood-royal of heaven we do in dignity o'er-top all the creation; ſo that what the *Pſalmiſt* uttered concerning man, is verified in the moſt comprehenſive ſence, *Thou haſt crowned him with glory and honour, and haſt ſet him over the works of thy hands; thou haſt put all things in ſubjection under his feet*: for now the Son of Man, being alſo the Son of God,

Ἀδύναλον γάρ ἦν τῇ φύσει λογικῇ ὄσῃ, ἢ ἐκτὸς ἁμαρτησίας, ἢ κατὰ κατάδικην θανάτε γενομένῃ ἑαυτῷ ἀνακαλέσασθαι εἰς ἐλευθερίαν. Ath. p. 638

Ἀδύναλον ἑτέρως τὰ καθαρσὸν ἢ ἀναμάρτηλον ἐπ' ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως παραδεχθῆναι, εἰ μὴ θεὸς ἐν σαρκὶ πισεύοιτο εἶ, ὁ τὴν ἀναμάρτηλον δικαιοσύνην εἰς κόσμον εἰσαγαγών, &c. Ath. *de Incarn. Verbi.*

Eph. 2. 15, 16,

Rom. 8. 3. 2 Cor. 5. 19.

Τὸ τῦ Ἀδὰμ σύμπλωμα εἰς ἀσύγκρειτον ἀνάσημα χειρὸς ἀνεσήσατο, ἐν ὁμοιώματι σαρκὸς ἁμαρτίας ἀφθὰς, ἢ καταπείνας τὴν ἁμαρτίαν ἐν τῇ σαρκί. Ath. p. 620.

Εἰ μὴ ἐν τῇ ἁμαρτησίᾳ φύσει ἡ ἀναμαρτησία ὤφθη, πῶς καθηκέδη ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῇ σαρκί. *Id.* p. 368.

(1 Pet. 1. 19. Heb. 7. 26.)
John. 14. 30. ——ἐν ἐμοὶ ἐκ ἔχει ἐδέν.
John 19. 6. ——ἐκ εὑρίσκω ἐν αὐτῷ αἰτίαν.
Matt. 3. 17. 1 Tim. 3. 16.
Jer. 23. 6. 33. 16.

Pſal. 85. 11.

Iſa. 9. 6.
Acts 10. 36.
Eph. 2. 17.
1 Cor. 2. 8.

Eph. 3. 10, 17.

(Ἡνωμένῳ σαρκὶ χ̄ι πνεῦμα, ἡμῖν ἢ χ̄ι σάρκα. Ath p. 612.)

Pſal. 8. 5.
Heb. 2. 7.
Col. 2. 10.
Eph. 2. 22.

God, is *the Head of all principality and power*, is *the Lord of all things*, is the Sovereign Prince of all the world; is placed *far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.* That is a peculiar honour, to which the higheſt Angels cannot pretend; for, *he took not the nature of Angels, but he took the ſeed of Abraham*; whence thoſe noble creatures are become in a manner inferiour to poor us; and according to juſt obligation, willingly to adore our nature; for, *when God brought his firſt begotten Son into the world, he ſaid, Let all the Angels of God worſhip him:* Is not indeed our fleſh become adorable, as the true *Shechinah*, as the everlaſting place of the ſupreme Majeſty, *wherein the fulneſs of the God-head dwelleth bodily*; as the moſt holy ſhrine of the divinity; as the Orb of *inacceſſible light*; as more than all this, if more could be expreſſed, or if we could expound that text, *the word was made fleſh, and dwelt in us?* May not our ſoul worthily claim the higheſt reſpect, all whoſe faculties (being endewed with unmeaſurable participations of the Holy Spirit) have been turned to a perfect harmony with the all-wiſe underſtanding, and the moſt pure will of God? yea, which hath been admitted into the neareſt conſortſhip, into the ſtricteſt union with the eternal Word; hath become an ingredient of him, who is *the wiſedom, and the power of God?* It was a great dignity that man ſhould be made according to the image of God, but it is a more ſublime glory, that God ſhould be made after the image of man, καὶ πάντα ὁμοιωθῆς, *being made like to us in all things*, bating only ſin, which is no part of us, but an unnatural excreſcence, or a deflection from our nature: How could we be ſo raiſed up to God as by his thus ſtooping down to us? what can be imagined more honourable to us, than that God ſhould deem us worthy of ſuch condeſcenſion? this, this indeed is our exaltation, that God for us ſhould expreſs not only ſo vaſt charity, but ſo prodigious humility.

Acts 10. 36. Eph. 1 21. Phil. 2. 9. 1 Pet. 3. 22. Heb. 2. 17. Heb. 1. 6. Ἡ σαρξ ἐθεοποιήθη. Ath. p. 597. Col. 2. 9. *Totum corpus implet tota divinitas.* Leo de Nat. Ser. 10. John 1. 14. 3. 34. 1 Cor. 1. 24. *Qui tam origini humanæ multum dederit, quòd nos ad imaginem ſuam fecit, reparationi noſtræ longè amplius tribuit, cùm ſervilis formæ ipſe ſe Dominus coaptavit.* Leo de Nat. Serm. 4. Heb. 2. 17. *Exultent ergo in laudem Dei corda credentium, & mirabilia ejus confiteantur filii hominum, quoniam, in hoc præcipuè Dei opere humilitas noſtra cognoſcit, quanti eam ſuus conditor æſtimârit.* Leo Serm. 4.

And is it not good matter of joy to be thus highly graced? when are men better pleaſed, than when they are preferred; then eſpecially, when from the meaneſt ſtate, *from the dunghil*, or *from the duſt*, they *are raiſed to be ſet among Princes*, and *made to inherit the throne of glory?* wherefore this being our caſe, that we ſons of earth, *children of corruption*, and *brethren of worms* (in *Job*'s ſtyle) we exiles of paradiſe, we heirs of death and miſery; we, that by our nature are the loweſt of all intelligent creatures, that by our merits were debaſed *beneath the Beaſts that periſh*, that we are aſſumed to ſuch relations, that we are ennobled to ſuch a pitch, that our nature hath mounted ſo high above all creatures, with what enlargement of heart ſhould we entertain a diſpenſation ſo wonderful; how welcome ſhould that day be, which doth introduce it?

Pſal. 113. 7, 8. 1 Sam. 2. 8. Job 17. 14. Pſal. 39. 12. *Hic infirmitatis noſtræ ſuſpiciens conditionem, propter quos ad inferna deſcendit eoſdem in cœleſtibus collocavit.* Leo de Nat. 5.

6. Finally, if we ſurvey all principal cauſes of joy, and ſpecial exultation, we ſhall find them all concurring in this event.

Is a meſſenger of good news embraced with joy? Behold the great Evangeliſt is come, with his mouth full of news, moſt admirable, moſt acceptable: He, who doth acquaint us, that God is well pleaſed, that man is reſtored, that *the adverſary is caſt down*, that paradiſe is ſet open, and immortality retrieved; that truth and righteouſneſs, peace and joy, ſalvation and happineſs are deſcended, and come to dwell on earth; He of whom the Prophet told, *How beautiful upon the Mountains are the feet of him,*

Apoc. 12. 10. John 14. 30. Luke 10. 18. Iſa. 52. 7.

Nah. 1. 15. Rom. 10. 15. *him that bringeth good tidings; that publiſheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publiſheth ſalvation, that ſaith unto Sion, Thy God reigneth*; He who doth himſelf thus declare the drift and purport of his meſſage;

Iſa. 61. 1, 2. Luke 4. 18. *The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath ſent me to bind up the broken hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and opening of the priſon to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, to comfort all that mourn.*

Is the birth of a Prince by honeſt ſubjects to be commemorated with

Iſa. 11. 2. Pſal. 45. & 72. joyous feſtivity? Behold a Prince born to all the world; a Prince undertaking to rule mankind with ſweeteſt clemency, and exact juſtice; a Prince

Jer. 23. 6. bringing with him all peace and proſperity; *in whoſe days Judah ſhall be ſaved, and Iſrael ſhall dwell ſafely*; who ſhall protect us in aſſured reſt and ſafety; ſhall ſecure us from all danger and miſchief; ſhall atchieve moſt gallant and glorious exploits in our behalf; ſhall vanquiſh all the enemies of our welfare, ſhall reſcue us from the worſt ſlaveries and miſchiefs;

Luke 1. 71, 74. ſhall ſettle us in a moſt free and happy ſtate: He *who bringeth ſalvation from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate us,* that *being delivered from the hands of our enemies, we might ſerve him without fear, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him, all the days of our life:* Now therefore it is

Apoc. 19. 6. 11. 15. ſeaſonable to cry out, *Allelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth, let us be glad and rejoyce, and give honour to him.*

Iſa. 9. 3. May victory worthily beget exultation? See the invincible warriour

Apoc. 6. 2. doth iſſue forth into the field *conquering and to conquer:* He that ſhall baffle

Luke 11. 22. and rifle *the ſtrong one*, our formidable adverſary; that ſhall rout all the

Col. 2. 15. forces of hell, and *triumph over* the powers of darkneſs; that utterly ſhall

(John 6. 33.) defeat ſin, and ſlay death it ſelf; and ſhall ſubdue the world, and lay all things proſtrate at his feet; behold the *Captain of our ſalvation*; arrayed with glorious humility, and armed with a mighty patience; See, the great

1 John 3. 8. blow it ſtruck, at which the infernal powers do ſtagger; the Devil's pride

Rom. 16. 20. and envy are abaſed; all the enemies are amazed, are daunted, are confounded at his preſence; they cannot ſtand, they break, they ſcatter, they flee before him.

Is a proclamation of peace, after rueful wars, to be ſolemnized with alacrity? Behold then everlaſting peace between heaven and earth, a general

Eph. 2. 17. peace among men, a ſound peace between each good man and himſelf are

(Iſa. 57. 2.) ſettled and publiſhed; the illuſtrious herald, the noble hoſtage of them is

Acts 10. 36. Iſa. 9. 6. arrived; *the prince of peace* himſelf doth bring all peace unto us.

Is ſatisfaction of deſire, and hope very pleaſant? Behold the *deſire of all nations, the expectation of Iſrael*, he for whom the whole creation groaned, is come.

Is recovery of liberty delectable to poor ſlaves and captives? Behold, the *Redeemer is come out of Sion*; the pretious ranſome, ſufficient to purchaſe the freedom of many worlds, is laid down; unblemiſhed innocence, purity

(Gal. 3. 22.) and perfection appearing in humane nature have procured a releaſment for us; have unlocked the priſon of ſin detaining us, have knocked off the ſhackles of guilt ſorely pinching and galling our conſciences; have wreſted us from the hands of thoſe proud Maſters, who claimed a right, who exerciſed a moſt tyrannous power over us; He is come, that *proclaimeth liberty to the captives, and opening of the priſon to them that are bound*; The time is come of which the Prophet foretold -----*The ranſomed of the Lord ſhall return, and come to Sion with ſongs, and everlaſting joy upon their heads; they ſhall obtain joy and gladneſs; and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall flee away.*

Nam ſuperbia hoſtis antiqui non immeritò ſibi in omnes homines jus tyrannicum vindicabat nec indebito dominatu premebat, quos à mandato Dei ſpontaneos in obſequium ſuæ voluntatis alleverat. Leo de Nativ. Serm. 2.

Luke 4. 18. Iſa. 35. 10.

Is

Is an overture of health acceptable to ſick and languiſhing perſons? Behold the great Phyſician, endewed with admirable skill, and furniſhed with infallible remedies, is come, to cure us of our maladies, and eaſe us of our pains; to bind up our wounds, and to pour in balm (the moſt ſovereign balm of his own blood) into them; to free us not only from all mortiferous diſeaſes, but from mortality it ſelf: He, who was *ſent to bind up and heal the broken-hearted*; He, who *himſelf took our infirmities, and bare our ſickneſſes*; He, of whom the Prophet (in relation to corporal, and much more to ſpiritual infirmities) did foretel; ----- *God will come and ſave you; then the eyes of the blind ſhall be opened, and the ears of the deaf ſhall be unſtopped; then ſhall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb ſhall ſing*; He whoſe art no diſeaſe can reſiſt, who is able to cure our moſt deſperate, our moſt inveterate diſtempers; to heal the corruption and impotency of our nature, to avoid the ignorances and errours of our underſtanding, to correct the ſtupidity of our hearts, the perverſeneſs of our wills, the diſorder of our affections; to mitigate our anguiſh of conſcience, and cleanſe our ſores of guilt; by various efficacious medicines, by the wholeſome inſtructions of his doctrine, by the powerful inſpirations of his grace, by the refreſhing comforts of his Spirit, by the ſalutary virtue of his merits and ſufferings.

Luke 10. 33. Matt. 9. 12. 1 Pet. 2. 24. Iſa. 61. 1. Luke 4. 18. Iſa. 53. 4. Mat. 8. 17. Iſa. 35. 5. Mat. 11. 5. Luke. 5. 17. (John 12. 40. Acts 10. 38. Luke 10 34.) (Ezek. 36. 25. Eph. 2. 10.)

Is mirth ſeaſonable on the day of marriage? Behold the greateſt wedding that ever was, is this day ſolemnized: heaven and earth are contracted; divinity is eſpouſed to humanity; a ſacred, an indiſſoluble knot is tyed between God and man, *The bridegroom is come forth out of his chamber (Verbum Dei de utero Virginali)* clad in his nuptial garment of fleſh, and ready to wed the Church his beloved Spouſe; *Let us therefore be glad and rejoyce; for the marriage of the lamb is come, and his wife hath made her ſelf ready.*

In natali Domini quaſi in ruptiis ſpiritalibus ſponſæ ſuæ Eccleſiæ Chriſtus adjunctus eſt ——— tunc proceſſit ſponſus de thalamo ſuo, hoc eſt, Dei de utero virginali. Aug. *de temp. Serm.* 2.

Ἡ παστὰς ἐν ᾗ ὁ λόγος ἐνυμφεύσατο τὴν σάρκα Procl. *in* Eph. p. 1.

Joel 2. 16. Apoc. 19. 7.

Is the acceſs of a good friend to be received with chearful gratulation? Behold the deareſt and beſt friend of all mankind (moſt able, moſt willing, moſt ready to perform all good offices; to impart wholeſome advice, needful aid, ſweet converſe, and ſeaſonable conſolation) is arrived to viſit us, to ſojourn with us, to dwell with us for ever.

Is opportune relief grateful to perſons in a forlorn condition, pinched with extreme want, or plunged in any hard diſtreſs? Behold, a merciful, a bountiful, a mighty ſaviour and ſuccourer, undertaking *to comfort all that mourn*; inviting all ſuch to receive from him a plentiful ſupply for their needs, a comfortable eaſe in their preſſures, a happy riddance from their calamities; who *crieth* aloud, *If any one thirſteth, let him come to me and drink*; *Come to me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt.*

Ἐκραξε, John 7. 37. Iſa. 55. 1. 44. 3. Mat. 11. 28.

Is the Sun-riſing comfortable, after a tedious, darkſome and cold night? See, *the Sun of righteouſneſs is riſen with healing in his wings*, diſpenſing all about his pleaſant rays, and kindly influences: *The day-ſpring from on high hath viſited us*; diffuſing an univerſal light upon the ſouls of men, whereby the night of ignorance is diſpelled, the ſpectres of errour are vaniſhed, the miſts of doubt are ſcattered; whereby we clearly and aſſuredly diſcern all truths of importance to us, and worthy of our knowledge; concerning the nature and attributes, the works and providence, the will and pleaſure of God; concerning our ſelves, our natural and original, our duty and intereſt, our future ſtate, and final doom: *Our light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon us*; *the light of the world, the true light, enlightning every man*;

Mal. 4. 2. Luke 1. 78, 79. Iſa. 60. 1. John 8. 12. 9. 5. 1. 9.

Luke .6. .7. *man*; by whose lustre *all flesh may see the salvation of God*, and *which guideth our feet in the way of peace*, doth visibly shine forth upon us.

Never indeed did heaven with so fair and serene a countenance smile upon earth, as then it did, when this (ἀστὴρ παμφεγὴς τῆ ἡμέρᾳ,) *bright and morning-star* did spring up above our horizon, bringing this goodly day; and with it shedding life and chear among us.

Apoc. 22. 26.

From this auspicious day did commence the revocation of that fatal curse, by which we were expelled from paradise, adjudged to death, and committed to hell; from thence we became re-instated in a condition of hope, and in a fair capacity of happiness; from thence is to be dated a return of joy into this Region of disconsolateness. In this nativity mankind was born, or did revive from manifold deaths; from a legal, a moral, a natural, an eternal death; from lying dead in irreparable guilt, and under an insuperable power of sin; from having our bodies irrecoverably dissolved by corruption, and our souls immersed into that *second* more ghastly *death*, of perpetual incurable anguish.

It is the birth-day of the Church.

Generatio enim Christi origo est populi Christiani, & natalis capitis natalis est corporis. P. Leo *de Nat. Serm. 6.*

Sicut cum Christo in passione crucifixi, in resurrectione resuscitati, in ascensione ad dextram Patris collocati ità cum ipso sumus in hac nativitate congeniti. Ibid.

It is in effect therefore the birth-day of the world; the beginning of a new, better, eternal life to men, (offered to all, and effectually bestowed on those, who will embrace it) which we now do celebrate: all reason therefore we have to rejoyce most heartily, and most abundantly; As the goods thence accruing to us are in multitude innumerable, in quality inestimable, in duration immense; so in some correspondence should our Joy be very intense, very effuse, very stable; The contemplation of them should infuse somewhat of that *unspeakable joy*, whereof St. *Peter* speaketh; we should *be filled* (according to St. *Paul*'s expression) *with all joy and peace in believing* them; we should *hold fast* (as the Apostle to the *Hebrews* adviseth) *the confidence and rejoycing of hope*, grounded on them, *firm to the end.*

Χαρᾷ ἀνεκλαλήτῳ. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Rom. 15. 13. Phil. 1. 25. Heb. 3. 6. Rom. 12. 12.

Having so many, so great causes of joy, are we not very stupid, are we not strangely cross and perverse if we neglect so pleasant a duty?

To conclude, Of all the days that rise upon us this undoubtedly is the Queen, crowned by God's own hand with sovereign blessings; God hath avowed it to be the day of his peculiar making, and therefore of our special rejoycing; for thus of old the inspired *Psalmist* did teach and exhort us to keep *Christmas*, *This is the day, which the Lord hath made, let us rejoyce and be glad therein.*

Psal. 118. 24. Mat. 21. 42. 21. 9. Acts 4. 11. 1 Pet. 2. 7.

SER-

Sermon XLIV.

The Sufferings of Chriſt foretold in the Old Teſtament.

ACTS III. 18.

But thoſe things, which God before had ſhewed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer, he hath ſo fulfilled.

MANY good arguments there are, different in kind, which conſpire to perſuade the truth of our religion; ſuch as are the intrinſick reaſonableneſs, excellency and perfection of its doctrine; the miraculous works performed in atteſtation thereto; the ſpecial favour of providence declared in the ſupport and propagation thereof; but upon no other ground do the Scriptures ſo much build its truth, and our obligation to embrace it, as upon the exact correſpondence and conformity thereof to all the ancient Scriptures, which did foreſhew or foretell its revelation and introduction into the World; to thoſe eſpecially which deſcribed the perſonal characters, circumſtances and performances of our Lord: to this *our Lord* in his diſcourſes, and diſputes with incredulous people, referred them; *Search the Scriptures*, (ſaid he) *becauſe in them ye expect to have eternal life* (that is, to find the true way of ſaving truth leading thereto) *and thoſe are they which teſtify of me*; by this he inſtructed and convicted his Diſciples; *beginning from Moſes and from all the Prophets he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himſelf:* and, *Theſe* (ſaid he to them preſently before his departure) *are the words which I ſpake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things muſt be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moſes, and in the Prophets, and in the Pſalms concerning me:* This the *Apoſtles* in all their preaching (whereby they taught, proved and perſuaded, the Chriſtian doctrine) did chiefly inſiſt upon; *Moſes* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *truly ſaid unto the Fathers, yea, and all the Prophets from Samuel, and thoſe that follow after, as many as have ſpoken, have likewiſe foretold of theſe days*; and, *To him* (ſaith he again) *give all the Prophets witneſs, that through his name whoſoever believeth in him ſhall receive remiſſion of ſins.* And, of St. *Paul* 'tis ſaid, that *he mightily convinced the Jews------ ſhewing by the Scriptures, that Jeſus was the Chriſt*; and ---- *he expounded, and teſtified the Kingdom of God, perſuading them concerning Jeſus, both out of the law of Moſes, and out of the Prophets*; thus the chief *Apoſtles* and founders of our religion in their publick diſcourſes; and in their *Epiſtles*, they obſerve the ſame method; as particularly aſſerting Chriſtian doctrines and duties by the teſtimonies of prophetical Scriptures, ſo generally affirming our religion to be chiefly grounded on them; *of which Salvation* (ſaith St. *Peter*, concerning the ſalvation exhibited by the Go-

Joh. 5. 39.
Luke 24. 27. 22. 37. 1. 70. 24. 44.
Acts 3. 22, 24.
Acts 10. 43. 13. 27. 15. 15. 24. 14.
John 1. 45.
Acts 18. 28. 28. 23.
1 Pet. 1. 10.

Gospel) *the Prophets did inquire, and search diligently, who propheſied of the grace to come unto you*; and (in regard to the conviction of others) he ſeems to prefer the atteſtation of this kind before the ſpiritual revelation immediately made to the *Apoſtles*; for having ſpoken of it, he ſubjoyns,
2 Pet. 1. 19. ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον. *We have alſo a more ſure word of prophecy, whereunto ye do well, that ye do take heed, as unto a light that ſhineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-ſtar ariſe in your hearts.* And,
Rom. 16. 26, 26. 1. 2. St. *Paul* ſaith, that *the myſtery which was kept ſecret ſince the world began, was then made manifeſt, and by the prophetical ſcriptures, according to the commandment of the everlaſting God, made known to all nations, to the*
1 Tim. 3. 15. *obedience of faith*; and, *The Holy Writings* (he telleth *Timothy*) *were able to make him wiſe to the ſalvation*, which is, *by the faith of Jeſus Chriſt*; that is, they were able to ſhew, and perſuade to him the truth of Chriſtianity, which promiſeth ſalvation to all that heartily embrace it, and obſerve its Laws.

Such a ſtreſs was laid upon this probation by the *founders* of our Religion; and no wonder; for that is not only extremely forcible in it ſelf, but hath ſome particular uſes, and ſome peculiar advantages beyond others. The fore-knowledge of future contingent events (ſuch as were many of thoſe concerning our Saviour, depending upon the freeſt acts of humane will) as it is for the manner of attaining it moſt incomprehenſible to us, ſo it is moſt proper to God, and by all men ſo acknowledged; future contingencies being ſecrets, which no man, no angel, no creature can dive into, they being not diſcernible in their cauſes, which are indeterminate; nor in themſelves, who are finite.) The prediction therefore of ſuch events could not otherwiſe than proceed from his pleaſure; neither could he yield it in way of favour and approbation to that, which was not perfectly true, and good: This way therefore doth abſolutely confirm the truth and goodneſs of Chriſtian doctrine; it withal manifeſts the great worth and weight thereof, as implying the particular regard and care God had of it, deſigning it ſo anciently, laying trains of providence toward it, and preparing ſuch evidences for the confirmation thereof; it together into the bargain maintaineth the truth of the *Jewiſh* diſpenſation, the ſincerity of the ancient Patriarchs and Prophets, and the vigilant care the divine goodneſs hath always had over the ſtate of Religion; and toward the welfare of mankind; never leaving it deſtitute of ſome immediate revelations from himſelf. It had a peculiar aptitude to convert the *Jews*, who were poſſeſſed with a full perſuaſion concerning the veracity and ſanctity of their ancient Prophets; and could not therefore doubt concerning the truth of that, which appeared conformable to that, which they had foretold ſhould be declared, and diſpenſed for their benefit. This probation alſo hath this advantage, that it ſingly taken doth ſuffice to convince; whereas others can hardly do it otherwiſe than in conjunction with one another, and eſpecially with its aid: for the goodneſs of the doctrine may be conteſted in ſome points, and however good it ſeem, it may be imputed to humane invention: ſtrange effects may be deemed producible by other cauſes beſide divine power; and they may be ſuffered to be done for other ends than for confirmation of truth; they are alſo commonly tranſcient, and thence moſt liable to doubt: Providence alſo is in many caſes ſo myſterious, and unſearchable, that the incredulous will never allow any inferences to be drawn from it: But the plain correſpondence of events to the ſtanding records of ancient Prophecies (obvious, and conſpicuous to every one, that will conſult and compare them) concerning a perſon to be ſent by God, who ſhould have ſuch circumſtances, and be ſo qualified; who ſhould in God's name preach

preach ſuch doctrines, and perform ſuch works, is a proof which alone may aſſure any man, that ſuch a perſon doth come from God, and is in what he declareth or doth approve by him: no counterfeiting can here find place; no evaſion can be deviſed from the force of this proof.

This way therefore of diſcourſe our *Lord* and his *Apoſtles* (whoſe buſineſs it was by the moſt proper and effectual methods to ſubdue the reaſons of men to the *obedience of faith*, and entertainment of Chriſtian truth) did eſpecially uſe; as generally in reſpect to all things concerning our *Lord*, ſo particularly in regard to his paſſion: declaring it to happen punctually according to what had been foreſeen by God, and thence foreſhewed by his Prophets, rightly underſtood; *He took the twelve* (ſaith St. *Luke* of our *Lord*) *and ſaid unto them*; *behold, we go up to Jeruſalem, and all things that are written by the Prophets concerning the Son of man ſhall be accompliſhed*; *for he ſhall be delivered unto the Gentiles, and ſhall be mocked, and ſpitefully entreated, and ſpitted on*; *and they ſhall ſcourge him, and put him to death*, And again, after his reſurrection, he thus reproves his Diſciples; *O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe all that the Prophets have ſpoken*; *ought not Chriſt to have ſuffered theſe things, and to enter into his glory?* they did not then (partly being blinded with prejudice, partly not having uſed due induſtry, and perhaps not excelling in natural capacity, however not yet being ſufficiently enlightned by divine grace) apprehend, or diſcern, that according to the prophetical inſtructions our Lord was to ſuffer; but afterward, when he had *opened their underſtanding, that they might underſtand the Scriptures*, they did ſee, and ſpecially urge this point: then Saint *Peter* declared, that *the Spirit of Chriſt, which was in the Prophets did teſtifie beforehand the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the glory that ſhould follow*; then it was their manner to *reaſon* (as is ſaid of St. *Paul*) *out of the Scriptures, opening, and alledging, that Chriſt muſt needs have ſuffered*; *ſaying none other things, than thoſe, which the Prophets and Moſes did ſay ſhould come, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer*; *delivering firſt of all, that Chriſt died for our ſins, according to the Scriptures*: this is that which in my Text St. *Peter* doth inſiſt upon, affirming about the paſſion of *Chriſt*, that it not only had been predicted by one, or more, but foreſhewed by an univerſal conſent of all the *Prophets*; to illuſtrate and confirm which aſſertion of his is the ſcope of our preſent diſcourſe; to perform which, after having briefly touched the ſtate of the matter in hand, we ſhall apply our ſelves.

Luke 18. 31. Luke 24. 25, 26. 46. Luke 24. 45. 1 Pet. 1. 11. Acts 17. 2. 26. 22. 1 Cor. 15. 3.

That the *Meſſias* was to come in an humble and homely manner (without appearance of worldly ſplendour, or grandeur) that he was to converſe among men in a ſtate of external poverty, and meanneſs; that he was to cauſe offences, and find oppoſitions in his proceedings; that he was to be repulſed and rejected, to be hated and ſcorned, to be diſgracefully and harſhly treated, to be grievouſly perſecuted and afflicted; yea that at laſt he was to be proſecuted, condemned and executed as a malefactor, is a truth indeed, which the *Jews* (although they firmly believed, and earneſtly expected the coming of a *Meſſias*) did not, and indeed were hardly capable to entertain. It was a Point repugnant to the whole frame of their conceits; yea, inconſiſtent with the nature and drift of their Religion, as they did underſtand it; for their Religion in its ſurface (deeper than which their groſs fancy could not penetrate) did repreſent earthly wealth, dignity and proſperity, as things moſt highly valuable; did propound them as very proper, if not as the ſole rewards of piety and obedience; did imply conſequently the poſſeſſion of them to be certain arguments of the divine goodwill, and regard: they could not therefore but eſteem poverty, affliction and diſgrace as curſes from heaven, and plain indications of God's diſ-

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favour toward those on whom they fell: they particularly are said to have conceited, that to be rich was a needful qualification for a Prophet (no less needful, than to be of a good complexion; of a good capacity, of a good conversation and life) *Spiritus Dei non requiescit super pauperem, The Spirit of God doth not rest upon a poor man*; (that is, no special communications of grace, or of wisdom and goodness, are by God ever afforded to persons of a low and afflicted condition) being a *maxim* which they had framed, and which currently passed among them: that he therefore, who was designed to be so notable a Prophet; who was to have the honour of being so special an instrument of promoting God's service and glory; who therefore should be so highly favoured by God, that he should appear despicable, and undergo great afflictions, was a notion that could not but seem very absurd; that could not otherwise than be very abominable to them. They had farther (in congruity to these prejudices, [x]abated by that extreme self-love, and self-flattery, which were peculiar to that Nation) raised in themselves a strong opinion, that the *Messias* was to come in a great visible state and power; to atchieve deeds of mighty prowess and renown; to bring the Nations of the world into subjection under him; and so to reign among them in huge majesty and prosperity; when *Jesus* therefore (however otherwise answerable in his circumstances, qualifications and performances, to the prophetical characters of the *Messias*) did first appear such as he did, with some pretences, or intimations rather, that he was the *Messias)* their stomach presently rose at it; they were exceedingly scandalized at him; they deemed him not only *a mad-man* (one possessed or distracted) and *an impostour*; but *a blasphemer*; for no less than blasphemy they took it to be for so mean and pitiful a wretch (as to their eyes he seemed) to assume unto himself so high a dignity, and so near a relation unto God, as being the *Messias* did import: we even see the Disciples themselves of our Lord so deeply imbued with this national prejudice, that, even after they had avowed him for the *Christ*, they could scarce with patience hear him foretelling what grievous things should befall him: St. *Peter* himself, upon that occasion, even just after he seriously confessed him to be the *Christ*, *did*, as it is expressed, *take him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord:* yea, presently after that our Lord most plainly had described his sufferings to them, they could not forbear dreaming of a Kingdom, and of being *Grandees* therein; yea farther, even after our Lord's passion and resurrection, this fancy still possessed them; for even then they demanded of him, whether he would *at that time restore the Kingdom unto Israel*; meaning such an external visible Kingdom.

[x] abated

Matt. 16. 20.
Matt. 13. 57. 26. 65.
Matt. 16. 22. 17. 2.
John 16. 12.
Matt. 20. 21, 25.
Acts 1. 6.

Hence of all things, notifying the *Messias*, this seemeth to be the only particular, which in general the *Jews* did not, or would not see, and acknowledge; and this caused them to oversee all other glorious marks, how clearly soever shining in, and about the person of *Jesus*: this cloud hindred them from discerning the excellency of his doctrine, from regarding the sanctity of his life, from being duly affected with the wonderfulness of his works; from minding, or from crediting all the testimonies from heaven ministred unto him; this, as St. *Paul* telleth us, was the main *scandal* which obstructed their embracing the Gospel. As it was their ignorance or errour in this point, which disposed them to persecute our Lord (*nisi enim ignoratus nihil pati posset*, as *Tertullian* saith; *if they had known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory*, saith St. *Paul*) so it was that, which maintained their obstinate hatred of his name and memory; although graced with so illustrious testimonies of divine power and providence.

1 Cor. 1. 23.
Acts 13. 27. 3. 17.
John 15. 21.
Tert. in Marc. 3. 6.
2 Cor. 2. 8.

We

We cannot therefore here, as in other particulars concerning our Lord, alledge the general conſent of God's people in expounding the Prophets according to our ſenſe, this being one of thoſe points, in reſpect to which the Prophets themſelves did foreſee, and foretel their perverſe ſtupidity, and incredulity; that *they ſhould look, and not ſee; hear, and not underſtand*; yielding herein ſpecial occaſion to that complaint, *Who hath believed our report?* Yet notwithſtanding their affected, and culpable blindneſs, there is no particular concerning the *Meſſias* in the ancient *Scriptures*, either more frequently in way of myſtical inſinuation and adumbration, glanced at, or more clearly, in direct and plain language expreſſed; or which alſo by reaſonable deduction thence may be more ſtrongly inferred than this.

Vid. Tert. *ibid.* Iſa. 6. 9. Matt. 13. 13. Ezek. 12. 2. Acts 28. 26. Iſa. 53. 1.

1. I ſay, *firſt*, it is frequently glanced at by myſtical inſinuations; for explaining the intent of which aſſertion, we ſhall premiſe ſomewhat, which may ſerve to declare the pertinency of many citations produced out of the *ancient Scripture* in the *New Teſtament*; the which, together with others connected with them, or bearing juſt analogy to them, we alſo, being aſſured of their deſign by the authority of our *Lord* and his *Apoſtles*, may ſafely preſume after them to apply to the ſame purpoſes.

We may then conſider, that the All-wiſe God, (who *worketh all things after the counſel of his own will*, and *to whom all things are preſent*) having *before eternal times* (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh) determined in due time to ſend the *Meſſias*, for accompliſhing the greateſt deſign that ever was to be managed in this World (that which ſhould bring the higheſt glory to himſelf, and procure the richeſt benefits to the principal of his Creatures here) did by his incomprehenſible providence ſo order things, that all the ſpecial diſpenſations preceding it ſhould have a fit tendency, and an advantageous reference thereto; ſo that, when it came upon the ſtage, it might appear that the main of the plot conſiſted therein; and that whatever was acted before, had principally a reſpect thereto: As therefore from the beginning of things God did in a gradual method make real preparations towards it, by ſeveral ſteps imparting diſcoveries of his mind about it, or in order thereto, (ſomewhat to *Adam* himſelf, more to *Abraham* and the *Patriarchs*, ſomewhat farther to *Moſes*, much more yet to divers of the *Prophets*, among his choſen people, who not only foretold largely concerning it, but delivered divers kinds of inſtruction conformable to it, and conducible to the promoting and entertainment thereof) ſo he did alſo take eſpecial care by many oppoſite repreſentations (νοητὰ θεωρήματα, *intelligible Spectacles*, or objects of mental ſpeculation, *Euſebius* calleth them) handſomely inſerted into all his diſpenſations, to ſet it out, and to inſinuate his meaning about it; that ſo it might at length ſhew it ſelf with more ſolemnity, and leſs ſurpriſe: the moſt eminent perſons therefore, whom he raiſed up, and employed in his affairs, tending to that end, as they did reſemble the *Meſſias*, in being inſtruments of God's particular grace and providence (being indeed inferiour *Chriſts*, and Mediatours, partial Saviours, and Redeemers of his people, as they are ſometimes called) ſo they were ordered in ſeveral circumſtances of their perſons, in divers actions they performed, in the principal accidents befalling them to repreſent him (becoming εἰκονικοὶ χριστοὶ, *Chriſts in image*, as *Euſebius* again ſtyleth them:) the rites alſo and ſervices of Religion inſtituted by them in God's name were adapted to the ſame purpoſe; they and all things about them, by God's eſpecial direction and wiſe care, being fitted ſo as to be congruous emblems and ſhadows prefiguring *Chriſt*, and whatever appertained to him: thus was *Adam* (as St. *Paul* calleth him) *a type of Chriſt*; and *Abel*, *Melchiſedec*,

Eph. 1. 11. 2 Tim. 1. 9. Tit. 1. 2. 1 Cor. 2. 7. Eph. 1. 3. 3. 9. Rom. 16. 25. Col. 1. 26.

Euſeb. *Hiſt.* l. 3. c. 4.

Pſal. 105. 15. Iſa. 45. 1. Heb. 8. 6. Gal. 3. 19. Nah. 9. 27. Acts 7. 35. Euſeb. *Hiſt.* l. 1. c. 4. Heb. 8. 5. Exod. 25. 40. Rom. 5. 14. *Vid.* Euſeb. *ibid.*

chiſedec, Iſaac, Moſes, Joſhua, David, Solomon, Zorobabel are intimated to have been ſuch; the moſt ſignal things done by them or befalling them, having been ſuted to anſwer ſomewhat remarkable concerning him; ſo that we may ſay of them all, as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* did of the *Jewiſh* Prieſts, *they ſerved to the ſubindication, and ſhewing of heavenly things.* In *David* particularly this relation is ſo plain, that becauſe thereof, in the Prophets *Jeremy, Ezekiel* and *Hoſea*, the *Meſſias* is called by his name; as if he were revived in the *Meſſias*. It indeed well ſuted the dignity of this great perſonage, and the importance of his buſineſs, that he ſhould have appointed ſo notable heralds and harbingers to *go before his face*; furniſhed with conſpicuous enſigns and badges denoting their relation to him. It was proper, that God ſhould appear to have had always an expreſs regard toward him: It conſequently doth ſerve to our edification; for that we duly comparing things, and eſpying this admirable correſpondency, may be inſtructed thereby, and eſtabliſhed in our faith; may be excited to the admiration of God's wiſdom, ſo harmoniouſly connecting things, and of his goodneſs, ſo provident for our welfare; may alſo be induced thereby the more highly to adore the *Meſſias*, and to eſteem his deſign: ſuch uſes St. *Paul* ſignifieth, when having compared divers things concerning *Moſes* to things concerning *Chriſt*, he ſaith; *All theſe things happened as types, and they were written for our admonition, on whom the ends of the world are come.*

Heb 8. 5. Οἵτινες ὑποδείγματι καὶ σκιᾷ λατρεύουσι τῶν ἐπουρανίων.

Jer. 30. 9. Hoſ. 3. 5. Ezek. 34. 23, 24. 37. 24. 25.

(Heb. 5. 8. 10. 1. 9. 23. Gal. 4. 24. Col. 2. 17.)

1 Cor. 10. 11, 6. 1 Pet. 1. 12.

It is alſo (both for illuſtration, and proof of theſe things) to be obſerved, that becauſe thoſe eminent Servants of God were Repreſentatives of *Chriſt*, many things are ſpoken of them, as ſuch; many things are aſcribed to them; which only, or chiefly were intended of him; their names are uſed as veils to cover divers things concerning him, which it ſeemed to divine wiſdom not ſo convenient in a more open and clear manner to diſcloſe promiſcuouſly to all men. That this obſervation is true; that, I ſay, under the names of perſons repreſenting *Chriſt*, (or of things, we may add, adumbrating his things) many things are intimated principally concerning him, and his diſpenſations, may be collected, and confirmed from hence, that many things are attributed to perſons (and to things alſo) which do not agree to them; many things were promiſed, which appear never accompliſhed, except after an improper and hyperbolical manner of expreſſion, or according to an enormous wideneſs of interpretation; ſuch as do not well ſeem to ſute the nature of true hiſtories, and ſerious promiſes: thus, for inſtance, many things are foretold concerning the large extent, and proſperous ſtate of the *Jewiſh* Church; which hiſtory and experience do teſtify never (according to ſtrictneſs of literal acception, yea not in any tolerable degree, near the height of what the words import) to have come to paſs: thus alſo (as the *Apoſtle* to the *Hebrews* argueth) effects are attributed to the *Jewiſh* rites and ſacrifices, which according to the nature of things cannot belong to them, otherwiſe than as ſubſtitutes, and ſhadows of things more high in ſubſtance, and efficacy: thus alſo what is with ſolemn oath promiſed to *Solomon* (concerning the vaſt extent, and endleſs duration of his empire in righteouſneſs, peace and proſperity; together with his mighty acts, and ſucceſsful atchievements (doth not appear directly in any competent meaſure to have been accompliſhed: thus alſo *David* (as St. *Peter* in the 2d of the *Acts* obſerveth, and groundeth his argumentation on it) ſpeaketh divers things of himſelf; which cannot be con-

Iſa. 25. 8.

Heb. 10. 4.

Pſal. 45. 72, 83, &c.

Acts 2. 29.

conceived properly and literally agreeable to him: such things therefore (having some truth under them) are reasonably supposed to be intimations of somewhat appertaining to the future more perfect state of things under the *Messias*; to concern him (who was to be *the end of the law*) and his dispensation, which was to be the accomplishment of all things predicted and presignified: that is that, which St. *Austin* signifieth, when he saith of *Christ*, that, *Him all the promises of the Jewish Nation, all their prophecies, priesthoods, sacrifices, their temple, and all their sacraments whatever did resound*, or express.

Rom 10. 4. 2 Cor. 13. 13. Luke 22. 37. 1 Pet. 1. 10, &c.

Quem Christum —— omnia gentis illius promissa, omnes prophetiæ, sacerdotia sacrificia, templum, & cuncta omninò sacramenta sonuerunt. Aug. *ad* Volus. *Ep.* 3.

Neither are these things only said according to suppositions assumed in the *New Testament*; but they agree (as to their general importance) to that sense of the ancient *Jews*, who did conceive such mysterious references often to lie couched under the letter of the Scriptures: they did suppose every where a *Midrash*, or mystical sense; which they very studiously (even to an excess of curiosity and diligence) searched after: it was a constant and confident opinion of their Doctours, that all things in *Moses* his Law were typical, and capable of allegorical exposition; and *Philo*'s writings (composed immediately after our Saviour's times) do shew that opinion then to have been passable. We have also several instances and intimations thereof in the *New Testament*: neither is it probable, that our Lord and the *Apostles* would in their discourses and disputations with the *Jews* have used this way of alledging and interpreting passages of Scripture, if they in general had not admitted and approved it.

Vid. Capell. *in Exerc. ad* Zohar.

Why God should chuse to express matters of this nature in such a manner, we need not to determine; it might be perhaps for reasons only known to himself, above our ken, or cognisance; yet divers probable reasons may be assigned for it, yea some more than probable, seeing they are expressed, or hinted in Scripture: It might be for a decent, and harmonious discrimination of times, of dispensations, of persons; it might be from the depth of things to conciliate reverence to them, and to raise the price of knowing them, by the difficulty of attaining thereto; it might be by exercise to improve the understandings of men, to inflame their desire, to excite their industry, to provoke their devotion, to render them modest and humble; it might be for occasion to reward an honest, and diligent study of God's word; and to convey special gifts of interpretation; it might be to conceal some things from some persons unworthy, or unfit to know them; especially from haughty and self-conceited persons; it might be to use the ignorance of some as a means to produce some great events; such as was the misusing and persecuting our Lord: for such reasons it might be, and there is no good reason against it; for it cannot be supposed necessary, that all things should be plainly discovered at all times, and to all persons; it is evident that some things are couched in parabolical, and mysterious expression; it is particularly the manner of prophetical instruction frequently to involve things, the full and clear knowledge of which is not congruous to every season, nor suitable to every capacity; but reserved for times, and persons, for which the divine wisdom only knows them most proper.

Vid. Chrys. *Tom.* 6. *p.* 649, &c. 658. &c.

Apoc. 2. 7. 13. 18. 17. 9. Mat. 13. 9. 24. 15. Dan. 9. 1. John 5. 39. Luke 24. 45. 1 Cor. 12. 10. 14. 26. Eph. 1. 9, 10. Matt. 13. 13. 11. 25. 7. 6. 1 Cor. 2. 8. Acts 3. 17. Gal. 4. 4. Eph. 1. 10. 1 Tim. 2. 6.

These things being thus premised, we come to our particular case, and say, that (according to what our *Lord*, and his *Apostles* teach) the *Messias* his being to suffer was in divers passages of the ancient Scripture prefigured: supposing the thing it self determined to be, there are peculiar reasons, why it rather so, than in a more open manner, should be

represented, contained in thoſe words of *Tertullian*: *The Sacrament indeed* (ſaith he) *of Chriſt's paſſion ought to have been figured in the* (ancient) *predications; for as much as that the more incredible it was (if it ſhould have been preached nakedly) the more offenſive it would have been; and the more magnificent it was, the more it was to be overſhadowed, that the difficulty of underſtanding it might be cauſe of ſeeking of God's grace.* Suppoſing it alſo that it ſhould be, it is plain that the paſſages about *Abel*, *Iſaac*, *Joſias*, *Jeremy*, and the like may congruouſly be applied thereto; that the elevation of the *Brazen Serpent*, and the ſlaying the *Paſchal* Lamb may appoſitely repreſent it; the *Jewiſh Prieſts*, with all their Sacrifices, may alſo with reaſon be brought in, and accommodated thereto: theſe things indeed by themſelves ſolitarily are not apt peremptorily to evince, that it ſhould be; yet do they handſomly ſute it, and adorn the ſuppoſition thereof; according to the notion premiſed about the figurative relation between the matters of the *Old* World before the *Meſſias*, and the *New* one after him. But with a clearer evidence, and ſtronger force we may affirm, that the *Meſſias* his ſufferings were implied in the afflictions, aſcribed to his repreſentative King *David*, ſuch as he in ſeveral *Pſalms* (in the 35, 69, 109, 118, and eſpecially in the 22 *Pſalm*) deſcribeth them; wherein divers paſſages, expreſſing the extreme ſadneſs; and forlornneſs of his condition, occur, which by the hiſtory of his life do not ſo well according to the literal ſignification of words, appear congruous to his perſon; which therefore there is a neceſſity, or at leaſt much reaſon, that they ſhould be applied to the *Meſſias*, whom that *Holy King* did repreſent.

Utique ſacramentum paſſionis ipſius figurari in prædicationibus oportuerat quantóque incredibile, tanto magis ſcandalum futurum, quantóque magnificum, tanto magis adumbrandum; ut difficultatas intellectûs gratiam Dei quæreret. Tert. *in* Jud. 10.

Which being admitted, comparing the paſſages we find there to that which befel *Jeſus*, we may obſerve an admirable harmony; there being ſcarce any part of his affliction in his life, or at any circumſtance thereof at his death, which is not in expreſs and emphatical terms there ſet out: there we have expreſſed his low, and deſpicable ſtate (*I am a worm, and no man; the reproach of men, and deſpiſed of the people*) the cauſeleſs hatred and enmity of the populacy, and of the great ones toward him (*They that hate me without a cauſe are more than the hairs of my head; they that would deſtroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty; they compaſſed me about with words of hatred, and fought againſt me without a cauſe*) the ingrateful requital for all the good intended, and performed by him; (*They rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love*) their rejecting him (*The ſtone which the builders refuſed is become the head-ſtone in the corner.*) Their inſidious, and calumnious proceeding againſt him, (*without cauſe have they hid for me their net, in a pit, which without cauſe they have digged for my ſoul.* And, *Falſe witneſſes did riſe up; they laid to my charge things that I knew not*; and, *The mouth of the wicked, and the mouth of the deceitful are opened againſt me; they have ſpoken againſt me with a lying tongue.*) Their bitter inſulting over him in his affliction; (*But in mine adverſity they rejoyced, and gathered themſelves together; yea the abjects gathered themſelves together againſt me:*) *They perſecute him, whom thou haſt ſmitten, and they talk to the grief of thoſe, whom thou haſt wounded:* καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἄλγος τῶν τραυμάτων μου προσέθηκαν, *and to the ſmart of my wounds they have added*; ſay the LXXII.) Their ſcornful, reviling, flouting, and mocking him; (*All they that ſee me, laugh me to ſcorn; they ſhoot the lip, they ſhake the head; ſaying, He truſted in the Lord, that he ſhould deliver him, let him deliver him, ſeeing he delighteth*

Pſal. 22. 9.
Pſal. 69. 4. 35. 7. 109. 3.
Pſal. 35. 12. 109. 5.
Pſal. 118. 22.
Pſal. 35. 7. 11. 109. 2.
Pſa. 35. 15. 69. 26.
Pſal. 109. 25. 35. 22. 16. 22. 6, 7.

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in him. And, *I became a reproach unto them; when they looked upon me, they ſhaked their heads; they opened their mouth wide againſt me, and ſaid, Aha, aha, our eye hath ſeen it.* Ἐπῆραν με, ἐξεμυκτήρισαν μυκτηρισμόν, ἔβρυξαν ἐπ' ἐμὲ τοὺς ὀδόντας αὐτῶν· *they tempted me, they extremely mocked me, they gnaſhed their teeth upon me.)* Their cruel and contemptuous uſage of him; *(Dogs have compaſſed me; the aſſembly of the wicked have encloſed me; they pierced my hands, and my feet; I may tell all my bones; they look, and ſtare upon me.)* Their abuſive dealing with him, when he in his diſtreſs called for ſome refreſhment; *(They gave me gall for my meat, and in my thirſt they gave me vinegar to drink.)* Their diſpoſal of his garments upon his ſuffering, *(They part my garments among them, and caſt lots upon my veſture.)* His being deſerted of his friends and followers; and thence deſtitute of all conſolation; *(I am become a ſtranger to my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children; ----- I am full of heavineſs, and I looked for ſome to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.)* The ſenſe of God's with-holding his favour, and help; *(My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me? why art thou ſo far from helping me?)* His charitable diſpoſition and demeanour toward his enemies and perſecutours; *(But as for me, when they were ſick* (when they did trouble me, ſay the LXX.) *my cloathing was ſackcloath, I humbled my ſelf with faſting, and my prayer returned into my own boſome; I behaved my ſelf as though it had been my friend, or brother, I bowed down heavily, as one that mourneth for his mother.)* Which paſſages, and the like, how patly, and punctually they do ſquare to reſpective paſſages in the *Goſpels*, I need not to ſhew; we do, I preſume, all of us well enough remember that both moſt doleful and comfortable hiſtory, to be able our ſelves to make the application.

Pſal. 22. 16. Pſal. 69. 21. Pſal. 22. 18. Pſal. 69. 9. 20. Pſal. 22. 1. 69. 17. Ἐν τῷ αὐτὸς παρεῖχον μοι. Pſal. 35. 13. &c.

But there farther are not only ſuch oblique intimations, of ſignifications of this matter ſhrowded under the coverture of other perſons, and names; but very direct, and immediate predictions, concerning the *Meſſias* his being to ſuffer, moſt clearly expreſſed: that whole famous *Chapter* (the 53d) of *Eſay*, doth moſt evidently and fully declare it, wherein the kind, manner, cauſes, ends, and conſequences of his ſufferings, together with his behaviour under them, are graphically repreſented: his appearing meanneſs *(He hath no form, or comelineſs; and when we ſhall ſee him, there is no beauty, that we ſhould deſire him:)* the diſgrace, contempt, repulſes, and rejection he underwent *(He is diſpiſed and rejected of men ---- we hid our faces from him; he was deſpiſed, and we eſteemed him not,)* His afflicted ſtate *(He is a man of ſorrows, and acquainted with grief; we did eſteem him ſtricken, ſmitten of God, and afflicted,)* the bitter, and painful manner of his affliction (He *was ſtricken*; he *bare ſtripes*; he *was wounded and bruiſed*) his being accuſed, adjudged and condemned as a malefactour *(He was taken from priſon, and from judgment ---- he was numbred among the tranſgreſſours)* his death conſequent *(He poured out his ſoul unto death; he was cut out of the Land of the living)* the deſign and end of his ſufferings; they were appointed, and inflicted by divine providence for our ſake, and in our ſtead; for the expiation of our ſins; and our ſalvation. *(It pleaſed the Lord to bruiſe him; he hath put him to grief---- when thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin------ he was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, he was bruiſed for our iniquities---- the chaſtiſement of our peace was upon him, and with his ſtripes we are healed---- ſurely he hath born our griefs, and carried our ſorrows ------ for the tranſgreſſion of my people he was ſmitten ------ the Lord hath laid on him the iniquities of us all)* his ſuſtaining all this with a willing, quiet, humble patience, and perfect meekneſs *(He*

Iſ. 53. v. 2. v. 3. v. 3, 4. v. 5, 8. v. 8, 12. v. 10, 5, 4, 8, 6. 12.

v. 7. *was oppreſſed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the ſlaughter, and as a ſheep before the ſhearer is dumb, ſo he opened not his mouth)* his charitable praying for his perſecutors, and de-
v. 12. ſigning their welfare *(He made interceſſion for the Tranſgreſſours)* the bleſſed conſequences, and happy ſucceſs of his ſufferings, in the converſion, and juſtification of men; in performing God's will and work; in being
v. 10, 11, 12. ſatisfied, rewarded, and exalted himſelf *(He ſhall ſee his ſeed, he ſhall prolong his days, and the pleaſure of the Lord ſhall proſper in his hand; he ſhall ſee of the travail of his ſoul, and ſhall be ſatisfied; by his knowledge ſhall my righteous ſervant juſtify many; ----I will divide him a portion with the great, and he ſhall divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong)* which paſſages as they do moſt exactly ſuit unto *Jeſus*, and might in a ſort conſtitute a true hiſtorical narration of what he did endure; together with the doctrines delivered in the Goſpel concerning the intents, and effects of his ſufferings; ſo that they did according to the intention of the divine ſpirit, relate to the *Meſſias* may from ſeveral conſiderations be made apparent; the context, and coherence of all this paſſage with the matters precedent and ſubſequent,
Iſa. 27. 5, 13. the which plainly do reſpect the *Meſſias*, and his times, do argue it: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him, that bringeth good tidings*; and, *Behold my ſervant ſhall deal prudently*, &c. are paſſages immediately going before; to which this *Chapter* is knit in way of continuation; and
Iſa. 54. 1, &c. immediately after it doth follow: *Sing, O barren, thou, that didſt not bear*, &c. being a no leſs perſpicuous, than elegant deſcription of the Church, enlarged by acceſſion of the *Gentiles*, which was to be brought to paſs by the *Meſſias*. The general ſcope of this whole prophecy enforceth the ſame concluſion; and the incongruity of this particular prediction to any other perſon imaginable beſide the *Meſſias* doth farther evince it; ſo high are the things aſcribed to the ſuffering perſon; as that he ſhould *bear the ſins of all God's people, and heal them*; that he ſhould *by his knowledge juſtify many* (or the multitude) that *the pleaſure of the Lord ſhould proſper in his hand* to theſe grand purpoſes; that God would *divide him a portion with the great, and that he ſhould divide the ſpoil with the ſtrong*; the magnificency and importance of which ſayings (rightly underſtood and weighed) do well agree to the *Meſſias*, but not to any other perſon, or ſimple man: whence if the ancient *Jews* had reaſon to believe a *Meſſias* was to come (as they with general conſent did ſuppoſe they had) they had as much reaſon to apply this place, as any other, to him, and thence to acknowledge that he was deſigned to be an eminent ſufferer. And indeed divers of the ancient *Targumiſts*, and moſt learned *Rabbins* did expound this place of the one *Meſſias*, which was to come; as the *Pugio fidei*, and other learned *Writers* do by ſeveral expreſs teſtimonies declare. This place alſo diſcovereth the vanity of that figment, deviſed by ſome later *Jews*; who to evade it, and to oppoſe *Jeſus*, have affirmed there was to be a double *Meſſias*; one, who ſhould be much afflicted; another, who ſhould greatly proſper; ſince we may obſerve, that here both great afflictions and glorious performances concurrently are aſcribed to the ſame Perſon.

The ſame things are by parts alſo clearly foretold in other places of this Prophet, and in other prophetical Scriptures: By *Eſay* again in the
Iſa. 52. 13, 14. *Chapter* immediately preceeding; *Behold* (ſaith God there) *my ſervant ſhall deal prudently, he ſhall be exalted, and extolled, and be very high*; there is God's ſervant (he, who in way of excellency is ſuch, that is, in the ſtyle of this *Prophet*, the *Meſſias*) in his real glorious capacity; it followeth concerning his external appearance; *His viſage was ſo marred more than any mans, and his form more than the ſons of men*: and again, in the

the 49th *Chapter*; *Thus ſaith the Lord, the redeemer of Iſrael, and his Holy one; to him, whom man deſpiſeth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a ſervant of rulers, Kings ſhall ſee, and ariſe, Princes alſo ſhall worſhip*: what can be more expreſs and clear, than that it is ſignified here, that the *Meſſias*, who ſhould ſubject the World, with its ſovereign powers, to the acknowledgment and veneration of himſelf, was to be deſpiſed by men, to be deteſted by the *Jewiſh* people, to appear in a ſervile, and baſe condition? the ſame *Prophet* doth again in the 50th *Chapter* bring him in ſpeaking thus: *I gave my back to the ſmiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from ſhame, and ſpitting*: his offending the *Jews*, ſo as thereby to aggravate their ſins, and accelerate their puniſhments, is alſo thus expreſſed by the ſame *Prophet*: *And he he ſhall be for a ſanctuary, but for a ſtone of ſtumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houſes of Iſrael; for a gin, and for a ſnare to the inhabitants of Jeruſalem.* Iſa. 49. 7. Iſa. 50. 6. Iſa. 8. 14. (Pſal. 2. 2.)

The Prophet *Zachary* doth alſo in ſeveral places very roundly expreſs his ſufferings; his low condition in thoſe words; *Behold thy King cometh unto thee lowly, and riding upon an Aſs*; (that is, *pauper*, mean and ſorry to appearance.) His manner of death in thoſe words: *Awake, O ſword, againſt my Shepherd, and againſt the man, that is my fellow, ſaith the Lord of hoſts; ſmite the Shepherd, and the ſheep ſhall be ſcattered*; and again; *I will pour upon the houſe of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeruſalem the ſpirit of grace, and of ſupplications, and they ſhall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they ſhall mourn*, &c. The *Prophet Daniel* alſo in that place, from which probably the name *Meſſias* was taken, and which moſt expreſly mentioneth him, ſaith, that *after 62 weeks the Meſſias ſhall be cut off, but not for himſelf*------Now from all theſe paſſages of *Scripture* (beſide divers others to the ſame purpoſe, obſervable by thoſe, whoſe induſtry is aſſiſted by divine illumination) we may well conclude with our Lord, Ὅτι οὕτω γέγραπται, καὶ οὕτως ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν χριστὸν· *that thus it was written, and thus* (according to the Prophet's foreſhewing) *it was to happen, that Chriſt ſhould ſuffer*; ſuffer in a life of penury, and diſgrace, in a death of ſorrow and ſhame. Zech. 9. 9. Zech. 13. 7. Zech. 12. 10. Dan. 9. 25. Luke 24. 46.

That it was to fall out thus, might alſo be well inferred, by reaſons grounded upon the qualities of the *Meſſias* his perſon, and upon the nature of his performances, ſuch as they are deſcribed in Prophetical *Scripture*: He was to be really, and plainly to appear a perſon of moſt admirable virtue, and goodneſs; but never (as even *Pagan* Philoſophers are obſerved) was, or can there be any ſuch without undergoing the trial of great affliction. He was to be an univerſal pattern to men of all ſorts (eſpecially to the greateſt part of men, that is, to the poor, and afflicted) of *all righteouſneſs*; to exemplify particularly the moſt difficult pieces of duty; (*Humility, Patience, Meekneſs, Charity, Self-denial, entire reſignation* to God's will) this he ſhould not have had opportunity, or advantage of doing, ſhould he have been high, wealthy, ſplendid, and proſperous in ſecular matters, he was to exerciſe great pity, and ſympathy toward all mankind; toward the doing what it was requiſite that he ſhould himſelf taſte and feel the inconveniences, troubles, pains and ſorrows incident to us. He was to advance the repute of ſpiritual goods, and eternal bleſſings, depreſſing the value of thoſe corporeal and temporal things, which men do ſo fondly admire, and dote on: the moſt compendious, and effectual way of doing which, was by an exemplary neglect, or rejection of worldly glories, and enjoyments; refuſing the honours, profits and pleaſures here, adjoyned to a high ſtate. He was by the moſt kindly, gentle and peaceable means to erect a Spiritual Kingdom; by pure force of reaſon Plato, Seneca, &c. *Vide* Theodoti, *Orat. in* Eph. 1. *Con-cil. p.* 997.

reason to subdue the hearts and consciences of men to the love, and obedience of God; by wise instruction to raise in us the hopes of future recompences in Heaven; to the accomplishment of which purposes temporal glory (working on the carnal apprehensions and affections of men) had rather been prejudicial, than conducible. He was to accomplish and manage his great designs by means supernatural, and divine, the which would surely become more conspicuous by the visible meanness, and impotency of his state. He was also most highly to merit from God, for himself, and for us (to merit God's high approbation of what he did, God's favour and grace to us) this he could not perform so well, as by willingly enduring for God's sake, and in our behalf the most hard and grievous things. He was in fine designed *perfectly to save us*; and consequently to appease God's wrath, to satisfy divine justice, to expiate our sins; whereto it was requisite, that he should undergo what he had deserved, being punished and afflicted for us.

Now that *Jesus*, our *Lord*, did most thoroughly correspond to whatever is in this kind declared by the *Prophets* concerning the *Messias*, we need not by minutely relating the known history of his life, and death make out any farther, since the whole matter is palpably notorious, and no adversary can deny it; I shall therefore conclude, that it is a clear, and certain truth, which St. *Peter* in our text affirmeth, that, *Those things which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.*

Apoc. 1. 5. Now, *unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us Kings, and Priests unto God, and his Father; to him be glory, and dominion for ever and ever.* Amen.

Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be unto him, that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

Sermon XLV.

A Whit-Sunday Sermon of the Gift of the Holy Ghost.

ACTS II. 38.

---And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Among the divers reasonable grounds and ends of the observing *Festival* Solemnities (such as are comforting the poor by hospitable relief, refreshing the weary labourer by cessation from ordinary toil, maintaining good-will among neighbours by chearful and free con-

converſation, quickning our ſpirits and raiſing our fancies by extraordinary repreſentations and divertiſements, infuſing and preſerving good humour in people; ſuch as are alſo the decent conſpiring in publick expreſſions of ſpecial reverence to God, withdrawing our minds from ſecular cares, and engaging them to ſpiritual meditations) the two principal deſigns of them ſeem to be theſe.

Θεοὶ δ' οἰκείρεγλες τὰ μὲν ἀνθρώπων ἐπίπονον πεφυκὸς γίνεσθαι, ἀναπαύλας τὲ αὐτοῖς μὲν πόνων ἐτάξατο, μὲν ἑορτῶν ἀμοιβὰς τοῖς θεοῖς. Plato 2. *de Leg.*

Legum conditores feſtos inſtituerunt dies, ut ad hilaritatem hominespublicè congerentur, tanquam neceſſarium laboribus interponentes temperamentum. Sen. *de Tranq. an.* 15.

1. The affording occaſion (or rather impoſing a conſtraint upon us) with a competent frequency to attend unto, to conſider upon, to inſtruct our ſelves and others in the myſterious doctrines and inſtitutions of our Religion.

2. The engaging us ſeaſonably to practice that great duty of thankfully remembring and praiſing God for thoſe eminent mercies, and favours, which by his great grace and goodneſs have been vouchſafed to us.

For theſe purpoſes chiefly did God himſelf appoint the *Jewiſh* Feſtivals; for inſtance the *Paſſover*, the reaſon of which being inſtituted is thus expreſſed; *that thou mayſt remember the day, when thou cameſt forth out of the land of Egypt all the days of thy life*; which words imply that the obſervation of that Solemnity did ſerve to preſerve the memory, yea the continual remembrance of that ſo notable a bleſſing, which otherwiſe might have been totally forgotten, or ſeldom conſidered; the ſame did alſo ſuggeſt occaſion of inquiry concerning the reaſons of its appointment, procuring conſequently needful information in that material point of their religion; as doth appear by thoſe words of God. *And it ſhall come to paſs, when your children ſhall ſay unto you, what mean ye by this ſervice? that ye ſhall ſay, it is the Sacrifice of the Lord's Paſſover*; ---- Deut. 16. 3. Exod. 12. 26.

In compliance with which prudent deſigns, the *Chriſtian* Church, from her firſt infancy, hath embraced the opportunity of recommending to her children the obſervation of her chief holy *Feſtivals*, continuing the time, and retaining the name, although changing or improving, the matter and reaſon of thoſe ancient ones; the divine providence concurring to further ſuch proceeding, by ſo ordering the events of things, that the ſeaſons of diſpenſing the *Evangelical* bleſſings ſhould fall in with thoſe, wherein the *Legal* benefits moſt reſembling and repreſenting them were commemorated; that ſo there might be as well a happy co-incidence of time, as correſpondence in matter between the ancient and new Solemnities; whence as the exhibitation of *Evangelical* doctrines and myſteries did meet with minds more ſutably prepared to entertain them, and as leſs innovation from former uſage did appear (a thing obſervable to be reſpected in moſt, or all the *poſitive* inſtitutions of our religion) ſo withall *Chriſtians* were engaged, while they conſidered the greater mercies by God vouchſafed to them, to reflect alſo upon the favours, from the ſame ſtock of goodneſs, indulged by him to his ancient people; that as thoſe ſhould chiefly be remembered, ſo theſe ſhould not wholly be forgotten: thus did god diſpoſe, that our *Saviour* ſhould then ſuffer, when the *Paſchal Lamb* was to be offered; or that the redemption of the world from ſin and miſery ſhould then be celebrated by us, when the deliverance from the *Egyptian* ſlavery was commemorated by them: and ſo (that we may approach to our purpoſe) at the time of *Pentecoſt*, when the *Jews* were obliged to *rejoyce before the Lord*, rendring thanks unto him for the harveſt newly gathered in, and the earths good fruits (the main ſupports and comforts of this life) were by God's bleſſing Aug. *de Civ. D.* 10. 4. Deut. 16.

be-

beſtowed on them, then did God bountifully impart the *firſt fruits* of his *Holy Spirit*, the food of our ſouls and refreſhment of our hearts; then did he cauſe his labourers to put their ſickle into the ſpiritual harveſt; converting ſouls and gathering them as mature fruits into the garners of the Church.

At the very ſeaſon (which is remarkable) that the *Law* was delivered to the *Jews*, and the *ancient Covenant* eſtabliſhed which did happen at *Pentecoſt*, as may be probably collected from the *Text*, and is commonly ſuppoſed by the *Jewiſh* Doctours, who therefore call this *Feaſt* חגא שמכה, *the joy* (or joyful Feaſt) *of the law*, in ſignification of their joy, uſing then to crown their heads with garlands, and ſtrew their houſes with green herbs) at that very time was the *Chriſtian* Law moſt ſignally promulged, and the *new Covenant*'s ratification moſt ſolemnly declared by the miraculous effuſion of the divine Spirit. Exod. 19. 1.

Πεντηκοστὴν ἑορτάζομεν, ἣ πνεύματος θεότητα, καὶ προδρομίαν ἐπαγγελίας, καὶ ἐλπίδος συμπλήρωσιν, &c. Naz. Orat. 44.

The benefit therefore and bleſſing, which at this time we are bound eſpecially to conſider and commemorate, is in effect the publication and eſtabliſhment of the Covenant *Evangelical*, the foundation of all our hopes, and all our claims to happineſs; but more immediately and directly the donation of the *Holy Spirit* to the *Chriſtian* Church, and to all its members; for the better underſtanding, and more truly valuing of which moſt excellent benefit, let us briefly declare the nature, and deſign thereof.

Almighty God, ſeeing the generality of mankind alienated from himſelf by groſs ignorance of its duty toward him, and by habitual inclinations to violate his holy laws (originally implanted by him in our nature, or anciently revealed to our firſt parents) immerſed in errour, enſlaved to vice, and obnoxious to the woful conſequences of them, ſevere puniſhment, and extreme miſery; was pleaſed in his immenſe goodneſs and pity to deſign its reſcue from that ſad condition; and in purſuance of that gracious deſign did reſolve upon expedients the moſt admirable, and moſt efficacious that could be: for to redeem men from the tyranny of ſin and hell, to reconcile them to himſelf, to recover them into a happy ſtate, he ſent his own only beloved Son out of his boſome into this world, clothed with our nature; by him, as by a *plenipotentiary Commiſſioner* from himſelf, inviting all men to return unto him; declaring himſelf by the meritorious obedience, the expiatory paſſion, the effectual interceſſion of his dear Son abundantly ſatisfied for, and ready to grant a full pardon of all offences committed againſt him in their ſtate of errour and eſtrangement; to admit them into a ſtate of preſent indempnity and peace, yea to ſettle them in perpetual alliance and friendſhip with himſelf: upon moſt fair and gentle terms; namely, that renouncing their erroneous principles, and reforming their vitious courſe of life, they chearfully would embrace his merciful overtures, and thereafter conform their lives to his righteous laws; the which, together with all his good intentions concerning them, he, by the ſame bleſſed Agent, clearly diſcovered to them; fully by him inſtructing them in their duty, and ſtrongly encouraging them to the performance thereof by the promiſe of moſt bountiful rewards; his certain love and favour attended with endleſs joy and bliſs: thus *did*, as St. *Paul* expreſſeth it, *the ſaving grace of God appear unto all men, teaching us, that, denying ungodlineſs, and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly in this preſent world, expecting that bleſſed hope.* Tit. 2. 11.

But

But to render this wonderfully gracious deſign ſucceſsful, in a way of wiſdom, and reaſonable proceeding, accommodated to the capacities of humane nature, it was requiſite, that there ſhould be provided convincing arguments to perſuade men of the truth and reality of theſe things (that indeed ſuch an extraordinary *Agent*, with ſuch a meſſage was come from heaven) effectual means of admoniſhing and exciting men to a heedful advertency towards them, competent motives to a cordial acceptance of them; a power alſo ſufficient, notwithſtanding their natural impotency and inſtability, to continue them in the belief, to uphold them in the practice of the duties preſcribed, in the performance of the conditions required.

For if it were not very credible, that God had truly thoſe intentions towards us, or if we did not much regard the overture of them, or if we did not conceive the buſineſs highly to concern us; or if reſolving to comply with the *Goſpel*, we yet were unable to diſcharge the conditions thereof, the deſign would totally be fruſtrated, and of it ſelf come to nothing: to prevent which diſappointment of his merciful intentions, Almighty God did abundantly provide, in a manner and meaſure ſuitable to the glorious importance of them; for to the miniſtery of his eternal wiſdom he adjoyned the efficacy of his eternal love, and bleſſed Spirit; the which not only conducted *God our Saviour* into his fleſhly tabernacle, and with *unmeaſurable communications* of himſelf did continually reſide within him, but alſo did attend him in the conſpicuous performance of numberleſs miraculous works, implying divine power and goodneſs, as exceeding not only any natural, but all created power (ſuch as were by mere word and will healing the ſick, and reſtoring the maimed; ejecting evil ſpirits, diſcerning the ſecret thoughts of men, foretelling contingent events, reviving the dead, raiſing himſelf from the grave) which works, (ſome expreſly, others by parity of reaſon) are aſcribed to the Holy Spirit; for, *If* (ſaith our *Lord*) *I by the ſpirit of God caſt out Devils*----, and, *God* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *anointed him with the Holy Ghoſt, and with power*; *who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppreſſed by the Devil*: and, *Who* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *was declared to be the Son of God, according to the Holy Spirit, by the reſurrection from the dead*: So did God afford the moſt evident atteſtation that could be to the truth of our Saviour's quality, commiſſion and doctrine; by ſo clear, and touſing ſignifications did God invite men to take notice of theſe things.

John 3. 34.

Matt. 12. 28. Acts 10. 38.

Rom. 1. 4.

But farther to induce them heartily to comply with theſe gracious overtures, and to render them thoroughly available to the purpoſe deſigned, the ſalvation of men, according to the terms preſcribed of faith in God, and obedience to his commandments, God was pleaſed farther to reſolve, and he faithfully did promiſe that he would impart the ſame *Bleſſed Spirit*, as a continual guide and aſſiſtance to all thoſe, who ſeriouſly would entertain thoſe tenders of mercy, ſincerely reſolving the performance of the conditions.

Now although the natural and ordinary manner of this divine Spirit's operation (like that of all Spirits, and more ſubtile ſubſtances) is not by violent and ſenſible impreſſions, but rather in way of imperceptible penetration, or gentle inſinuating of it ſelf into the ſubject upon which it worketh, hardly diſcovering it ſelf otherwiſe than by the notable effects reſulting from it; and altho likewiſe the proper and principal effects thereof, according to divine deſignation, do relate to the furthering our performance of

Καὶ γὰρ οὐ θεῖας ἀπέλαυσας χάριτος βαπτιζόμενος, ἢ πνεύματος μετέσχες, εἰ μὴ πρὸς τὸ σῶμα ποιῆν, ἀλλ' ὅσον ἀρκεῖ πρὸς τὸ πολιτείαν ὀρθὴν, ἢ ἦκος βεμμένον λαβεῖν. Chryſ. *Tom. 6. Orat. 12. ad* Demet.

the said conditions requisite toward our salvation, that is, to the cherishing our faith, and quickning our obedience; disposing men to perform vertuous actions, rather than to atchieve wondrous exploits; yet more fully to satisfie the doubtful, to convince the incredulous, (to confound the obstinate) world about the truth of his intentions, more illustriously to manifest the completion of his promise, more surely to fortifie the faithful against the scandals and temptations, which their profession would incur, God was pleased after our *Lord*'s ascension, and when the *Apostolical* promulgation of the *Christian Doctrine* did commence, to dispence both to the Teachers and the Disciples thereof more liberal communications of that *Holy Spirit*, attended with notorious, strange and wonderful effects, apt to provoke the admiration of men, to persuade their judgments, to prevail upon their affections, to produce within them strong desires of partaking so high a privilege, and excellent endowment.

Τῶν γὰρ χαρισμάτων τῶν πνευματικῶν τὰ μὲν ὁρατὰ ἦν καὶ πίστει καλαμβάνεται μόνη· τὰ δὲ καὶ αἰσθητὸν ἐνδείκνυται σημεῖον πρὸς τὸ τῶν ἀπίστων πληροφορίαν. Chrys. T. 5. Orat. 88.

Acts 2. 12, 43. 4. 14. 9. 11, 16. 1 Cor. 14. 25.

The memorial therefore of that most gracious and glorious dispensation, the *Christian* Church wisely and piously hath continually preserved, obliging us at this time peculiarly to bless God for that incomparable and inestimable gift, conferred then most visibly upon the Church, and still really bestowed upon every particular member, duly incorporated thereinto.

I say bestowed upon every particular member of the Church; for the *Evangelical* Covenant doth extend to every Christian; and a principal ingredient thereof is the collation of this Spirit; which is the *finger of God*, whereby (according to the Prophet *Jeremy*'s description of that Covenant) *God's law is put into their inward parts, and written in their hearts*; *inscribed* (as St. *Paul* allusively speaketh) *not with ink, but by the Spirit of the living God*; *not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart*; not only as the *Jewish* Law represented from without to the senses, but impressed within upon the mind and affections; whence God's Spirit is called *the Spirit of promise*, the donation thereof being the peculiar promise of the Gospel; and the end of our *Saviour*'s undertaking is by St. *Paul* declared, *that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith*, that is by embracing Christianity might partake thereof, according to God's promises; and the Apostolical ministery or exhibition of the Gospel is styled *the ministration of the Spirit*, and *tasting of the heavenly gift, and participation of the Holy Ghost* is part of a Christian's Charter; and the susception of Christianity is thus described by St. *Paul*; *But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath chosen you from the beginning to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth*; and our *Saviour* instructed *Nicodemus*, that *No man can enter into the Kingdom of God* (that is become a Christian or subject of God's spiritual Kingdom) *without being regenerated by Water, and by the Spirit*, that is without *Baptism*, and the spiritual grace attending it; according as St. *Peter* doth in the words adjoyning to our *Text* imply, that the reception of the Holy Spirit is annexed to Holy Baptism; *Repent* (saith he) *and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*; *for the promise* (that great promise of the Holy Ghost) *is unto you, and to your Children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call*; that is, the *Holy Spirit* is promised to all, how far soever distant in place or time, whoever shall be invited unto, and shall embrace the Christian profession. St. *John* also maketh

Luke 11. 20.

Jer. 31. 33. Heb. 8. 10. Ezek. 11. 19. John 6. 45. 2 Cor. 3. 3.

Πνεῦμα τῆς ἐπαγγελίας. Eph. 1. 13. Gal. 3. 14.

Διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος. 2 Cor. 3. 8. Heb. 6. 4.

2 Thess. 2. 13.

John 3. 5.

Acts 2. 38.

maketh it to be the diſtinctive mark of thoſe, in whom Chriſt abideth, and who dwell in Chriſt, that is of all true Chriſtians, to have this Spirit; *Hereby* (ſaith he) *we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us*; and *Hereby we know that we dwell in him and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his Spirit*; and, St. *Paul* denieth him to be a good Chriſtian who is deſtitute thereof; *Now* (ſaith *he*) *if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*; and, *Know ye not*, ſaith *he* to the *Corinthians, that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*? that is, do ye not underſtand this to be a common privilege of all Chriſtians, ſuch as ye profeſs your ſelves to be? and the converſion of men to Chriſtianity *he* thus expreſſeth; *After the kindneſs and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared*; *not by any righteous works which we had done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us by the laver of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt*; And all pious diſpoſitions qualifying us for entrance into heaven and happineſs (faith, charity, devotion, every grace, every vertue) are repreſented to be *fruits of the Holy Spirit*: and, the union of all Chriſtians into one body; the *Catholick* Society of all truly faithful people, doth, according to St. *Paul*, reſult from this one Spirit, as a common ſoul animating and actuating them: *for* (ſaith *he*) *by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free*; *and have all been made to drink of one Spirit.*

1 John 3. 24. 1 John 4. 13. Rom. 8. 9. 1 Cor. 3. 16. Tit. 3. 4. Gal. 5. 22. Eph. 5. 9. Rom. 4. 5. 1 Cor. 12. 13.

In fine, whatever ſome few perſons, or ſome petty *Sects* (as the *Pelagians* of old, the *Socinians* now) may have deemed, it hath been the doctrine conſtantly, and with very general conſent delivered in the *Catholick* Church, that to all perſons by the holy myſtery of *Baptiſm* duly initiated to Chriſtianity, or admitted into the communion of Chriſt's body, the grace of God's Holy Spirit certainly is beſtowed, enabling them to perform the conditions of piety and vertue then undertaken by them; enlightning their minds, rectifying their wills, purifying their affections, directing and aſſiſting them in their practice; the which holy gift (if not abuſed, ill treated, driven away, or quenched by their ill behaviour) will perpetually be continued, improved and encreaſed to them; it is therefore by *Tertullian* (in his *preſcriptions againſt Hereticks*) reckoned as part of that fundamental rule, which was grounded upon the general tradition, and conſent of the Chriſtian Church, that *Chriſt had ſent the vertue of the Holy Ghoſt, in his room, which doth act believers*; to which that *Article* doth anſwer of the *Apoſtolical Creed*, in which we profeſs to *believe the Holy Ghoſt*; meaning I ſuppoſe, thereby not only the bare exiſtence of the *Holy Ghoſt*, but alſo its gracious communication and energy.

Tert. *depræſc.* 13 — *miſiſſe vicariam vim Spiritus Sancti, qui credentes agat.*

Since therefore the collation of this eminent gift and favour ſo nearly doth concern us all; ſeeing it is our preſent duty more eſpecially to praiſe and bleſs God for it; ſeeing alſo we are wont to commenſurate our gratitude to our eſtimation of the benefit, unto which it relateth, let us a little conſider the worth and excellency of this divine gift conferred on us.

That it is tranſcendently valuable we may in general hence collect, that even in our Lord's eſteem it did not only countervail, but in a manner ſurmount the benefit of his preſence; συμφέρει, *It is* (ſaid *he*) *expedient* (or profitable) *for you that I go away*; God having deſigned, that my abſence ſhall be ſupplied by the *Comforter*'s more beneficial preſence: and wonderfully beneficial ſurely muſt that preſence be, which could not only compenſate, but render advantageous the loſs of that moſt benign and ſweet converſation, that tender and watchful inſpection, that wholſome and powerful advice, that clear and lively pat-

John 16. 7.

tern of all goodness shining forth in our Saviour's life upon his disciples: could there be a more indulgent Master, a more discreet guide, a more delightful companion, a more faithful friend, a mightier protector, a surer assistant, a sweeter comforter than he? Yes, it seemeth that our Saviour did apprehend, that upon some accompts those benefits with greater advantage might accrue to them by the gift of his Spirit, than by his own immediate presence; that it by internal operation could more clearly inform the mind, more strongly incline the will, more vigorously affect the heart, than any exteriour word or example could do: neither could our *Saviour*, according to the condition of his humanity, limited to particularities of time and place, so perfectly correspond to the various exigencies of mankind; as that omnipotent Spirit, intimately present to, uniformly diffused through all things: him therefore did our Saviour leave the guardian of his otherwise *Orphan* disciples; him did he substitute to undergo the care and tuition of them; to conduct them in the right way, to preserve them from dangers, to comfort them in distresses, to manage all their concernments, to be their counsellour, monitour, advocate and patron; by him he meant fully to make good his word, *that he would be with them till the end of this world.*

Οὐκ ἀφήσω ὑμᾶς ὀρφανούς. John 14. 18.

Ἕως τῆς συντελείας τοῦ αἰῶνος. Matt. 28. 20.

But more distinctly to survey the many benefits and advantages proceeding from this excellent gift unto us, we may observe, that on it the foundation, the improvement, the completion of all our good and happiness do depend; that to the *Holy Spirit* in truth and justice are to be ascribed, 1. Our better state and being. 2. Our spiritual powers and abilities. 3. Our good and acceptable performances; whatever we are, whatever we can do, whatever we actually do perform as Christians.

1. We owe to the Holy Spirit our spiritual state and being; our spiritual life, our freedom, our honourable condition.

Πνεῦμα ζωοποιεῖν. 1 Cor. 15. 45. John 6. 63. 2 Cor. 3. 36. Eph. 2. 1, 5. 1 Pet. 1. 23.

It is by virtue of this *quickning Spirit* that from death and corruption we are raised to an immortal and indefectible state of life; that (as St. *Paul* saith) we that were *dead in trespasses and sins are quickned together with Christ*; we by this *incorruptible seed are born again*, not as formerly to a life of vanity and misery, or to the enjoyment of a few transitory delights, tempered with many vexatious inconveniences, pains and troubles; but to sure capacities of most solid and durable contentment, *to a living hope of an incorruptible inheritance reserved in heaven for us.*

1 Pet. 1. 3, 4.

It is thereby we are free-men, enjoying a true and perfect liberty; being enfranchised from divers intolerable slaveries, to which we naturally are subjected, and from which otherwise we could not be exempted; from the dominion of a rigorous law, which prescribeth hard duties, but doth not afford strength to perform them; apt to condemn us, but not able to convert us; from the clamorous accusations of a guilty conscience, with anxious fears of punishment, that *spirit of bondage unto fear*, of which St. *Paul* speaketh; from the tyranny of a most crafty, spiteful and cruel enemy, that wicked one who did *captivate us at his pleasure*, and detained us under his power; from the no less unjust, no less mischievous domination of our own flesh, or natural concupiscence, imposing grievous tasks and destructive necessities upon us; *It is* (saith St. *Paul*) *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which setteth us free from these laws of sin and of death*; so that, *where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

Gal. 4. 24. *Lex os omnium potuit obstruere, non potuit mentem convertere.* Ambr. Rom. 8. 15. 2 Tim. 2. 26. Eph. 2. 2.

Rom. 8. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 17.

From such base thraldoms we thereby are redeemed, and not only so, but are advanc'd to an honourable condition, are ennobled with illustrious relations, are entitled to glorious privileges: all the benefits and immunities contained in the charter of the *new Jerusalem*, all the advantages and privileges

privileges appropriated to God's Court and Family thereby appertain unto us; for *we have* (saith St. *Paul*) *access by one Spirit unto the Father* and are thence *no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens of the Saints, and of the household of God:* by this *holy unction* we are consecrated *Kings and Priests unto God*; by participation of this *immortal seed*, we are engrafted into alliance with the heavenly King, become children of God, brethren of Christ, heirs of paradise (an infinitely better paradise than that, from which we formerly were excluded;) for this is that πνεῦμα υἱοθεσίας, that Spirit, which constituteth us the Sons of God, qualifying us to be so by dispositions resembling God, and filial affections toward him; certifying us that we are so, and causing us by a free instinct *to cry Abba Father*, running into his bosome of love, and flying under the wings of his mercy in all our needs and distresses; whence *as many as are led by the Spirit, they* (saith St. *Paul*) *are the Sons of God*; and, *the Spirit it self beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God*; yea, which may seem yet a farther pitch of dignity, we, by intervention of this Spirit, are united and incorporated into *Christ* himself, being made living members of his body, partaking a common life and sense with him; by it we are compacted into the same spiritual edifice, dedicated to the worship and inhabitation of God; our bodies and souls are made temples of his divinity, thrones of his majesty, orbs of his celestial light, paradises of his blissful presence; for, *In whom* (saith St. *Paul*) *ye are built together for an inhabitation of God through the Spirit*; and, *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

Eph. 2. 18, 19. Rev. 1. 6. 1 Pet. 2. 9.

Rom. 8. 15. John 1. 13.

Gal 4. 6.

Rom. 8. 14.

Rom. 8. 16.

Eph. 2. 26. 22

1 Cor. 3. 16

By the *Holy Spirit* we are enstated in these unconceivably glorious privileges, and by it onely we are assured of them, to our comfort; the gift of it as it is a great part of them, and the chief cause, so it is a sure confirmation and pledge; *Ye*, saith St. *Paul*, *were sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance*; and *It is God who did establish us with you in Christ, and anointed us, and also sealed us, and gave the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*; all which phrases do import the same thing, that is, a comfortable assurance concerning the reality of the benefits by divine grace exhibited and promised to us.

Eph. 1. 13. Rom. 8. 9, 11. 2 Cor. 1. 21.

2. Neither only relatively and extrinsecally is our state bettered and exalted from death to life, from slavery to freedom, from baseness to dignity; but our selves answerably are changed, and amended by the same *Holy Spirit*, with a real and intrinsecal alteration, transforming us into other things, much different from what we were in our former natural state; by that *renovation of the Holy Ghost*, of which St. *Paul* speaketh, we are (saith *he*) *renewed in the Spirit of our mind*; so that not onely the decayed frame of our soul is thereby repaired, and reformed, but its powers are much improved and inlarged; we are thence endowed with new and better faculties, as it were; with quicker apprehensions, with sincerer judgments, with righter inclinations, with nobler passions, than we had before (yea than we could have had in our original state;) so that in the language of *Holy Scripture* we thence become *new men*, and *new creatures, created according to God in righteousness and true holiness*; according to God, that is in conformity to the divine perfections of rectitude in mind and will, so as to resemble God in a higher degree, and more worthy respects than formerly. Our Father *Adam* was made εἰς ψυχὴν ζῶσαν; a creature endowed with life and sense, furnished with powers and appetites disposing to acquire, preserve and enjoy the conveniences agreeable to that frame; and we naturally are ψυχικὶ ἄνθρωποι, *animal*,

2 Cor. 5. 17.

Tit. 3. 5.

Eph. 4. 23.

Eph. 4. 24. 2 Cor. 5. 17. Col. 3. 10.

Eph. 4. 23. 2. 10. Col. 3. 10.

1 Cor. 15. 45.

1 Cor. 2. 14.

mal men; such as naturally do apprehend, do affect, do pursue things concerning this present life; the pleasures of sense, and the satisfactions of fancy; freedom from want and pain, security from danger and disturbance, together with the means we suppose conducible to those, wealth, honour and power; these are those *desires of the flesh and of the mind*, the things which according to our natural temper and frame we like and approve; which most men therefore do highly value, passionately love, and earnestly seek: Nor doth nature only incline us to a complacence in these things, but customary fruition greatly endeareth them to us; so that we continually improve our acquaintance, and contract a firmer alliance with them; but spiritual and divine things (*the things of the Spirit of God*, as St. *Paul* calleth them) we cannot * *receive*, that is, simply of our selves, without aid of another interiour principle, we have no capacity to apprehend them, no disposition to entertain them, no strength to pursue them; they (as the *Apostle* saith) *are foolishness to us*, that is, incongruous to our prejudicate notions, and insipid to our corrupt palates.

Θελήματα σαρκὸς καὶ τῶν διανοιῶν. Eph. 2. 3.

Τὰ τοῦ πνεύματος τοῦ Θεοῦ. 1 Cor. 2. 14. *Δέχεσθαι.

Such doctrines as these; that our felicity consisteth not in affluence of temporal enjoyments, but in dispositions of soul crossing our humours, curbing our appetites, and quelling our passions; in conformity of practice to rules distasteful to our sense; in the love and favour of an invisible Being: in reversion of an estate not to be possessed until after our death in another world; that none of these present things do well deserve our serious regard, affection or care, and that it is blamable to be sollicitous about them; that naked goodness (how low, weak and poor soever) is to be chosen before all the specious pomps and glories of this world; that the secret testimony of conscience is to be preferred before all the approbation and applause of men; that the hope of future joy should oversway the desire of present most certain and sensible delights; that the loss of all things may sometime be deemed our greatest gain, being contemned our highest honour, enduring afflictions our most desirable condition, death our surest welfare, a cross preferrible to a crown; that accordingly it is often advantageous and expedient for us, and a duty incumbent on us willingly to discard our dearest contents of life, to sacrifice our most valued interests, to forsake our neerest relations, to refuse what we most affect, to undertake what we most distast, to undergo without reluctancy or regret the most bitter accidents that can befall us; that we must (to use the *holy style*) *hate our own souls, deny our selves, and take up our cross, quit houses and lands, desert kindred and friends*; ἀποτάσσεσθαι πᾶσι τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ ὑπάρχουσι *to renounce* (or bid farewel) *to all that he hath*, or owneth; *cut off our right hands, and pluck out our right eyes*; *circumcise our hearts, mortifie our members*; *crucify our flesh with its affections and lusts*; *be crucified to the world*; to *accompt all* worldly *things damage*, dross, and *dung* in comparison to spiritual goods. That we must so far remit and restrain our self-love, as to love all men, not excluding our greatest enemies, as our selves; so as not only to part freely with our particular accommodations, but upon occasion, in imitation of our Saviour, to *lay down our lives for them*; so as not only to comport with their infirmities, but to requite their extremest injuries with good will and good turns; so as to do all good to all men, to return no evil to any; *to bless them that curse us, to do good to them that hate us, to pray for them which despitefully use us, and persecute us.*

John 12. 25. Luke 14. 26. 2. 13. Luke 14. 33. Matt. 16. 24. 5. 29. Col. 3. 5. Gal. 5. 24. 6. 14. Rom. 6. 6. Phil. 3. 7, 8.

Matt. 6. 44.

These, and such like dictates of the Spirit are *hard*, and harsh sayings, absurd to our natural conceit, and abominable to our carnal humour; we cannot readily swallow them, we cannot easily digest them; in respect to them

John 6. 60.

them we as mere men are ἐχθροὶ τῇ διανοίᾳ, *enemies in our mind*, or reason; our discourse presently doth contradict and oppose them: Our reason is shut up, and barr'd with various appetites, humours and passions against such truths, nor can we admit them into our hearts, except God by his Spirit do *set open our mind*, and work a free passage for them into us; it is *he who commanded the light to shine out of darkness*, must as St. *Paul* speaketh) *illustrate our hearts with the knowledge* of these things; an *Unction from the holy one*, clearing our eyes, softning our hearts, healing our distempered faculties must (as St. *John* informeth us) *teach* and persuade us this sort of truths; a hearty faith of these seemingly incredible propositions must indeed be, as St. *Paul* calleth it, *the gift of God*, proceeding from that *Spirit of faith*, whereof the same *Apostle* speaketh; such faith is not (as St. *Basil* saith) *engendred by Geometrical necessities, but by the effectual operations of the Holy Ghost: Flesh and bloud will not reveal unto us, nor can any man* with clear confidence *say, that Jesus* (the Authour, Master and Exemplifier of these doctrines) *is the Lord*, (the *Messias*, the infallible Prophet, the universal Law-giver, the Son of the living God) *but by the Holy Ghost: Every Spirit, which* sincerely *confesseth him to be the Christ*, who hath enjoyned these Precepts, we may with St. *John* safely conclude to *be of God*; for of our selves *we are not sufficient* (as the *Apostle* saith) λογίζεσθαί τι, *to reason out*, or collect any of these things; we never of our own accord, without divine attraction should *come unto Christ*, that is should effectually consent unto, and embrace his institution, consisting of such unplausible Propositions, and Precepts; hardly would his own Disciples, who had so long enjoyed the light of his instruction and conversation, have admitted it, if he had not granted to them that *Spirit of truth*, whose work it was ὁδηγῆσαι, to lead them in this unknown and uncouth way, ἀναγγέλλειν, to tell them again and again, that is, to instill and inculcate these crabbid truths upon them, ὑπομιμνήσκειν, to admonish, excite and urge them to the marking and minding them; hardly, I say, without the guidance of this Spirit would our Lord's Disciples have admitted divers Evangelical truths, as our Lord himself told them; *I have* (said he) *many things beside to say to you, but ye cannot as yet bear them; but when he, the Spirit of truth shall come, he shall conduct you into all truth.*

Col. 1. 21.

Διανοίγειν τὸν νοῦν. Luke 24. 45. Acts 16. 14. 2 Cor. 4. 6.

1 John 2. 27.

Eph. 2. 8. Phil. 1. 29. 1 Cor. 12. 9. Πνεῦμα τῆς πίστεως. 2 Cor. 4. 13. 1 Cor. 12. 9. Πίστις οὐκ ἐν γεωμετρικαῖς ἀνάγκαις, ἀλλ' ἢ τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐνεργείας ἐγγινομένη. Bas. in Ps. 115. Matt. 16. 17. 1 Cor. 12. 3.

1 John 4. 2. 2 Cor. 3, 5.

John 6. 44. John 16. 13. 14. 26.

John 16. 12.

As for the mighty *Sages* of the world, the learned *Scribes*, the subtile *disputers*, the deep politicians, the *wise men according to the flesh*, the men of most refined judgment, and improved reason in the world's eye, they were more ready to deride, than to regard, to impugn, than to admit these doctrines; to the *Greeks who sought wisdom*, the preaching of them did seem *foolishness*.

1 Cor. 1. 20. &c.

It is true some few sparks or flashes of this divine knowledge may possibly be driven out by rational consideration; *Philosophy* may yield some twilight glimmerings thereof; common reason may dictate a faint consent unto, may produce a cold tendency after some of these things; but a clear perception, and a resolute persuasion of mind, that *full assurance of faith*, and *inflexible confession of hope*: which the Apostle to the *Hebrews* speaketh of; that *all riches of the full assurance of understanding*, that *abundant knowledge of the divine will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding*, with which St. *Paul* did pray that his *Colossians* might *be replenished*; these so perfect illustrations

Πληροφορία τῆς πίστεως. Heb. 10. 22. Ὁμολογία τῆς ἐλπίδος ἀκλινής. Heb. 10. 23.

Πᾶς πλοῦτος τῆς πληροφορίας τῆς συνέσεως. Col. 2. 2. Col. 1. 9.

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ons of the mind, ſo powerful convictions of the heart do argue immediate influences from the fountain of life and wiſdom, the divine Spirit: no external inſtruction could infuſe, no interiour diſcourſe could excite them; could penetrate thoſe opacities of ignorance, and diſſipate thoſe thick miſts of prejudice, wherein nature and cuſtom do involve us; could ſo thoroughly awaken the lethargick ſtupidity of our ſouls; could ſupple the refractary ſtiffneſs of our wills, could mollify the ſtony hardneſs of our hearts, could void our natural averſation to ſuch things, and quell that Rom. 8. 7. φρόνημα τῆς σαρκὸς, *that carnal mind*, the which St. *Paul* ſaith *is enmity againſt God, for it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*; 2Cor. 10. 4, 5. could depreſs thoſe ὑψώματα, thoſe *lofty towers* of ſelf-conceit, *reared againſt the knowledge of God*, and *demoliſh* thoſe ὀχυρώματα, thoſe *bulwarks* of ſelf-will and perverſe ſtomach oppoſed againſt the impreſſions of divine truth; and *captivate* πᾶν νόημα, *every conceit* and device of ours *to the obedience of Chriſt*, and his diſcipline: Well therefore did St. *Paul* pray in Eph. 1. 17. behalf of his *Epheſians*, that *God would beſtow on them that Spirit of wiſdom and revelation in the acknowledgment of him, and that the eyes of their mind* Τῆς διανοίας. (or reaſon) *might be enlightned, ſo as to know the hope of their calling*; that is, to underſtand and believe the doctrines of Chriſtianity, which upon condition of obedience did promiſe felicity to them.

So is the light of ſpiritual knowledge, together with a temper of mind diſpoſing to receive it, communicated to us; but farther alſo by the ſame divine power and ſpirit are our vital heat and vigour, our active ſtrength and courage imparted. For as mere men we are not only blind to diſcern, dull to conceive, backward to undertake the neceſſary duties of vertue and piety, but we are alſo dead, heartleſs and unwieldy, lame and impotent, indiſpoſed and uncapable to perform them: though we ſhould competently apprehend our duty, and our *ſpirit* thence ſhould be Matt. 26. 41. *willing*, yet *our fleſh*, or natural power, *is weak*; we may (as St. *Paul* inſtructeth us) in our judgment conſent that *the law* Rom. 7. 12, 16. Σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός. *is holy, juſt and good*; and conſequently *to will may be preſent to us*; that is, we may be deſirous, and in Rom. 7. 18. Συνήδομαι τῷ νόμῳ κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον. Rom. 7. 22. ſome meaſure reſolved to obey it; yea we may *have ſome interiour rational complacence therein*; and yet not have ability to act according to theſe dictates and deſires; for *to will is preſent to me* (ſaith he in the perſon of a man Rom. 7. 18. Τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὐχ εὑρίσκω. endewed only with natural ſtrength, abſtracting from the ſubſidiary virtue and operation of the divine Spirit,) *but to perform that which is good, I find not*; I perceive not any means, or way of affecting it; knowledge therefore and willingneſs to do good doth not ſuffice; we need a prevalent force to ſtir and raiſe this unweildy bulk; to overpoiſe our natural propenſions, to ſubdue the reluctancies, and check the importunities of ſence, to correct bad nature, and reclaim from bad cuſtom: The natural might and policy of our ſingle reaſon, being very feeble and ſhallow, is not fitly matched to encounter that potent confederacy of enemies, which continually with open violence doth invade and aſſail us; or which by clandeſtine wiles doth watch to circumvent and ſupplant us: Is it eaſie for us not to dread the frowns, nor to be charmed by the flatteries; to ſlight both the hatred and favour; to abide the perſecutions, and to avoid the allurements of this world; this wicked, violent, deceitful world, which is ever ready to deter from good, and entice us to evil? Is it eaſie to reſtrain and repreſs thoſe *fleſhly luſts, which* (as St. *Peter* ſaith) 1 Pet. 2. 11. James 4. 1. *do war againſt our ſouls*, combating them with their own forces; uſing their own faculties and members as weapons againſt them? Is it eaſie to

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reſcue our ſelves from that *other law in our members, that warreth againſt the law of our underſtanding, and captivateth us to the law of ſin?* Is it a ſmall matter to ſet upon, to grapple with, to knock down that Gigantick-*Philiſtine*, inordinate ſelf-love (the root of injuſtice, pride, envy, malice, ambition and avarice within us) which naturally is ſo tall and ſtout; which, if not checked in its progreſs, will daily grow in ſtature and ſtrength? Is it a ſlight buſineſs to detect, to counterplot, to decline or defeat thoſe μεθοδείας, thoſe *devices*, or *ſubtile trains*, and ſleights of the Tempter; *to wreſtle with principalities, with powers, with the rulers of this darkſome world, with the ſpiritualities of wickedneſs*, ſurrounding us? may we not reaſonably in compariſon to theſe mighty *Anakim* be (as the children of *Iſrael* anciently were) *in our own ſight as Graſhoppers*, quite deſpairing by our own ſtrength to vanquiſh, to reſiſt them? Rom. 7. 23. Eph. 6. 11. Τὴν ἡμῖν ἢ πάλη. Eph. 6. 12. Num. 13. 33.

In our ſpiritual conflict with ſuch dangerous and dreadful adverſaries, we do need an ἐπιχορηγία τῦ πνεύμα]Θ, (as St. *Paul* ſpeaketh, that is) *a large ſupply of the Spirit*, a collation of auxiliary forces, an habitual ſupport derived from that invincible and infallible ſpirit, which only is ſtronger, and wiſer than they; we need to be armed with that δύναμις ἐξ ὕψ]ους, that *power from on high*, or heavenly might, whereby the *Apoſtles* were enabled to fight their noble battles, and to atchieve their glorious conqueſts, ſubduing the rebellious world, and baffling the powers of darkneſs; we need δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι, *to be ſtrengthened with might by Chriſt's ſpirit in the inward man*, as St. *Paul* expreſſeth it; whereby, as he, we may πάντα ἰσχύειν, be *able to do all things*, or to accompliſh the moſt difficult parts of our duty; without which *we can do nothing*, that is, cannot diſcharge the moſt eaſie things required of us; *all our ſufficiency is of God*; it is he, who *out of his goodneſs doth effect in us both to will and to perform*; his ſpirit *taking part with our infirmities*, and thereby giving us advantage over all oppoſition and difficulty. The chief reaſon why we *do not ſin*, or perſiſt in a courſe of diſobedience to the Laws of God, is, as St. *John* telleth us, *becauſe the divine ſeed abideth in us*, that root of divine life, and vital activity implanted in us by the Holy Spirit; that *divine nature* (as St. *Peter* ſtyleth it) that principle and ſpring of ſpiritual motion by him inſerted in us; from which only *ſeed* or *nature* do ſprout all heavenly graces and vertues. Luke 24. 49. (Iſa. 59. 19.) Eph. 3. 16. Col. 1. 11. Phil. 4. 13. John 15. 5. 2 Cor. 3. 5. Phil. 2. 13. Col. 1. 12. Τὸ πνεῦμα συναντιλαμβάνε]αι τ ἀσθενείας ἡμῶν——Rom. 8. 26. 1 John 3. 9. 1 Pet. 1. 23. 1 Pet. 2. 4. Θεία φύσις. 2 Pet. *Vis divinæ gratiæ, potentior utique natura.* Tertull.

The principal and original virtue, charity *(the root, the fountain, the mother of all goodneſs*, as Saint *Chryſoſtome* calleth it) even that *ſhed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit given unto us*, as St. *Paul* telleth us; and *the fruit* (ſaith he) *of the Spirit is in all goodneſs, righteouſneſs and truth*; and, *Love, peace, long-ſuffering, benignity, goodneſs, faith, meekneſs, temperance* are by the ſame divine *Apoſtle* reckoned ſtreams from the ſame ſource, fruits of the ſame rich and goodly ſtock: to it generally are attributed all purification of our hearts, mortification of our luſts, ſanctification of our lives, and conſequently ſalvation of our ſouls: *Ye* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *are waſhed, ye are ſanctified, ye are juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the ſpirit of our God*; and, *God hath choſen us from the beginning to ſalvation by ſanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth*; and, *Having* (ſaith St. *Peter*) *purified our ſouls in obedience to the truth, by the Spirit, unto charity unfeigned*; and, *If* (ſaith St. *Paul* again) *by the Spirit ye mortify the deeds of the Fleſh, ye ſhall live*; Thus doth our ſpiritual being and ſtate, toge- Οὐ γὰρ ἔστιν ἁμαρτημάτων ἀπαλλαγῆναι ἄνευ τ τῦ πνεύμα]Θ ἐνεργείας. Chryſ. Ῥίζα, πηγή, μήτηρ ἁπάντων ἐστὶ ἀγαθῶν. Chryſ. Rom. 5. 5. Eph. 5. 9. Gal. 5. 22. 1 Cor. 6. 11. 2 Theſ. 2. 13. 1 Pet. 1. 22. Rom. 8. 13.

ther with our life and active powers depend upon the *Holy Spirit*; and not only ſo, but

3. The continued ſubſtance and preſervation, the actual uſe and exerciſe of them, all our diſcreet conduct, all our good practice do rely upon him: It is true of our ſpiritual no leſs than of our natural life. *If he doth avert his face, we are troubled*; *if he doth ſubſtract his influence, we die and return unto our duſt*: upon all occaſions we do need his direction, aid and comfort; for *the way of man* (as the *Prophet* ſaith) *is not in himſelf*, *it is not in man that walketh to direct his ſteps*; *It is the Lord* (as the *Pſalmiſt* ſaith) *that ordereth the ſteps of a good man, and upholdeth him with his hand*; we have all need to pray with that good man; *Cauſe me to know the way, wherein I ſhould walk*; *teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God*; *thy ſpirit is good, lead me into the Land of uprightneſs.*

Pſal. 104. 29. Jer. 10. 23. Pſal. 37. 23. Pſal. 143. 8. 10.

We are vain and uncertain in our opinions, fickle and irreſolute in our purpoſes, ſlow and heavy in our proceedings; apt to faint and faulter, to ſtumble and ſlip in all our practice; we do need therefore this ſure Oracle to conſult in our doubts and darkneſſes; this faithful friend to direct and adviſe us in our affairs; this conſtant Monitor to rouſe, and quicken us in our undertakings; this powerful Guardian to ſupport and eſtabliſh us in our ways; It is, in reſpect to good men, this ſteady hand that holdeth the helm, and gently ſteereth their courſe through the blind tracts of religious practice; withdrawing them from thoſe dangerous ſhelves of errour and temptation, upon which they are apt to ſplit; it is this heavenly gale, that filleth their ſails with conſtant reſolution, and fairly driveth them forward in their voyage toward eternal bliſs. He ſoftly doth whiſper and inſinuate good thoughts into us; doth kindle pious deſires, doth cheriſh virtuous intentions, doth promote honeſt endeavours; he ſeaſonably checketh and reſtraineth us from ſin; he faithfully reproveth and upbraideth us for committing it; he raiſeth wholſome remorſe, ſhame and diſpleaſure for our unworthineſs and folly; He ſweetly warmeth our cold affections, inflaming our hearts with devotion toward God; he qualifieth us, and encourageth us to approach the throne of grace, breeding in us faith and humble confidence, prompting us fit matter of requeſt, becoming our advocate and interceſſour for the good ſucceſs of our prayers; *Through Chriſt Jeſus* (ſaith St. *Paul*) *we have acceſs by one ſpirit unto the Father*; and, *The ſpirit helpeth our infirmities*; *for we know not what we ſhould ask for as we ought, but the ſpirit it ſelf intercedeth for us.*

Eph. 2. 18. Rom. 8. 26.

He guardeth us, he ſtandeth us, he ſuſtaineth by us in all trials, and temptations, affording *grace ſufficient* to eſcape or to endure them; *not ſuffering us to be tempted above what we are able.*

2 Cor. 12. 2. 1 Cor. 10. 13.

He ſupporteth and comforteth us in our afflictions and diſtreſſes of all kinds, of our inward and outward eſtate: this *David* knew when in his penitential agonies he prayed, *Caſt me not away from thy preſence, and take not thy holy Spirit from me*; *reſtore unto me the joy of thy ſalvation, and uphold me with thy free ſpirit*; this thoſe *firſt Chriſtians* felt, who under perſecutions and all outward diſcouragements were yet *filled with joy*, and *did walk in the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt*; whence that teſtimony of St. *Paul* concerning the *Theſſalonians*; *Ye were followers of me, and of the Lord, receiving the word in much affliction with joy of the Holy Ghoſt*; by it the bleſſed *Saints*, *Martyrs* and *Confeſſors* being inſpired did not only with admirable patience, but incredible alacrity undergo the extremeſt loſſes, ignominies and tortures which the ſpite of hell, and rage of the world could inflict on them.

Pſal. 51. 12. Acts 13. 14. 9. 31, &c. 1 Theſ. 1. 6.

It

It is in fine, this Holy Spirt, which is the ſole Author and ſpring of all true delight, of all real content within us; of that *unſpeakable joy in believing*, that *gayety of hope*, that ſatisfaction in well doing; the partaking of his ſociety, influence and conſolation is indeed the moſt delicious repaſt, and richeſt cordial of our ſoul; the neareſt reſemblance, the ſweeteſt foretaſt of Paradiſe. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Rom. 15. 13. Heb. 3. 6.

So many, ſo great; yea far more, far greater than, ſhould the time give me leave, I could enumerate or expreſs, are the benefits accruing to us from this moſt excellent gift of God, by him graciouſly conferred upon all good Chriſtians; for which we ſhould correſpondently endeavour with all our hearts to praiſe, and thank him; in all our lives to make grateful and worthy returns for it; eſpecially by well uſing it to the greateſt purpoſes, for which it was beſtowed, of enabling us to ſerve God, of preſerving us from ſin, of conducting us to eternal ſalvation.

Let us earneſtly invite this Holy gueſt unto us, by our Prayers unto him, who hath promiſed to beſtow his Spirit upon thoſe, which ask it; to impart *this living* ſtream to every one, which *thirſteth* after it; let us willingly receive him into our hearts, let us treat him with all kind uſage, with all humble obſervance. Let us not exclude him by ſupine neglect, or rude *reſiſtance*; let us not *grieve* him by our perverſe and froward behaviour toward him: let us not *tempt him* by our fond preſumptions, or baſe treacheries; let us not *quench* his heavenly light and heat by our foul luſts and paſſions: But let us admit gladly his gentle illapſes; let us hearken to his faithful ſuggeſtions; let us comply with his kindly motions; let us demean our ſelves modeſtly, conſiſtently, and officiouſly toward him; that we may ſo do, God of his infinite mercy grant unto us, through *Jeſus Chriſt our Lord*; to whom with the ſame *Holy Spirit* for ever be all glory, and praiſe. *Amen.* Luke 11. 33. John 7. 37, 38, 39. Acts 7. 51. Eph. 4. 30. Iſa. 63. 10. Acts 5. 9. 1 Theſ. 5. 19.

O God the ſtrength of all them, that put their truſt in thee, mercifully accept our prayers; and becauſe through the weakneſs of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without thee, grant us the help of thy grace, that in keeping of thy commandments we may pleaſe thee both in will and deed, through Jeſus Chriſt *our Lord.* Amen.

SER-

A DEFENCE OF THE B. TRINITY.

Trinity Sunday, 1663.

Φύσει μὲν ἅπας λόγος σαθρὸς ἢ ἐυκίνητος, ἢ διὰ τὸ ἀντιμαχόμενον λόγον ἐλευθερίαν ἐκ ἔχων· ὃ ὃ ᾧδε ἢ τοσοῦτῳ μᾶλλον, ὅσῳ μέιζον τὸ ὑποκείμενον, ἢ ὁ ζῆλος πλείων, ἢ ὁ κίνδυνος χαλεπώτερος· ἢ γὰρ νοῆσαι χαλεπὸν, ἢ ἑρμηνεῦσαι ἀμήχανον, ἢ ἀκοῆς πεπαρμένης ἕπεται χεῖρον ἑρμηνεύτερον. Greg. Naz. *Orat.* 26.

COL. III. 2.

Set your Affections on things above.

Φρονεῖτε τὰ ἄνω.

FOR understanding this Apostolical Precept, two Particulars must be considered; first the Act, φρονεῖν (which is rendred to *set our Affections*) then the Object, τὰ ἄνω, *things above*; these we briefly shall explain.

The word φρονεῖν doth primarily, and also according to common use, denote an advertency, or intent application of the mind upon any Object: Of the mind, that is, of a man's Soul, especially of its rational part; so as to include the powers of Understanding, Will, Affection, Activity; whence it may imply direction of our Understanding to know; of our Will to chuse and embrace; of our Affection to love, desire, relish; of our Activity to pursue any good (real or apparent) which is proposed: according to which most comprehensive sense (suting the nature of the thing) I do take the word, supposing that St. *Paul* doth enjoin us to employ all our mental Faculties in study, choice, passion, endeavour upon supernal things.

The τὰ ἄνω (things above) may be so taken, as to import all things relating to our spiritual Life here, or our future state hereafter; the which do either actually subsist above in Heaven, or have a final reference thither: so they may comprize, 1. The substantial Beings, to whom we stand related, owe respect, perform duty. 2. The state

and condition of our ſpiritual Life here, or hereafter, as we are Servants and Subjects of God, Citizens of Heaven, Candidates of Immortal Happineſs. 3. Rules to be obſerved, Qualities to be acquired, Actions to be performed, Means to be uſed by us in regard to the ſuperior Place and State.

Of theſe things the incomparably Principal and Supream, the τὸ ὑπερέχον, is the ever moſt Glorious and Bleſſed Trinity; to the minding of which this Day is peculiarly dedicated, and the which indeed is always the moſt excellent, moſt beneficial, moſt comfortable Object of our Contemplation and Affection; wherefore upon it I ſhall now immediately fix my Diſcourſe.

The Sacred Trinity may be conſidered, either as it is in it ſelf wrapt up in unexplicable folds of Myſtery; or as it hath diſcovered it ſelf operating in wonderful methods of Grace towards us.

As it is in it ſelf, 'tis an Object too bright and dazling for our weak Eye to faſten upon, an Abyſs too deep for our ſhort Reaſon to fathom; I can only ſay, That we are ſo bound to mind it, as to exerciſe our Faith, and expreſs our Humility, in willingly believing, in ſubmiſſively adoring thoſe high Myſteries which are revealed in the Holy Oracles concerning it, by that Spirit it ſelf, *which ſearcheth the Depths of God*, and by that only Son of God, who reſiding in his Father's Boſom, hath thence brought them forth, and *expounded them* to us, ſo far as was fit for our capacity and uſe: And the Lectures ſo read by the Eternal *Wiſdom of God*, the Propoſitions uttered by the Mouth of *Truth it ſelf*, we are obliged with a docile Ear, and a credulous Heart, to entertain.

Ἐκεῖνος ἐξηγήσατο. Joh. 1. 18.

That there is one Divine Nature or Eſſence, common unto Three Perſons incomprehenſibly united, and ineffably diſtinguiſhed; united in Eſſential Attributes, diſtinguiſhed by peculiar Idioms and Relations; all equally infinite in every Divine Perfection, each different from other in order and manner of ſubſiſtence; that there is a mutual inexiſtence of one in all, and all in one; a communication without any deprivation or diminution in the Communicant; an Eternal Generation, and an Eternal Proceſſion, without precedence or ſucceſſion, without proper cauſality or dependence; a Father imparting his own, and the Son receiving his Father's Life, and a Spirit iſſuing from both, without any diviſion, or multiplication of Eſſence: theſe are Notions which may well puzzle our Reaſon in conceiving how they agree, but ſhould not ſtagger our Faith in aſſenting that they are true; upon which we ſhould meditate, not with hope to comprehend, but with diſpoſition to admire, veiling our Faces in the preſence, and proſtrating our Reaſon at the feet of Wiſdom ſo far tranſcending us.

Joh. 10. 38. 14. 10. 17. 21.

There be thoſe, who, becauſe they cannot untie, dare to cut in ſunder theſe ſacred Knots; who, becauſe they cannot fully conceive it, dare flatly to deny them; who, inſtead of confeſſing their own infirmity, do charge the plain Doctrins and Aſſertions of Holy Scripture with impoſſibility. Others ſeem to think they can demonſtrate theſe Myſteries by Arguments grounded upon Principles of natural Light; and expreſs it by Similitudes derived from common Experience. To repreſs the Preſumption of the former, and to reſtrain the Curioſity of the latter, the following Conſiderations (improved by your Thoughts) may perhaps ſomewhat conduce.

1. We

1. We may consider, that our Reason is no competent or capable Judg concerning Propositions of this nature: *Our Breast* (as *Minutius* speaketh) *is a narrow Vessel, that will not hold much Understanding*; 'tis not sufficient, nor was ever designed to sound such depths, to descry the radical Principles of all Being, to reach the extreme possibilities of things. Such an intellectual Capacity is vouchsafed to us as doth sute to our degree (the lowest Rank of Intelligent Creatures) as becometh our Station in this inferiour part of the World, as may qualify us to discharge the petty Businesses committed to our management, and the facile Duties incumbent on us: but to know what God is, how he subsisteth, what he can, what he should do, by our natural perspicacity, or by any means we can use, farther than he pleaseth to reveal, doth not sute to the meanness of our Condition, or the narrowness of our Capacity; these really are the most elevated Sublimities, and the abstrusest Subtilties that are, or can be in the nature of things; he that can penetrate them, may erect his Tribunal any where in the World, and pretend justly that nothing in Heaven or Earth is exempted from his Judgment: But in truth, how unfit our Reason is to exercise such universal Jurisdiction, we may discern by comparing it to our Sense; it is obvious that many Beasts do (by advantage of a finer Sense) see, hear, smell things imperceptible to us; and were it not very unreasonable to conclude that such things do not exist, or are in themselves altogether insensible, because they do not at all appear to us? Is it not evident, that we ought to impute their imperceptibility (respecting us) to the defect of our Sense, to its dulness and grossness, in regard to the subtilty of those Objects? Even so may Propositions in themselves, and in regard to the capacity of higher Understandings (for there are gradual differences in Understanding, as well as in Sense) be true and very intelligible, which to our inferior Reason seem unintelligible, or repugnant to the Prenotions with which our Soul is imbued; and our not discerning those Truths, may argue the blindness and weakness of our Understanding, not any fault or inconsistency in the things themselves; nor should it cause us any wise to distrust them, if they come recommended to our belief by competent Authority.

Nobis ad intellectum pectus angustum est, &c. Min. F.

Τὸν μὲν ἓν ποιητὴν καὶ πατέρα τοῦδε τοῦ παντὸς εὑρεῖν τε ἔργον καὶ εὑρόντα εἰς πάντας ἀδύνατον λέγειν. Plato in Tim.

To such purposes indeed the Holy Scripture frequently doth vilify our Reason and Knowledg: *Every man* (saith *Jeremiah*) *is brutish in knowledg. The Lord* (saith the *Psalmist*) *knoweth the thoughts of men (of wise men,* as St. *Paul* quoteth it) *that they are vanity. Vain man* (saith he in *Job*) *would be wise, tho man be born like a wild Asses Colt*; (that is, however we affect to seem wise, yet to be dull as an Ass, to be wild as a Colt, is natural to us.) *My thoughts* (saith God in the Prophet) *are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways: for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.* God's Wisdom is as the Heavens, the highest and top of all Wisdom; Man's as the Earth, beneath which there is no degree, but that of Hell and Darkness: We therefore in this respect are unfit to determine concerning things so exceedingly sublime and subtile.

Jer. 10. 14. Psal. 103. 14. 1 Cor. 3. 10. Job 11. 12. Isa. 55. 8.

2. We may consider, that not only the imperfection of our Reason it self, but the manner of using it doth incapacitate us to judg about these matters. Had we competent skill to sail in this deep Ocean, yet we do want a Gale to drive us, and a Compass to steer our Course by therein; we have not any firm grounds to build our Judgment on, or certain Rules to square it by. We cannot effectually discourse or de-

termine upon any Subject, without having Principles homogeneous and
Annal. I. 7. pertinent thereto (that are ἐν τῇ αὐτῇ συγγενείᾳ, cognate and congruous to the Subject-matter, as the Philosopher speaketh) upon which to found our Argumentation. Now all the Principles we can have, are either originally innate to our Minds; or afterward immediately infused by God, or by external Instruction from him disclosed to us; or acquired by our Experience, and observation of things incurring our Sense; or framed by our Reason, comparing those means; of which the three former sorts are most arbitrarily communicated, and both for number and kind depend upon the free pleasure of him, who distri-
Ὡς ἑκάστῳ θεὸς ἐμέρισε μέτρον. Rom. 12. 3. buteth them according *to a measure* suitable to each man's occasions, estimated by himself: how many those are, and how far they may qualify us to judg, or discourse about those transcendent Matters, is hard to define; but most certainly they never can clash with one another; no Light in any manner imparted by God can obscure the Doctrine declared by him, no Doctrine can thwart Principles instilled by him. The latter sorts appertain only to material and sensible Objects; which therefore can only enable us to deduce, or to examine Conclusions relating to them; and being applied to things of another kind, are abused, so as to become apt to produce great mistakes: As for instance, most Antient Philosophers observing, that the Changes and Vicissitudes in Nature were generally, by the same Matters, undergoing several Alterations, or putting on different Shapes; and that Bodies once being in rest, did usually consist in that state, until by impulse of other Bodies they were put into motion, did thence frame such Axioms, or Principles of Discourse, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*; and *Quicquid movetur, ab alio movetur*: which Propositions, supposing them true in relation to the present Conditions and Powers of sensible things, yet were it unlaw-
Id quod Deus est, secundum id quod est nec humano sermone edici, nec humanis auribus percipi, nec humanis sensibus colligi potest. Novat. *de Trin.* cap. 7. ful to stretch them unto Beings of another kind and nature (to Beings immaterial and insensible) or to infer thence generally, that in the utmost possibility of things there is not any creative, or any self-motive Power: Even as from the like Premises it would be vain to conclude, that there be no other Beings subsistent beside those which strike our Senses, or discover themselves by sensible Effects. In like manner, it cannot be reasonable out of Principles drawn from ordinary Experience, about these most low and imperfect things, to collect, that there
Ὑπονοήσωμεν γάρ, ὡς ἡμῖν ἐφικτόν, ἐν ὅσῃ τὰ τοῦ θεοῦ. Naz. *Or.* 37. *de Sp. S.* can be no other kind of Unions, of Distinctions, of Generations, of Processions, than such as our own gross Sense doth represent to us: Reason it self more forcibly doth oblige us to think that to sublimer Beings there do pertain modes of Existence and Action, Unions and Distinctions, Influences and Emanations of a more high and perfect kind, such as our coarse Apprehension cannot adequate, nor our rude Language express; which we, perhaps, have no Faculty subtile enough to conceive distinctly, nor can attain any congruous Principles, from which to discourse solidly about them: to judg of these things, if we will not against the Philosopher's Rule, μεταβαίνειν εἰς ἄλλο γένος, *shift kinds*, or use improper and impertinent Arguments, we must *compare spiritual things with spiritual*, so as to draw Conclusions about Spirituals only from Principles revealed by God's Spirit, the sole Master of Spiritual Science; so also as to express them not ἐν διδακτοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις, *in terms devised by human Wisdom*, but in such as the Holy Spirit hath

Cùm quæritur quid tres, magnâ inopiâ humanum laborat eloquium; dictum est tamen tres personæ, non ut illud diceretur, sed nè taceretur. Aug. *de Trin.* 5. 9.

Κύριον ὄνομα οὐδὲ νοητὸν τῶν ἀσωμάτων ἔδεν. Naz. *Orat.* 45. (*ad* Evagr.)

1 Cor. 2. 13. Πνευματικοῖς πνευματικὰ συγκρίνειν.

ſuggeſted; for ψυχικὸς ἄνθρωπος, a man endowed merely with common Senſe (or natural Reaſon) cannot δέχεσθαι, *apprehend*, or perceive thoſe *things of God, which only the Spirit of God doth know.* To improve and preſs which Conſideration farther,

3. We may conſider the weakneſs and ſhortneſs of our Reaſon, even about things moſt familiar and eaſy to us; the little or nothing we by our utmoſt diligence can attain to know concerning their intrinſick Eſſences, their Properties, their Cauſes and manners of production. What do we more commonly hear, than earneſt Complaints from the moſt induſtrious Searchers of natural Knowledg concerning the great obſcurity of Nature, the difficulty of finding Truth, the blindneſs of our Mind, and impotency of our Reaſon? And ſhould they be ſilent, yet Experience plainly would ſpeak how difficult, if not impoſſible, it is to arrive unto any clear and ſure knowledg of theſe common Objects; ſeeing the moſt ſedulous Inquiries, undertaken by the choiceſt Wits for above two thouſand Years, have ſcarce perhaps exhibited one unqueſtionable Theorem in Natural Philoſophy, one unexceptionable Maxim of Ethical Prudence or Policy; all things being ſtill expoſed to doubt and diſpute, as they were of old, when firſt Admiration and Curioſity did prompt men to hunt after the Cauſes of things; the moſt however that after all our care and toil we can perceive doth not exceed ſome faint Colours, ſome ſuperficial Figures, ſome groſs effects of things, while their radical Properties, and their immediate Cauſes remain inveloped, and debarred from our ſight in unacceſſable Darkneſs. Shall we then, who cannot pierce into the nature of a Peble, that cannot apprehend how a Muſhroom doth grow, that are baffled in our Philoſophy about a Gnat, or a Worm, debate and decide (beyond what is taught us from above) concerning the preciſe manner of Divine Eſſence, Subſiſtence, or Generation? *I do* (ſaith St. *Chryſoſtom*) *eat Meats, but how they are divided into Flegm, into Blood, into Juice, into Choler, I am ignorant; theſe things which every day we ſee and taſte, we do not know; and are we curious about the Eſſence of God?* We are (as * *Ariſtotle* himſelf, no Dunce, no Idiot, doth confeſs) but *Owl-eyed*, πρὸς τὴν φύσει φανερώτατα πάντων, *in regard to things naturally moſt evident*, and palpable; and can we be ſuch *Lynceus*'s, as to ſee through the fartheſt Receſſes of Infinity? *Hardly* (ſaith the *Wiſdom* of *Solomon*) *do we gueſs aright of things upon the earth, and with labour do we find the things that are before us; but the things that are in heaven, who hath ſearched out?* Yea, and the genuine *Solomon* himſelf, *I ſaid I will be wiſe, but it was far from me; that which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?* What is more remote, what more profound, than God's Nature, who then can find it out? ſooner with our hands may we touch the extreme ſurface of the Skies, ſooner with our Eyes may we pierce to the Center of the Earth: So it is expreſly told to us in *Job*; *Canſt thou by ſearching find out God? canſt thou find out the Almighty to perfection? it is as high as heaven, what canſt thou do? deeper than hell, what canſt thou know?*

Κενόδοξοι τὸ φιλόπονον ἐν ἀκινδύνοις. Greg. Naz. *Or.* 26.

Βρώματα ἐσθίω, τὸ δὲ πῶς μερίζονται εἰς φλέγμα, εἰς αἷμα, εἰς χυμὸν, εἰς χολὴν, ἀγνοῶ· ταῦτα ἀπερίλεπτα καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν ἐσθίοντες ἀγνοοῦμεν, ἢ τινὰ σοφίαν τῶν θείων πολυπραγμονοῦμεν; Chryſ. Περὶ ἀκαταλήπτ. α.

* Ariſt. *Met.* 2. 1.

Sap. 9. 13. 16

Eccleſ. 7. 23.

Job 11. 7.

4. It may be conſidered, that we daily ſee and obſerve things, which, did not manifeſt Experience convince us of their being, we ſhould be apt to disbelieve their poſſibility; Senſe no leſs than Faith doth preſent

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us with Objects, to bare Reason improbable and unconceivable; so that should we attend to the Scruples injected thereby, we should hardly take things for possible, which we behold existent; we should distrust the greatest Evidence of Sense, and by our Logick put out our Eyes. Who would believe, that, did he not every day see it; who can conceive how, altho he seeth it, from a little, dry, illfavoured, insipid Seed thrown into the Earth, there shortly would rise so goodly a Plant, endewed with so exact figure, so fragrant smell, so delicate taste, so lively colour; by what Engines it attracteth, by what Discretion it culleth out, by what Hands it mouldeth its proper aliment; by what Artifice it doth elaborate the same so curiously, and incorporate it with it self? What Virtue could we imagine in Nature able to digest an earthy Juice into the pellucid clearness of Chrystal, into the invincible firmness of a Diamond? Who would not be an Infidel, did not his sight assure him of the Miracles atchieved by that blind plastick force, which without Eye or Hand doth frame such varieties of exquisite Workmanship, unimitable, and far surpassing the skill of the greatest Artist? That a little Star, from so vast a distance, in a moment, should make impression on our Eyes, replenishing with its Light or Image so spacious a Region all about it, were we blind we should hardly believe, we scarce could fancy: How, without knowing the Organs of Speech, or the manner of applying them, without any care or pain imployed by us, we so conform our Voice, as to express what Word, what Accent we please; how we do this, or that we can do it, as it will confound our Thought to imagine, so it would stagger our Faith to believe, did not our Conscience persuade us that we can, and do speak. It is upon occasion very commonly said, I should never have believed it, had I not seen it; and that men speak so in earnest, many such Instances declare. Now if we can give credit to our Sense against the suffrage or scruple of our Reason in things not so discosted from our capacity of Knowledg, shall we not much more yield our Belief unto God's express Word in things so infinitely distant from it? If common Experience can subdue our Judgments, and compel us to a belief of things incredible, shall our Reason demur at submitting to Divine Authority? If the dictate of our Conscience doth convince us,
1 John 3. 20. shall not we much more surrender to the Testimony of *God*, who *is greater than our Conscience, and knoweth all things?* If we do believe, because we seem to know by seeing our selves; we should rather believe, because we surely know by hearing from God: for Sense may deceive, us, and often needeth correction from Reason; God cannot deceive, and Reason often is by him corrected: which leadeth me to a farther Consideration, that

5. The Propositions clearly delivered unto us by God himself, are upon many accounts more unquestionably true, more credible than the Experiments of any Sense, or Principles of any Science: whence if there happen to arise any seeming Contest between these, a precedence is due to the former, in derogation to the latter; it is fit that we rather give our Eyes and our Ears, our Fancies and our Reasons the lie, than any wise, by diffidence to his Word, put an affront on God; (for to
1 Joh. 5. 10. disbelieve him, is, as St. *John* telleth us, to give him the lie.)
1 Cor. 1. 25. Τὸ μωρὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, *the folly of God* (as St. *Paul* speaketh; that is, the Points of Faith declared by God, which seem most irrational, and cross to the Decrees of Humane Wisdom) is σοφώτερον τῶν ἀνθρώπων,

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wiſer than men, that is, more aſſuredly conſonant to real Truth, than our moſt undoubted Theorems of Science, and moſt current Maxims of Policy. God is the *Father of all Lights*, both of that which immediately ſhineth from Heaven, and of that which glimmereth here below; he is the Fountain of all Truth, whether natural or ſupernatural: but his Light and his Truth he conveyeth into us by manners different; ſome Light ſtreameth directly from him, other cometh obliquely, being refracted through divers *mediums*, or reflected from ſeveral Objects upon us; the firſt ſort muſt needs be more bright, and more pure, ſhould be more powerful and efficacious upon our Minds: the latter is often blended with material Tinctures, is weakned by the interruptions it meeteth with, loſeth of its purity and its force by the many Conduits it paſſeth through, by the many Shades it mixeth with. Obſervations of Senſe do often prove fallacious, and their not ever doing ſo, dependeth upon divers Conditions, a right temper of the Organ, a fit diſpoſition of the *Medium*, a juſt diſtance of the Object; ſo that Concluſions derived from them cannot be ſo abſolutely certain, nor conſequently the Principles grounded on them: but Divine Revelation is not obnoxious to ſuch Conditions; as the Doctrines revealed are in themſelves ſimply true, according to the higheſt pitch of neceſſity, becauſe Supreme Wiſdom doth conceive them, and Truth it ſelf doth vent them; ſo the manner of declaring them muſt be competent, becauſe God himſelf doth chuſe, and uſe it; there plainly needeth no more, than yielding an attentive Ear, and skill in the Language wherein they are expreſſed, to ſecure us from Error, and uncertainty about them: So that well might St. *Auſtin* ſay, that *in other things our Conjecture is exerciſed; but Faith alone doth aſſure our Mind.*

Ad cætera excercemur per fortaſſe; at cùm de rebus fidei agitur, ibi eſt certè ſine forte. Aug.

There have been thoſe, you know, who have not only advanced Doubts concerning Propoſitions atteſted to by cleareſt Senſe, and inferr'd by ſtrongeſt Diſcourſe; but have by their argute Cavillations bid fair to ſhake the Foundations of all Humane Science: but I never heard of any, who believed a God to be, that did conteſt the infallible Truth of his Oracles: *Socrates* we may be ſure (his excellent Scholar aſſuring us) who was ſo incredulous, as to diſclaim all pretence to Wiſdom or Science, being Author of the famous Saying, *Hoc tantùm ſcio*; yet greatly did rely upon Divine Significations, and Teſtimonies, ſo deemed by him, and ſuch as he could come at; alledging, that who followeth the Conduct of his own Reaſon, inſtead of God's Direction, chuſeth a blind and ignorant Guide, before one that beſt ſeeth, and knoweth the way: *He*, ſaith the * Hiſtorian, *deſpiſed all Humane Conceits in reſpect of God's Advice.*

Ἀπομν. α.

Αὐτὸς δὲ πάντ' ἀνθρωπίνα διανοήματα πρὸς τὴν παρὰ τῶν θεῶν συμβουλίαν.

He that formeth the eye (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *ſhall not he ſee? he that planted the ear, ſhall not he hear? he that teacheth man knowledg, ſhall not he know?* He that indued us with all our knowing Faculties, and preſideth over us in the management of them, ſhall not he ſupereminently know all that we can? muſt not they in reaſon continue ſubordinate to his Direction? Should they not always diſcern and judg under correction by him, with an appeal and ſubmiſſion reſerved to his better Judgment?

Pſal. 94. 9.

I might adjoin, that the Object and the End (as well as the Author and the Manner) of Divine Revelation, doth argue it to ſurpaſs all Reaſon, and all Senſe, in certainty and credibility; for Senſe and Reaſon converſe wholly, or chiefly about Objects material and mutable; Revelation about immaterial and immutable things: They direct us in Affairs

Affairs concerning this Tranſitory Life. This leadeth us toward Eternal Felicity; to miſtake about thoſe Objects, to miſcarry in thoſe Affairs, is in it ſelf of little, in compariſon of no importance: but to judg rightly about theſe things, to tread ſafely in theſe paths, is of infinitely vaſt concernment; a ſmaller competency therefore of Light and certainty might well ſuffice to the purpoſes of Reaſon and Senſe, but to Faith the greateſt degree of aſſurance is worthily due, and ſeemeth requiſite. But farther,

6. Not only the conſideration of this Myſtery, but of all the Divine Attributes, will in like manner extort from our feeble Reaſon the
John 3. 9. Queſtion of *Nicodemus*, *How can theſe things be?* they will all of them equally puzzle our ſhallow Imagination, and baffle our ſlender Underſtanding: For who can imagine, or underſtand, how God's Immenſity doth conſiſt with his perfect Simplicity; or that without any parts he doth coexiſt to all poſſible extenſion of Matter; being all here, and wholly there, and immenſely every where? Who can apprehend his Indiviſible Eternity, or how all ſucceſſions of Time are ever preſent to him, and ſubject to his view; ſo that he is not older now than he was when the World began, nor younger than he will be after innumerable Ages are paſt; ſo that he foreſeeth the moſt contingent Events, depending upon Cauſes in their nature arbitrary and indeterminate? Who can fancy, how out of mere Nothing, or out of extreme Confuſion and Indiſpoſedneſs the World could be created, and framed into ſo goodly order, by a mere act of Will, or by the bare ſpeaking of a word? How without any diſtraction of thought he governeth Affairs, attending to the infinite varieties of Thoughts, Words, and
Confeſſ. 3. 11. Actions occurring here; and *ità curans univerſos tanquam ſingulos, ità ſingulos tanquam ſolos,* as St. *Auſtin* ſpeaketh? How he is truly ſaid to reſolve and to reverſe, to love and hate, to be pleaſed and grieved, all without any real change, or *ſhadow of alteration?* how he ſuffereth many things to happen, which extremely diſpleaſe him, and which he can eaſily hinder; and doth not effect many things, which are much deſired by him, and very feaſible to his Power? why to equal Men he diſtributeth his Gifts ſo unequally; affording to divers abundant means of becoming happy, leaving others deſtitute of them? What Wit of man can reconcile his infinite Benignity with his moſt ſevere Decrees; or compoſe the ſeeming differences between his Mercy and his Juſtice? Many ſuch Perfections and Diſpenſations of God we muſt ſtedfaſtly believe, becauſe they are plainly taught in Scripture; to diſtruſt them being to renounce Chriſtianity; to deny them being to raſe up the very foundations of our Religion: yet he that ſhall with his utmoſt attention of mind endeavour to conceive how they can be, or how they conſiſt together, according to our ordinary notions of things, and the vulgar meaning of words, applied by us to theſe inferior matters, ſhall find himſelf gravelled with innumerable ſemblances of contradiction, plung'd in depths inſcrutable, involved in Labyrinths inextricable.

What in practice the Croſs of Chriſt was, *a ſcandal to Jews* (men dull, but obſtinate, and invincibly poſſeſſed by vain Prejudices) and *folly to Greeks* (men of wit and ſubtilty, but overweeningly conceited of them) that in Speculation may a great part of Divine Truths be,

Πλέον ἐστὶ τῶν ἀεὶ Μεσικῶν ἀμύσης, ἢ πολεμικῶν ἀσεβεύτες διαλέγεδαι, τὰ τὰ θεῖα ἢ δαιμόνια πεῖσμαλα διασκοπεῖν ἀνθρώπες ὄνλας, οἷον ἀτέχνες τεχνιτῶν διάνοιαν ἀπὸ ὄψεως ἢ διανοίας καὶ τὸ εἶναι μεῖόντας. Plut. *de ſera num. Vind.*

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apt to ſtumble froward and arrogant Men; but as there, ſo here, *bleſſed are they who are not ſcandalized*; whom no fond Scruple, or haughty Conceit can pervert from readily embracing all neceſſary Verities; ſuch are thoſe we pointed at, which if without extreme folly and impiety we cannot reject, or be diffident of, altho ſurmounting our Conceit, and dazling our Reaſon; then upon the ſame account, with like facility, we muſt ſubmit our Faith to the Doctrines concerning the B. Trinity, ſtanding upon the ſame Authority.

7. Laſtly, We may conſider and meditate upon the total Incomprehenſibility of God in all things belonging to him; in his Nature, his Attributes, his Decrees, his Works and Ways; which all are full of depth, myſtery, and wonder. God *inhabiteth*, φῶς ἀπρόσιτον, *a light inacceſſible* to the dim and weak ſight of mortal Eyes; which *no man hath ſeen, or can ſee: No man* (as he told his Servant *Moſes*) *can ſee his face* (the very exteriour appearance of him) *and live:* He is *a conſuming fire*, that will ſcorch, and devour ſuch as by raſh Inquiries approach too near him; *the ſight* ('tis ſaid) *of the glory of the Lord, was like devouring fire in the ſight of the children of Iſrael.* Even thoſe ſpiritual Eagles, the quick and ſtrong-ſighted Seraphims, are obliged *to cover their faces*, as not daring to look upon, nor able to ſuſtain the fulgour of his immediate preſence, the flaſhes of Glory and Majeſty iſſuing from his Throne: And the moſt illuminate Secretaries of Heaven, unto whom Secrets were diſcloſed, into which *Angels themſelves were ambitious to pry*, were ſometimes nonpluſt in contemplation of God's Attributes and Actions; being in their aſtoniſhment forced to cry out, ὦ βάθος· *O the depth of the riches of the wiſdom and knowledg of God!* Even his Methods of exterior Providence are inſcrutably Myſterious; *his judgments are* ἀνεξεβύνητα, like inexhauſtible Mines, to the bottom whereof we cannot any wiſe dig by our inquiry; *his paths are* ἀνεξιχνίαστοι, ſo obſcure as not to be traced by any footſteps of our Diſcourſe; *his gifts are* ἀνεκδιήγητοι, not to be interpreted, or expreſſed by our Language. And if all concerning God be thus incomprehenſible, why ſhould any thing ſeem incredible? why out of ſo many unconceivable Myſteries do we chuſe ſome, reprobate others? wherefore do we ſtretch our Judgment beyond its limits to things ſo infinitely exceeding it? Why do we ſuffer our Reaſon to be pragmatical, unjuſtly invading the Office not belonging thereto; *intruding into things which it hath not ſeen*, nor can comprehend; thoſe *ſecret things which belong to the Lord our God*, and the comprehenſion whereof he hath reſerved unto himſelf?

Εἰ γὰρ οἱ κοινομισεῖς ἀκριτόλογοι, πολλῷ μᾶλλον αὐτός. Chryſ. ἀκατ. α.

1 Tim. 6. 16.

Exod. 33. 20.

Deut. 4. 24.

Exod. 24. 17.

Scrutator majeſtatis opprimetur à gloria. Aug.

Iſa. 6. 2.

1 Pet. 1. 12.

Rom. 11. 33.

Τὶ πρὸς ἐσαῦθον ἀνίπλασαι πέδε ὧν; τί χ' οὐ μετρεῖς τῇ χειρὶ τὸ ὕδωρ, χ' τὸ ἐσαῦθον σπιδάμῃ, χ' πᾶσαν τὼ γλῶ ἐσαχᾶ; Greg. Naz. Or. 26.

2 Cor. 9. 15.

Δόξη ἐστὶν ἀχώρητος· μεγέθει ἀκατάληπτος, οὐ λέγει ἀπερινόητος, σοφία ἀσυμβίβαστος, ἀγαθωσύνη ἀμίμητος, καλότητι ἀνεκδιήγητος. Theoph. *ad Autol.*

Theſe Conſiderations may ſuffice in ſome manner to ſhew, that S. * *Chryſoſtom* had reaſon to exclaim ſo much againſt *the madneſs*, as he ſtileth it, of thoſe, who do πολυπραγμονεῖν τὼ θείαν τῆς θεᾶς, *are buſily curious in ſpeculation about the Eſſence of God*; daring, τοῖς οἰκείοις ἐπιβάλλειν λογισμοῖς, *to ſubject Divine Myſteries to their own Ratiocinations:* that S. *Baſil*'s Advice was wholeſom, μὴ περιεργάζεσθαι τὰ σιωπώμενα, *not to be meddleſom about things, about which Holy Scripture is ſilent:* That † another Antient Writer did ſay no leſs truly, than

* Μάνιαν δ' ἔγωγε εἶναι ἐγκαλῶ φημὶ φιλονεικεῖν εἰδέναι τι τῶν θείων ἐαν ὁ θεὸς. Chryſ. περὶ ἀκατάλ. α.

Cogitemus ſi valemus, ſi non valemus credamus. Aug. *Serm.* 5. *de Temp.*

Τὶς ἡ τοιαύτη ὑμῶν φιλονεικία ὦ ἐφιλοσόφεσθαι ὥστε ἀνθρωπίνη φρονήσει ὑπὲρ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων νόησιν ὁρίζεσθαι; Athan. *T.* 1. 625.

† Zeno Veronenſ.

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prettily, that in these matters *curiositas reum facit, non peritum*; we may easilier incur blame, than attain skill by nice inquiry into them: that many of the Fathers do with great wisdom dislike and dissuade the searching τὸ πῶς, the manner of things being true, or possible, as a suspicious Mark, or a dangerous Motive of Infidelity: that St. *Paul*'s Rules, φρονεῖν εἰς τὸ σωφρονεῖν, *to be wise so as withal to be sober*, and modest; and μὴ φρονεῖν ὑπὲρ ὁ γέγραπται, *not to conceit any thing without warrant of Scripture*; are in this Case most especially to be heeded: that, according to St. *Peter*'s Admonition, we should, *as new born babes* (unprepossessed with any Notions or Fancies of our own) *long for, and greedily suck in the sincere milk of the word*; not diluting it with baser Liquors of Humane Device: that where God doth interpose his definitive Sentence, our Reason hath nothing to do but to attend and submit; no right to vote, no licence to debate the matter; its Duty is to listen and approve whatever God speaketh, to read and subscribe to whatever he writeth; at least in any case it should be mute, or ready to follow *Job*, saying, *Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth.* In fine, The Testimony of God, with a sufficient clearness represented to the Capacity of an honest and docile Mind (void of all partial respects, and clear from all sorts of prejudice; loving Truth, and forward to entertain it; abhorring to wrest or wrack things, to use any fraud or violence upon any Principle, or ground of Truth) the Testimony of God, I say, so revealed, whatever exception our shallow Reason can thrust in, should absolutely convince our Judgments, and constrain our Faith. If the Holy Scripture teacheth us plainly, and frequently doth inculcate upon us (that which also the uniform course of Nature, and the peaceable government of the World doth also speak) that there is but One True God; if it as manifestly doth ascribe to the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity the same August Names, the same Peculiar Characters, the same Divine Attributes (essential to the Deity) the same superlatively admirable Operations of Creation and Providence; if it also doth prescribe to them the same supreme Honours, Services, Praises and Acknowledgments to be paid unto them all; this may be abundantly enough to satisfy our Minds, to stop our Mouths, to smother all Doubt and Dispute about this High and Holy Mystery. It was exceeding Goodness in God, that he would condescend so far to instruct us, to disclose so noble a Truth unto us, to enrich our Minds with that τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως, that *most excellent knowledg of himself*; and it would be no small Ingratitude and Unworthiness in us any-wise to suspect his Word, or pervert his meaning; any-wise to subject his Venerable Oracles to our rude Canvases and Cavils. In fine, The proper employment of our Mind about these Mysteries, is not to search and speculate about them, to discourse flippantly and boldly about them; but with a pious Credulity to embrace them, with all humble Respect to adore them.

Σαφὴς ἔλεγχος ἀπιστία τὸ πῶς περὶ θεοῦ λέγειν. Expos. fid. apud *Just. M.*

Rom. 12. 3.

1 Cor. 4. 6.

1 Pet. 2. 2. Ἐπιποθεῖν.

Job 40. 4.

I have thus endeavoured in some measure to defend the Outworks of the Orthodox Doctrine concerning the Blessed Trinity; it was beside my intent to insist so long thereon, but the Matter did ἐφέλκεσθαι, was so attractive, that I could not wave shewing my Respect thereto.

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I proceed now to that which I principally designed, the proposing briefly some practical Considerations, apt to excite us to the exercising our Understanding and Affections upon those wonderful Dispensations of Grace and Mercy, vouchsafed to us by the Holy Trinity, either conjunctly, or (as they κατ' οἰκονομίαν are expressed) separately.

We first should carefully study, and duly be affected with that gracious Consent, and (as it were) Confederacy of the Glorious Three in designing and prosecuting our good; their unanimous agreement in uttering those three mighty words of favour to Mankind, *Faciamus, Redimamus, Salvemus*, Let us make Man out of nothing, let us recover him from Sin and Perdition, let us crown him with Joy and Salvation; we should, with grateful Resentments, observe them conspiring to employ their Wisdom in contriving fit Means and Methods to exert their Power in effectual accomplishment of what was requisite to the promoting of our Welfare, the rescue of us from all Misery, the advancing us to the highest degree of Dignity, and instating us in the most perfect Condition of Happiness of which our Nature is capable; in prosecution of that gracious Design, which their joint Goodness had projected for us. More distinctly,

1. We should set our Mind on God the Father, before the Foundation of the World from all Eternity, pleasing to forecast with himself the Creation of us, and communication of his own Image to us; endowing us with most excellent Faculties of Body and Soul; subjecting the visible World to our use and governance; placing us in a state of great accommodation and delight; permitting us to fall, that he might raise us to a higher and better Condition, resolving to send his own dear Son from his Bosom to procure and purchase the Redemption of Mankind; preparing and disposing the World for the reception of so great a Mercy, by a general testification of his Patience and Beneficence *(giving showers, and fruitful seasons,* and *filling the hearts of men with food and gladness)* but more especially by prophetical Promises, Predictions, and Prefigurations; also suffering the generality of Mankind so *to proceed in its ways*, as might render it sensible of its Error and Unhappiness, of the need and benefit of a Deliverance; then *in the fulness of time*, when *the creature did earnestly groan, and long for its recovery from vanity and slavery*, actually sending his only Son, and clothing him with Humane Flesh, that conversing with us, he might discover to us his gracious Intentions toward us, might confirm the truth thereof by Miraculous Works, might instruct us by his Heavenly Doctrine and Holy Life in our Duty, and the Terms of our Salvation; then freely delivering him over unto Death, and accepting his Passion as a Sacrifice expiating our Sins, and meriting his Favour toward us: Then raising him as *the first fruits* from the Dead, setting him at his right Hand, investing him with Authority to govern and save those who sincerely would believe in him, and faithfully obey him; also sending and bestowing his Holy Spirit to dwell in them, to conduct, confirm, and comfort them in the ways of Truth and Righteousness. These, with manifold other intercurrent Passages of gracious Providence, ascribed to God the Father, we should seriously mind, and so resent, as to be ravished with admiration of his Mercy; to be enflamed with love of his Goodness; to be possessed with gratitude toward him; to become thorowly devoted to his Service.

Act. 14. 17.

Gal. 4. 4.

Rom. 8. 22.

2. We ſhould likewiſe mind the Bleſſed Son of God concurring with his Father in all his purpoſes of Love and Mercy toward us, in *making all things*, and *ſuſtaining them by the word of his power*; but eſpecially in his (toward the freeing us from the deſperate Miſeries, Corruptions, and Slaveries, into which we were plunged) aſſuming Humane Nature, leading therein a troubleſom and toilſom Life, for our benefit and inſtruction; undergoing a bitter and ſhameful Death, for the atonement of our Sins, and reconciliation of us to Divine Favour; purchaſing great and precious Promiſes, procuring high and glorious Privileges for us; aſcending into Heaven to prepare us Manſions of Bliſs; interceding for us with God, and pouring from above manifold Bleſſings upon us: the aſtoniſhing Miracles of Goodneſs, of Wiſdom, of Condeſcenſion and Patience, diſplayed in the management of which Undertakings for us, what Heart can well conceive, what Tongue can utter? What amazement ſhould it produce in us to conſider the brighteſt efflux of Divine Glory eclipſing and ſhrowding it ſelf under ſo dark a Cloud of Mortal-Frailty; the moſt High ſtooping into the quality of ſo mean a Creature; the Firſt-born, and Heir Apparent of Heaven deſcending from his Throne of Eternal Majeſty, and voluntarily degrading himſelf into the *form of a ſervant*, clad in Rags, worn with labour and travel, expoſed to contempt and diſgrace? To reflect upon the great Creator and Sovereign Lord of all the World, who reared the Heavens, and founded the Earth, who poſſeſſeth and upholdeth all things, needing himſelf a Shelter, pinched with Want, taking Alms from his Slaves, and paying Tribute to his Subjects; to contemplate the Son of God willingly ſtiling himſelf the *Son of Man*, really ſubjecting himſelf to the Duties, the Neceſſities, the Infirmities of Humane Nature; ſuffering the coarſeſt Hardſhips, and extremeſt Diſaſters thereof; all this upon freeſt Choice, with full Contentment, and perfect Submiſſion to ſo mean and ſo diſtaſtful a Condition.

We may obſerve with how admirable Goodneſs he did vouchſafe to converſe with a froward Generation of Men, to inſtruct a ſtupid and indocile ſort of People, with all ſorts of Beneficence to oblige an Incredulous, Inſenſible, and Ingrateful Crew; with how invincible a Meekneſs and Patience he *endured the contradiction of ſinners*; the ſcornful Reproaches, the wrongful Calumnies, the ſpiteful and cruel Uſages of the envious and malicious World; being to the higheſt extremity deſpiſed, hated, maligned, and abuſed by thoſe whom he had moſt highly honoured, moſt affectionately loved, and conferred the greateſt Favours upon. We may with aſtoniſhment contemplate that ſtrange Conteſt between Divine Patience, and Humane Wickedneſs, ſtriving which of them ſhould excel; when we do peruſe and weigh thoſe enigmatical Paſſages, God accuſed by Man of Blaſphemy, the Eternal Wiſdom aſperſed with Folly, Truth it ſelf impleaded of Impoſture, eſſential Love made guilty of Miſchief, and ſupreme Goodneſs ſtiled a Malefactor; Infinite Power beat down, and trampled upon by Impotent Malice; the Judg of all the World, the Fountain of all Authority and Right, Arraigned, Condemned, and Executed for Injuſtice; the *deſire of all Nations* rejected by his own Country and Kindred; the Joy of Paradiſe (whoſe lightſom Countenance doth cheer Heaven it ſelf) almoſt overwhelmed with Grief, uttering lamentable Groans, tortured with grievous Agonies; the very Heart of God bleeding, and the ſole Author of Life expiring.

We may farther ſtudy Jeſus with a hearty Compaſſion, and Tears guſhing from his inmoſt Bowels, pitying not theſe his own Sufferings, but for the Vengeance for them due and decreed unto his Perſecutors; we ſhould mark him excuſing their Fault, and praying for their Pardon; dying willingly for their Good, when he died violently by their Hand; paſſionately deſiring their Salvation, when they maliciouſly procured his Deſtruction.

We ſhould mind all the Actions of the Son of God, our Saviour, with the moſt wiſe Grounds, endearing Circumſtances, and precious Fruits of them; his Birth, Life, Death, Reſurrection, Aſcenſion, Interceſſion; as containing Inſtances of the greateſt Charity and Humility poſſible ſhewed unto us, as Arguments of the greateſt Love and Gratitude due from us: Mind them we ſhould moſt ſeriouſly, ſo as to be heartily affected with them, ſo as to eſteem worthily the tranſcendent Honour done us by God aſſuming our Nature, and exalting us to a conjunction with the Divine Nature; ſo as to be deeply ſenſible of our Obligation to ſo immenſe a Charity, that could do and ſuffer ſo much for us, without any Deſert of ours, yea notwithſtanding our exceedingly bad Deſerts, our Rebellions and Enmities againſt him; ſo as to deteſt the heinouſneſs of our Sins, that needed ſo mighty an Expiation, that cauſed ſo horrid a Tragedy; ſo as not to neglect ſo great Salvation ſo frankly offered, ſo dearly purchaſed for us; not to fruſtrate the Deſigns of ſo unconceivable Love and Goodneſs, ſo as to obey readily ſo gracious a Maſter, to follow carefully ſo admirable an Example; ſo as in imitation of him, and for his ſake, to be meek, and humble in heart, and in deed, ſeeing he did ſo infinitely condeſcend and abaſe himſelf for us; to be patient and ſubmiſſive to his Will, who ſtooped ſo low, and ſuffered ſo much for us; ſo as to bear a general affection to Mankind, grounded like his, not upon any particular Intereſts, nor limited by any partial Reſpects, but extended freely, in real deſire and intention, toward all; liberally to impart the good things we poſſeſs, and patiently to brook the Croſſes we meet with, and heartily to forgive the Offences done to us; for that he freely did part with the greateſt Glories of Eternity, with the higheſt Dignities, and the richeſt Treaſures of Heaven for our ſake; when we were *enemies in our minds by wicked works, dead in treſpaſſes and ſins*, guilty of numberleſs grievous Offences againſt him, by his Blood redeeming us from Wrath, reconciling us to the Mercy and Favour of God.

3. We ſhould alſo meditate upon the Bleſſed Spirit of God, with equal Goodneſs conſpiring, and co-operating with all the Purpoſes, to all the Effects of Grace, which conduce to our everlaſting Happineſs; more eſpecially as the Repairer of our decayed Frames, the Enlivener of our dead Souls, the Infuſer of ſpiritual Light into our dark Minds, the Kindler of ſpiritual Warmth into our cold Hearts; the Raiſer of ſpiritual Appetite to Righteouſneſs, and the Reliſh of Goodneſs in our ſtupid Senſes; the Imparter of ſpiritual Strength and Vigour to our feeble Powers; the Author of all Liberty, looſing us from Captivity under the Tyranny of Satan, from Vaſſalage unto our own Carnal Luſts and Paſſions; from ſubjection to a hard and imperious Law, from bondage to the Terrors of a guilty Conſcience: As him, that enableth us to perform the Duties, and accompliſh the Conditions required of us in order to our Salvation, that qualifieth us to be the Sons of God by his effectual Grace, and aſſureth us that we are ſo by his comfortable Teſtimo-

Teſtimony; as our ſure Guide in the ways of Truth and Virtue; our faithful Counſellor in all Doubts and Darkneſſes; our mighty Support and Succour in all Needs, in all Diſtreſſes; our ready Guard againſt all Aſſaults and Temptations; our ſweet Comforter in all Sadneſſes and Afflictions: Who doth inſinuate good Thoughts, doth kindle holy Deſires, doth cheriſh pious Reſolutions, doth further honeſt Endeavours in us: Who only doth inflame our Hearts with Devotion toward God; doth encourage, doth inable us to approach unto him; doth prompt us with fit matter of requeſt, and becometh Advocate for the good ſucceſs of our Prayers.

We ſhould mind him as the Root of all good Fruits growing in us, or ſprouting from us; the Producer of all good Habits formed in us, the Aſſiſter of all good Works performed by us; the Spring of all true Content that we enjoy; to whom our embracing the Faith, our continuing in Hope, our working in Charity, the purification of our Hearts, the mortification of our Luſts, the ſanctification of our Lives, the Salvation of our Souls are principally due, are moſt juſtly aſcribed: As the Author and Preſerver of ſo ineſtimable Benefits unto us, let us mind him; and withal let us conſider him as condeſcending to be a loving Friend and conſtant Gueſt to ſo mean and unworthy Creatures; vouchſafing to attend over us, to converſe with us, to dwell in us, rendring our Souls holy Temples of his Divinity, Royal Thrones of his Majeſty, bright Orbs of his heavenly Light, pleaſant Paradiſes of his bliſful Preſence; our Souls, which naturally are profane Receptacles of wicked and impure Affections, dark Cells of falſe and fond Imaginations, cloſe Priſons of black and ſad Thoughts: As graciouſly *ſtriving with us*, ſtriving to open and enter into our Hearts, barr'd againſt him by vain Conceits, and vicious Inclinations; ſtriving to reclaim us from the Sins and Errors into which we are wont heedleſly or wilfully to precipitate our ſelves; ſtriving to make us, what in all duty and wiſdom we ſhould be, capable of Divine Favour, and fit for Everlaſting Happineſs: As enduring patiently manifold Diſpleaſures and Diſreſpects from us; our rude Oppoſitions againſt him, our frequent neglects of his kind Admonitions; our many perverſe Humours, wanton Freaks, wilful Miſcarriages, and unworthy Dealings toward him.

We ſhould thus mind the Bleſſed Spirit of God, and be ſutably affected toward him; ſo as to be duly ſenſible and thankful for thoſe unexpreſſible Gifts and Bleſſings indulged to us by him, ſo as to render all Love and Reverence, all Praiſe and Glory, all Obedience and Service to him, eſpecially ſo as to admit him cheerfully into our Hearts; yea, invite him thither by our earneſt Prayers; to make fit preparations for his Reception and Entertainment (by cleanſing our Hearts from all loathſom Impurities) to make him welcom, and treat him kindly, with all civil reſpect, with all humble obſervance; not *grieving* and vexing him by our diſtaſtful Croſneſs and Peeviſhneſs, not tempting him by our fond Preſumption, or baſe Treachery; not extinguiſhing his heavenly Light, and holy Fire by our foul Luſts, our damp Stupidities, our cold Neglects, our Neglects to foment and nouriſh them by the food of devout Meditations and zealous Deſires: So let us mind him, as to admit gladly his gentle Illapſes, to delight in his moſt pleaſant Society, to hearken to his faithful Suggeſtions, to comply with all his kindly Motions, to behave our ſelves modeſtly, conſiſtently, and officiouſly toward him.

* Thus

Thus ſhould we employ our Mind, all the Faculties of our Soul, our Underſtanding, our Will, our Affections upon the Bleſſed Trinity, the Supreme of all things above, the Founder of that Celeſtial Society, into which as Chriſtians we are inſerted; the Sovereign of that heavenly Kingdom to which we are Subjects; the Fountain of all the Good and Happineſs we can hope for in that ſuperior State. To the performance of which Duty there be Arguments and Inducementsinnumerable; 'tis the moſt proper and connatural Object of our Mind, that for which it is fitteſt, and for which it was deſigned; the beſt Intelligible, and infinitely moſt Amiable of all things. 'Tis the moſt worthy and noble Object, the contemplation of which, and affection whereto, will moſt elevate, moſt enrich, moſt adorn, moſt enlarge the Capacities, and moſt ſatisfy the Appetites of our Souls: 'Tis the moſt ſweet and pleaſant Object, wherein all Light, all Beauty, all Perfection do ſhine; the ſight and love of which do conſtitute Paradiſe, and beatify Heaven it ſelf. 'Tis the moſt uſeful and beneficial Object of our Mind, which will beſt inſtruct us in what it concerneth us to know, will moſt incite us to thoſe Duties which we are obliged to perform, will be moſt efficacious to the begetting in us thoſe Diſpoſitions, which are indiſpenſably requiſite for the attainment, and for the injoyment of that Everlaſting Bliſs; unto which that one Bleſſed Unity, and Glorious Trinity in its infinite Mercy bring us all: To whom be all Glory, Honour, and Praiſe for ever. *Amen.*

FINIS.

A TABLE

OF

THINGS, or Chief MATTERS

Contained in the Third Volume.

A.

ABraham. *His Faith, and Example*, Page 14, 15.
Adam's *Sin and Punishment*, 356, 357. *Christ, the second* Adam, 384.
Afflictions. *Their Original, and End*, 40. *Benefits of them*, 71. *how born*, 149, 155, 156.
Αὐτάρκεια. *The Import of the word*, Philip. IV. 11. 43.

B.

BAptism. 392, 408.
Baptism *and Fasting*, &c. *of Christ, the End of them*, 29. *Divine Grace bestowed in Baptism*, 453.
Bishops, *and their Presidency*, 240.

C.

CAllings, *as referred to Christians*, 201. *The Reward of Industry therein.*
Canaanites. *The Divine Proceedings against them vindicated*, 358.
Censures *of the Primitive Church*, 225.
Censures *of men how born*, 257.
Ceremonies *of the Christian Church*, 248.
Charity, 250, 252, 296, 316, 459, 460.
Charity. *How wrought in us*, 26, 126. *The delight therein*, 115, 116. *Directions concerning it*, 306.
Christ's Living, Abiding, Dwelling, being Formed in us; *The meaning of those Expressions in H. Scripture*, 25.
Christ's *Example. The Transcendent Excellence and Power thereof*, 24. *his Divinity*, 29, 32. *Humanity*, 385. *Sufferings*, 393, &c.
Church *Governours and Government*, 238. *Obedience to them in* seq. *Discipline*, 242, 256, 257.
Civility, *and Courteste. Non-compliance therein by whom thought to bring an Imputation on Religion*, 336, &c.
Clemens Romanus, *called by* Clemens Alexandrinus *an Apostle*, 394. *A Character of his Epistle to the* Corinthians, *Ibid.* Eusebius *and S.* Hierom's *Note of its being antiently read in Churches*, Ibid.
Compliance. *Base Compliance*, 327.
Company *(Good) A Remedy against Discontent*, 93.
Company *(Bad) The Danger, and Remedy*, 326.
Conscience *(Good) The Comfort*, 89, 90, 112, 115.
Consideration. *The Benefits*, 95.
Conversation, *and outward Demeanour, the great Care to be had thereof on a Religious and Civil Account*, 304, &c.
Of Contentment, 43, &c. *The Necessity. Arguments to it. The Nature and way to it.*
Covetousness. *Remedies against it*, 133, 144.
Courage, *enflamed by Example*, 20.
Curiosity. *The Power*, 23.
Custom. 131, 308, 336, 338. *in Sin, the danger*, 158, 162.

D.

DEacons, 243.
Death, 136. *Benefits*, 151. 77, 78. *Conquered by Christ*, 419. *The wisdom to Philosophers in Contemplation thereof.*
Death *of Friends*, 64, 65.
Death. *No Knowledg after Death of Things done in this World*, 146.
Degrees *of Rewards hereafter*, 174.
Delay *in Matters of Religion. The Danger*, 161, &c.

De-

Deluge, *(Universal)* 357.
Despair, 72.
Detraction. *Fear thereof how prejudicial to Religion*, 332.
Dishonour, *how born*, 62, 63.
Discipline, *of the Primitive Church*, 242, 256, 257.
Devotion *(Publick and Private)* 308, 309.
Devotion. *An excellent Means of Contentment*, 91.

E.

Ecclesiastical *Government*, 247.
Ecclesiastical *Orders. Their Antiquity, and Distinction*, 236.
Empires. *Their Ruin from neglect of Religion*, 338.
Emulation. *Power thereof to Virtue*, 21.
Endeavours *(Our own) necessary to Happiness*, 35, 184, 185.
Enemies. *Love of them*, 50, 53, 100, 101, &c. 387.
Enemies. *A Christian's Enemies, how conquered by Christ*, 416, &c.
Enemies *of Religion*, 35, 55.
Envy, 330.
Evil-speaking, 125.
Examination. *The Duty*, 122.
Example. *Humane Example, no sure Pattern*, 27, 28.
Example. *The Power*, 33.
Examples *of Piety, how they exceed all others in Valour*, 23.
Examples. *The Delight in considering them*, 23.
Example *of Christ. The Necessity of the Imitation*, 416. *V.* 447. *We are to give, and follow good Example*, 14, 15. *The Advantages, and how much Examples exceed Precepts, in* seq.
Example *(Publick) The Power and Practice*, 315.

F.

Faith, 5, 6. *The Power, and Necessity.*
Faith *in God. The Benefit*, 96.
Faith. *Open Confession thereof*, 113, 114, 313.
Faith. *The Foundation of Joy*, 114.
Faith. *Implicit Faith*, 270, 271.
Fathers *of the Church*, 266.
Favour *of God. The Happiness*, 68.
Fear *of God*, 336, &c.
Fear. *The Prejudice to Religion from base Fear*, 336.
Festivals *(Jewish and Christian) their Institution, Correspondence, and End*, 423, 448, 449.
Flattery, 127. *how avoided*, 319.
Flood *(Universal) The Goodness of God therein*, 349, &c.
Fortune, *and Chance*, 46.
Friendship *obtained and preserved by Religion*, 324.

G.

Gentleman's *Calling, and Duty to be industrious*, 212, &c.
Ghost. *Gift of the Holy Ghost, the Benefits*, 448, &c.
Gift *of God in Scripture, whence sometimes said to be the Effect of Man's Industry*, 183.
Glorifying *God*, 310, 312.
God's *Attributes*, 110, 229.
God's *Existence*, 349.
Of the Goodness, *the Patience of God*, 348.
Gospel. *Some Nations Ignorance thereof, no Argument against Divine Providence, or Universal Redemption by Christ*, 397.
Governours, *and Guides Spiritual*, 236, &c.
Grace *of God. The Danger of not asking, and using the same*, 168, 169. *V.* 398.
Grace. *Communication and Effects in Heathens*, 401.
Grace. *When a Person in a State of Grace*, 420, 421.
Great *Men. Their Conditions in this World*, 83.

H.

Happiness. *Future Happiness. Degrees therein*, 90, 91, 174.
Happiness. *Consideration of Future Happiness, a sovereign Means of Content*, 90.
Happiness *(Future) sought after from remembrance of this Life's shortness, and vanity*, 54, 190.
To Hear, *in Scripture-language, is to observe attentively*, 120.
Hearers. *The Character of truly Religious Hearers*, 297.
Heart *to be kept with all Diligence*, 118. *The* Heart *by whom supposed*

to be the chief Seat of the Soul, 119.
Hereſy, 270.
Hieruſalem. *Deſtruction thereof no Argument againſt Providence*, 360, 361.
Holy Life *how advanced*, 130, 134. *from conſideration of our Hearts, and Chriſt's Example*, 26.
Honeſty *and Publick Behaviour*, 303.
Honour *and Reputation of the World*, 140, 141, 374.
Honour *in Religion*, 375, 432.
Honour *how attained and kept*, 197, 222.
Hope, 73, 194.
Hope *in God*, 5, 115.
Hope *Reviſed by Example*, 19.
Humility, 94, 128, 129, 229, 286.
Hypocrites, 326, 335.

I.

I *Can do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengtheneth me*, Phil. 4. 13. 7.
Jeſus. *The Name, and Extent of the Salvation by Him, and whence*, 456.
Idleneſs. *The Miſery*, 93.
Jews *diſeſteem of Chriſt*, 104, 105, 107. *Their Rejection by God*, 228.
Ignorance *in this State*, 227, 229, 230.
Ignorance. *Miſchiefs ariſing from Ignorance of our ſelves*, 224.
Ignorance *of Mankind before Chriſt's coming*, 430.
Imitation *of Chriſt*, 15, &c.
Impartiality. *A Divine Attribute*, 364, &c.
Incomprehenſibility *of God*, 471.
Indifferency *in Matters of Religion, the danger*, 346.
Induſtry. *Nature thereof, and Arguments to it*, 180, &c.
Injuries. *Chriſt the Example of bearing them, and our Duty of Imitation*, 97.
Intentions. *The beſt* alone *unavailable*, 4.
Joſeph's *Example. The Power*, 16.
Joy. *True Joy wherein*, 109, 423.
Iſraelites. *God's great goodneſs to them in his Judgments*, 358.
Judgment *(Future)* 41, 160, 171. *All to appear*, 371.
Judgments *of Almighty God, the Unſearchableneſs of them*, 228, &c.
Juſtice *of God*, 364.
Juſtice *to our Neighbour*, 316, &c.

K.

Kings. *The Honour and Obedience to them*, 380.
Knowledg. *Secular Knowledg. The Imperfection, Vanity, when ſeparated from Religious Performances*, 146, 286.
Knowledg *how gained*, 200, 220, 266.
Knowledg. *Divine Knowledg*, 55, 123, 215. *The Delight, and other Benefits*, 195, 196.
Knowledg *of our ſelves, the Benefits therein*, 121.

L.

Learning. *Vid. Knowledg.*
Laws. *Humane Laws*, 135.
Laws. *Man governed by them*, 121.
Life. *Shortneſs thereof*, 75. *Uſe of this Conſideration, and of our latter End*, 136. & in ſeq.
Life. *To know the fixed Time thereof, thought no fit Subject of Prayer*, 137.
Life *preſent and future compared*, 153.
Life *(Preſent) a State of Probation*, 80.
Life *(Wicked) the Scandal and Danger*, 314.
Life. *An H. Life*, 456.
Love. *The Power*, 33.
Love *of our Neighbour*, 2, 94, 361.
Loving *of God. The Duty, and Joy there is in it*, 116.

M.

Martyrdom, 332.
Magiſtrates, 378, 379.
Mercy *of God in Pardon of Sin*, 348, &c.
Merit. *All pretended Merit diſclaimed*, 5, 6, 9, 58, 59, 60, 286, 287.
Midraſh, *or myſtical Senſe in the Old Teſtament, the Antient* Jews *conſtant Belief thereof*, 443.
Miniſters *of the Goſpel. Their Character, and Titles*, 265. *The Duty of their Hearers*, 261. *The Influence of Miniſters Example*, 272, 273.
Miracles, 194.
Modeſty, *how preſerved by Example*, 23. *what kind blameable*, 327.
Monarchy, *and Democracy*, 241.
Moſes's *Example*, 17, 18. *The Power thereof.*

N.

Name. *What is ſignified by doing any thing in another's Name*, 1. *All to be done in Chriſt's Name*, ibid.
Name. *A good Name attended by being Religious*, 322.
Nativity *of Chriſt*, 423.
Neceſſity, *and Chance*, 72.
Novatians, *and Pelagians; their Pretenſions to Perfection, and Purity noted*, 287.

O.

Obedience *to God*, 161, 162. *muſt be Univerſal*, 310.
Omniſcience *of God*, 350.
Omnipreſence *of God. The Reſtraint on Sin thence*, 134.
Ordination, 241, &c.
H. Orders *among the* Jews, ibid.
Original *Sin*, 6, 350, &c.

P.

PAgans. *Their State with reference to receiving Divine Grace*, 401. *and whether such Grace is consistent with the want of an Explicit Knowledg of Christ, and Faith in him*, 402. & in seq.
Passion *of Christ. The infinite Merit thereof*, 395. *The same foretold in the Old Testament*, 423.
Patience, *and how learnt*, 97. *St.* Paul's *Character and Example*, 17.
Peace *in Religion*, 110.
Pelagians, 453.
Pentecost. *The Feast*, 449. *how observed by the* Jews *of old*, 450.
Performances *to be judged by their Natures, not by contingent Events*, 396.
Persecution, 332.
Perseverance *in Religion*, 344.
Pleasures *of the World. The Vanity*, 96, 145.
Poor. *God's peculiar care of them*, 371.
Poverty. *How born*, 62.
Power. *Worldly Power, the Character of it*, 140.
Power *in God only originally, and essentially*, 3, 4.
Practice *of Religion shewed from Examples*, 20.
Prayer, 133. *Its Power*, 91, 92. *What to pray for*, 133, 134. *To be offered to God alone in the Name of Christ*, 8, 9. *The necessity of Prayer*, 10, 11.
Prayer, *its Benefit against Discontent*, 91.
Prayer *promoted by Knowledg of our selves*, 129.
Prayers. *Whence to be made for all Men*, 386.
Predestination, 375.
Prejudice, 32, 35, 36, 95, 261, 411, 457.
Presumptuous. *This World made for them, A saying of the* Rabbins, 78.
Pride, 299, 301.
Priests, 240. *or Presbyters.*
Profession. *Outward Profession only unavailable*, 3, 4.
Promises *of the Gospel*, 114, 183.
Profanation *of God's Name by a wicked Life*, 311, &c.
Prophecies *and Types of Christ*, 438, &c.
Prophets. *Antient Prophets*, 268.
Propositions *deliver'd by God, on many accounts more credible than Experiments of Sense*, 468, 469.
Prosperity *of the Wicked*, 78, 142. *No Argument against Divine Providence*, 142.
Prosperity. *The Miseries, if without Virtue*, 71.
Provide *Things honest in the sight of all Men* (Rom. 12. 17.) 303.
Providence *of God*, 6, 7. *Trust therein*, 289, 290. Vid. 56, 350.
Providence *(Unsearchable)* 230. *Inferences thence*, 236, 237.
Publick. *What Duties to be publickly performed*, 307, 308.
Purgatory, *a Fable*, 76.
To Put on Christ; *the Explanation of the Phrase in H. Scripture*, 25.

R.

REason, *of what things it is no competent Judg*, 465, 470. *Not to be us'd in some things, were it more perfect*, 466. *Its shortness with respect to things most familiar to us*, 467, 468. *Ought to consent to what the Scripture teaches*, 472.
Redemption *by Christ*, 8. *Universal*, 399. & in seq. *The mighty love therein.*
Regeneration, 455.
Rejoice Evermore, 1 *Thess.* 5. 16. 109.
Religion. *The Practice whence easy*, 110, 189.
Remission *of Sins*, 168, &c.
Repentance, 110. *Danger of the Delay*, 161, &c.
Reproach *undergone by the knowledg of our selves*, 129. *The vain Fear of being reproached for the sake of Religion*, 338.
Reputation *in Religion*, 322.
Resignation *of the Will*, vid. *Will*, 34, &c.
Resolution, 20, 128, 129.
Retirement, 318.
Revenge, *and Love of our Enemies*, 54, 100, 101, 126.
Rewards *(Future)* 96. *Degrees thereof*, 76.
Riches, 142, 143, 185. *how gained, with their Advantages*, 212, &c.
Be not Righteous *overmuch*, Eccles. 7. 18. *The foolish Plea some assume from thence*, 348.

S.

SAcraments, 392.
Sacrilege, 224.
Saints. *The Power of their Example*, 24. *Who so called*, 310.
Saviour *of all Men*, &c. 380. *What the Term Salvation implies*, ibid.
Schismaticks, 242, &c.
Scholars *Calling*, 218. & in seq.
Scoffing *at Religion.*
H. Scriptures. *The Rule of Faith and Manners*, 27. *How they are to be taught and heard*, 233. *An earnest Exhortation to the study of them, and practice*, 122, 271. *and the duty of searching.*
Self-conceit. *The Sin*, 280.
Self-confidence *and Complacence*, 289, 290.
Self-interest, 263.

Self-

Self-Love. *The Kinds of it*, 125. *and how to be avoided*, 302.
Self-Praise, *and thinking of our selves*, 300, 301.
Self-Will, 291.
Servants *of Christ, who, and why?* 3.
Shame *in Sin*, 166, 167, 331, 333.
Sin. *The Misery*, 93.
Sincerity, 159.
Singularity. *Fear of Imputation thereof in Matters of Religion, and the Folly*, 342, 343.
Sloth, 171.
Society. *The Good thereof*, 295.
Societies *flourish by observation of Religion*, 322.
Socinians, 453.
Solomon. *The Account of his Wisdom*, 220, &c.
Stoicks. *Their Doctrines, and Example*, 149.
Soul *of Man. Motions thereof how ordered*, 134, 135. *The Duty and Necessity of caring for the Soul*, 236, &c.
Soul's *Activity*, 11.
H. Spirit *of God*, 398. 451. *and Gifts*, 452.
Spiritual *Guides, and Governors*, 238, &c.
Sufferings *of Christ in the old Testament*, 132.
Sufferings *of Christ*, 37, 38, 39.
Synods.

T.

TAlents. *Their Improvement*, 211. Teach us to number our days, Psal. XC. 12.—136. *The full Importance of the Words.*
Temperance, 189.
Temptations, 36. *how conquered*, 459.
Thanksgiving, 9, 57, 58.
Things above, *what meant thereby in* Col. 3. 2. 463, 464.
Thoughts, 121, 182. *how they work on the Affections*, 11. *Government of the Thoughts*, 136.
Time. *Improvement thereof*, 157, 175. *The Wisdom therein*, ibid.
Times *(Good and Bad)* 65, 66.
Tongue. *Government of the Tongue*, 52, 99.
Tradition. *Universal Tradition*, 242.
Trinity. *The Glorious Trinity the great Object of our Faith, tho above our Reason*, 464. *Our Understanding and Affections to be employ'd in the contemplation of it, whether consider'd conjunctly*, 473. *or separately*, 473—477.
Trust *in God*, 5, 114.
Truth. *Discovery thereof*, 408.
Types *(Antient) and Prophecies, whence it pleased Almighty God to make use of them*, 436, 437.

V.

VAin-glory, 297.
Virtue *attained by Industry, and inseparable from it*, 187, 206.
Virtue *and Vice. The Advantages of the former with relation to this Life, as well as the next*, 178, 179.
Union *with Christ*, 26, &c.
Unity. *Church Unity*, 249.
Use. *Popular Use, no good Argument of Truth or Right*, 327.

W.

WAtchfulness, 120.
How the Will *of God* our Sanctification, 40.
Will. *Freedom thereof*, 35, 36.
Will. *Submission to the Divine Will*, 34, &c. 40.
Be wise as Serpents, *Mat.* 10. 16. 346.
Wisdom, 187. *How attained.*
Wisdom *of God*, 46.
Wisdom. *Worldly Wisdom*, 346.
World. *A Character of this World*, 78, 139.
World's *Creation and Harmony, declare the Divine Providence*, 350.
Worldlymindedness, 74, 143. *an Occasion of Discontent*, 94.
Works. *Rewards hereafter according to them*, 368.
Worship. *The Publick Worship of Almighty God*, 307.

Y.

YOuth, *and Old Age*, 126, 127. *compared with regard to Religious Practice*, ibid.

Z.

ZEAL, 339, 397.

THE END.